

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
2009 Churchwide Assembly

# **Reports and Records: Assembly Minutes**

August 17–23, 2009  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

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Secretary

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# Introduction

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A Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a gathering of voting members, serving as the highest legislative authority of this church, but it is so much more! Centered in worship, members and guests proclaim the gospel, learn about the work of this denomination, share stories of mission and ministry, engage in fellowship together—and transact business! The minutes of such meetings describe the legislative actions and the important business of the assembly, but they cannot capture the Holy Spirit energizing and working through more than one thousand individuals engaged collaboratively in the ministry of this church.

These are the official minutes—the historic record—of the eleventh regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA, held at the Minneapolis Convention Center on August 17–23, 2009. The theme for the assembly was “God’s work. Our hands.”

To facilitate the historical record and for the ease of the reader, these minutes are organized in a comprehensive manner. Thus, approved actions are printed in their entirety in these minutes at the point of presentation, along with a summary of the assembly’s discussion of the issues. Relevant exhibits are appended to provide ready reference in a single document.

Prior to the assembly, voting members and others received numerous reports and exhibits organized in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*. These minutes refer to applicable portions of that document.

A word about the designation of actions is helpful. The numbers adjacent to each final action of the Churchwide Assembly are preceded by the letters “CA” to designate that the action was taken by the Churchwide Assembly. The designation “CA” is followed by the year of the assembly, 2009; thus, “CA09.” Then follows the notation of the day of the assembly on which the action occurred, and the number of the action taken sequentially during the assembly. The action number CA09.04.15 signifies that the fifteenth action of the assembly occurred on the fourth day of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

References to actions of various ELCA governing bodies also are cited using a similar designation code. For example, CC09.03.23 refers to the action taken by the Church Council (CC) at its March (3rd month) meeting in 2009 (09), which represented the twenty-third action (23) of that governing body in the calendar year. Similarly, the designations “EC” and “CB” refer respectively to the Executive Committee of the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops.

Citations to the sections of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* are codified variously as ELCA 8.11. (a churchwide constitutional provision), ELCA 8.31.01. (a churchwide bylaw), S9.04. (Constitution for Synods provision), and C10.02. (Model Constitution for Congregations provision). A dagger (†) preceding the letter “S” or an asterisk (\*) before “C” indicates that the provision is required rather than only recommended. Continuing resolutions are designated by a letter and the year in which they were adopted; thus, an ELCA churchwide continuing resolution is numbered, for example, 16.31.A05.

Various amendments to the governing documents of this church were adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. As a convenience to readers and for historical documentation, the full text of the 2009 edition of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, as amended, is printed at the end of this volume.

I want to express a word of appreciation to all those who made the 2009 Churchwide Assembly a success (despite many challenges, including a tornado!). Those who served on



assembly committees are listed on pages 49–51 of these minutes. Special thanks to the Churchwide Assembly planning team, capably chaired by Ms. Myrna Sheie, the Minutes Team, and to the staff of the Office of the Secretary, especially to Ms. Mary Beth Nowak for unparalleled excellence in meeting planning, Mr. Frank F. Imhoff, who compiled this document, and the Rev. Ruth E. Hamilton, the executive for administration in the Office of the Secretary, for her reservoir of knowledge and keen editorial eye!

Video, photo, and audio highlights of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly are available on the Internet at [www.elca.org/assembly](http://www.elca.org/assembly). The ELCA Web site also includes “Legislative Updates,” which provided voting members with daily summaries of assembly actions.

Consistent with the commitment of this church to be faithful stewards of God’s creation, these minutes also are posted on the ELCA Web site. Voting members and others will not receive a book of minutes, except upon request.

As this church moves forward in mission and ministry, let us always remember that we are Christ’s ambassadors, called to a ministry of reconciliation. Let us continually give thanks for the opportunity to do God’s work with our hands!

MR. DAVID D. SWARTLING, Secretary  
All Saints Day 2010

**Eleventh Churchwide Assembly  
of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

**Minutes**

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**August 17–23, 2009  
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

**Marked with the cross of Christ forever,  
we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.**



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

*Claimed* by God's grace for the sake of the world,  
we are a new creation through God's living Word  
by the power of the Holy Spirit;

*Gathered* by God's grace for the sake of the world,  
we will live among God's faithful people, hear God's Word,  
and share Christ's supper;

*Sent* by God's grace for the sake of the world,  
we will proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,  
serve all people following the example of our Lord Jesus,  
and strive for justice and peace in all the world.

# Plenary Session One

Monday, August 17, 2009

7:00 P.M.—10:45 P.M.

On Monday, August 17, 2009, members of the Churchwide Assembly gathered for the Opening Service of Holy Communion at 4:00 P.M. Central Daylight Time (CDT) in Exhibition Hall D of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn. The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), served as preacher and presiding minister; Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president of the ELCA, was assisting minister; and Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the ELCA, and Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA, served as lectors.

## Order for the Opening of an Assembly and Welcome

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson lit a candle and rang a bell, and he then called Plenary Session One of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 7:01 P.M. CDT in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

Presiding Bishop Hanson welcomed the 1,045 voting members, along with the advisory members, resource people, congregation observers, invited guests, and visitors. He acknowledged the many hours of prayer and preparation that already had been spent by those gathered. He thanked them for their deep commitment to the ELCA and to the work of the coming week.

The presiding bishop asked assembly members to turn to the Order for Opening of an Assembly in the booklet *Worship and Song: Plenary*. Following the order, he invited the assembly to sing “We All Are One in Mission.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson spoke of his invitation to every member of the ELCA to join in 50 days of renewal and focused prayer around the Scripture readings that would be used at the assembly. He affirmed that each day would have worship at its center. Every session would begin and end with prayer, and members would pause for prayer periodically throughout the assembly, particularly before major votes. Prayer would be led by the members of a team made up of synodical vice presidents, synodical bishops, and members of the Church Council.

Presiding Bishop Hanson described his role as presiding officer of the Churchwide Assembly to help the assembly do its work thoughtfully, respectfully, and in an orderly way. He also affirmed that deep conversation and decisions were the responsibility of all the voting members.

## Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, page 9.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called for the report of the Credentials Committee. Bylaw 12.41.11. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides a formula to determine the number of voting members of the Churchwide Assembly. The Church Council and Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA and *ex officio* chair of the Credentials Committee, determined that 1,045 was the number of voting members, including the officers. Secretary Swartling reported that, as of 6:54 P.M. CDT, 1,025 of the eligible voting members had registered with the Credentials Committee. On the basis of that report, Presiding Bishop Hanson declared the presence of a quorum.

## Greeting: Host Synods

The bishops of the host synods greeted the assembly. The Rev. Craig E. Johnson, bishop of the Minneapolis Area Synod, welcomed the assembly members on behalf of the 167 congregations in the Minneapolis Area Synod, the 114 congregations in the Saint Paul Area Synod, and the 13 developing congregations in the synods, which were composed of some 370,000 members. Bp. Johnson told the assembly that more than 600,000 members reside in the other four Minnesota synods. He described the Minneapolis Area Synod as a dynamic place, with many immigrant communities. He identified it as the center of the Oromo diaspora in the world. In addition, he told of congregations of people from Sudan and Liberia, as well as congregations that worship in Laotian, Amharic, Spanish, Swahili, Hmong, American Sign Language, and Chinese throughout both the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Area Synods.

Bp. Johnson announced that, in honor of the assembly, the synods had contracted with “Tree Trust” to plant 66 trees in the Twin Cities area, one for each synod and one for the ELCA churchwide expression. He explained that “Tree Trust” is an organization founded in 1976 to address the urban deforestation caused by Dutch elm disease and to provide a response to urban unemployment and poverty by training workers to plant and tend trees.

The Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod, spoke next, and said that the local synods are made up of many different kinds of Lutheran congregations: megachurches, small rural churches, house churches, historic old churches, and the immigrant churches previously mentioned, as well as organizations including both Good Soil and Lutheran CORE (Coalition for Reform). He pointed out that the region has more varied expressions of Lutheranism than any other in the country. He described this diversity as a “symphony of sound,” rather than people playing the same instruments and same notes. Bp. Rogness stated, “We are all different voices, woven around the same God by the power of the Spirit.” Continuing the musical analogy, Bp. Rogness contrasted the cacophony of dissonance with the richness of a fugue. With God as the synods’ composer, Bp. Rogness proposed, they will move in the melody of a “Pentecost fugue.”

Before taking up the next agenda item, Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the offering received at the opening worship service totaled \$15,630.04. It was designated for the World Hunger appeal, the HIV and AIDS Initiative, and the Fund for Leaders in Mission.

## Introduction to Electronic Voting Procedures

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, page 10.

For the benefit of those new to the Churchwide Assembly, as well as for returning voting members, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson led the assembly in a demonstration and test of the electronic voting machines. He acknowledged support from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to provide the technology for the use of the Churchwide Assembly. He further noted that proxy voting is prohibited by the governing documents of this church, and instructed voting members that they were to vote using only the machine assigned to them.

## Organization of the Churchwide Assembly: Roll of Voting Members

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 6–8 and pages 31–39.

Secretary David D. Swartling, *ex officio* chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the roll of voting members, advisory members, resource members, and other members. He noted that the report is subject to revision if a bishop certifies a replacement of a voting member from his or her synod. The final revised listing of those registered as voting members will be included in the minutes of this assembly.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that, unless there was objection, the report of the Credentials Committee would be accepted. No objection was heard, so the report was approved.

## **Introduction of the Parliamentarian**

Presiding Bishop Hanson introduced the parliamentarian, the Rev. Lyle A. Kleman of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Pr. Kleman is a registered parliamentarian, as well as an ELCA pastor serving as an intentional interim.

## **Adoption of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure”**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 5–21.*

Presiding Bishop Hanson provided an overview of the proposed “Rules of Organization and Procedure” in the order that they appeared in Section I of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, giving particular attention to the deadlines that were listed both in the rules (*2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section I, page 21) and in the proposed “Order of Business.”

Members were instructed that only those with appropriate credentials could come on the assembly floor. The presiding bishop pointed out the time limits on speeches and the rules for going to the red and green microphones. He further explained that the use of a white card signified the intent to offer a motion or amendment, to seek clarification, or to make a parliamentary inquiry. He cautioned members seeking to make motions to do so before speaking to their motions; otherwise, they would be ruled out of order. He explained how speakers would be logged in when they approached a microphone, where they would be called upon in turn according to their position in the electronic microphone queuing system.

All resolutions, motions, and amendments would need to be submitted in writing to the secretary’s deputy, the Rev. Ruth E. Hamilton. The deadline for the submission of items of new business would be on Thursday, August 20, at 11:15 A.M. These motions would be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee for consideration and a recommendation to the assembly. Such motions for new business would be required to bear the signatures of the mover and of one other voting member.

The presiding bishop then outlined the process for handling substitute motions. He indicated that a two-thirds vote would be required for the following: motions that amend the constitution and bylaws, provided they are made in accordance with the constitution; motions that adopt and amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for this assembly; and certain issues specified in the constitution and the rules, such as adoption of a social statement or a full-communion relationship, as well as certain parliamentary procedure motions. If the governing documents, *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (10th edition)*, or the assembly’s “Rules of Organization and Procedure” did not call for a two-thirds vote on a given matter, the underlying principle of parliamentary law would apply: a majority vote ordinarily is necessary to take action in a deliberative assembly.

Memorials were addressed next. These resolutions from synod assemblies call on the Churchwide Assembly to take a particular course of action. Since the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, synods had forwarded 144 memorials to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The Memorials Committee has recommended that most of the resolutions be voted on *en bloc* (“as a block,” or in a group). The committee organized the memorials into categories, and designated some memorials to be considered separately. The presiding bishop explained that the proposed rules allowed voting members to identify additional memorial categories that they would like to consider separately. The proposed deadline for requesting separate consideration of synodical memorials would be Tuesday, August 18 at 11:15 A.M.

Any motion that offered amendments to the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* or to the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality would be referred automatically to an *ad hoc* committee specially formed to consider and make recommendations to the assembly on such amendments.

Presiding Bishop Hanson continued by explaining the procedures for votes on and amendments to social statements and related actions. The vote required for approval of the social statement, by constitutional mandate (ELCA 12.12.01.), would be a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting. Under the proposed rules, this margin would not apply, however, to either the implementing resolutions to the social statement (which would be submitted to the assembly as a separate matter) or to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. The Church Council earlier had considered a rule that would require a two-thirds vote to adopt recommendations or resolutions relating to the social statement and the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, but had elected not to do so. Absent a special rule adopted by the assembly, the four resolutions in the Recommendation on Ministry Policies would be considered one at a time as they appeared in the *Pre-Assembly Report* and in the “Order of Business.”

Regarding the proposal for a full-communion agreement with The United Methodist Church, Presiding Bishop Hanson explained that a two-thirds vote for passage would be required by constitutional mandate (ELCA 8.71.), and that the proposed agreement itself would not be subject to amendment, as it would be necessary to vote on exactly the same wording that already had been approved by the General Assembly of The United Methodist Church.

Deadlines for floor nominations and amendments to the budget were described next, as listed in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section I, page 21, as well as in the proposed “Order of Business.”

Constitution and bylaw changes would be considered *en bloc* unless requests for separate consideration were filed by the deadline of Wednesday, August 19, at 11:15 A.M. A member’s request for separation of individual rules from the *en bloc* resolution would need to be supported by the signatures of ten additional voting members.

The election of officers would be subject to special rules mandated by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* and the “Rules of Organization and Procedure.” The presiding bishop asked members to review these rules and direct any questions to Secretary David D. Swartling or to Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel and chair of the Elections Committee.

Finally, Presiding Bishop Hanson pointed out helpful charts in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report* regarding motions.

Presiding Bishop Hanson indicated that the adoption of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” would be voted on *en bloc* unless members asked for separate consideration of any rule. Because the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” involve parliamentary issues, the presiding bishop stipulated that they would require a two-thirds vote for passage. Under *Robert’s Rules of Order*, a motion to amend an individual rule by adding or deleting language would require a majority vote. Amendments that involve changing language in a proposed rule would require two votes: one to amend the proposed rule (by majority vote) and one to approve the rule as amended (two-thirds vote). With respect to a motion to add a new rule, a single two-thirds vote would be required.

Secretary Swartling, on behalf of the Church Council, presented the recommendation to adopt the “Rules of Organization and Procedure.”

**MOVED:** To adopt the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force).

Presiding Bishop Hanson noted that, because the motion to adopt the rules came from the Church Council, it did not require a second. He called on Church Council member Ms. Norma J. Hirsch of the prayer team to lead the assembly in prayer. After the prayer, he asked if anyone intended to offer amendments or additional rules.

Mr. John T. Gates Jr. [Florida-Bahamas Synod] asked for clarification concerning the rules. He said he believed that previous Churchwide Assemblies had perfected rules before voting. He asked why this assembly would vote on uncontested rules before proceeding to amendments and additions. Presiding Bishop Hanson stated that, to his knowledge, the sequence of voting *en bloc* on the uncontested rules before addressing ones removed for separate consideration had always been the practice of the Churchwide Assembly. He called upon Secretary Swartling, who confirmed that the preliminary vote on uncontested rules, followed by a vote on amendments, had always been the practice of the assembly and, furthermore, that it was the sequence stipulated by *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the assembly if there were requests to discuss any rule separately, to amend a rule, or to propose a new rule. He reminded members to provide a written copy of the proposed change to the secretary’s deputy in order for the language to be displayed on the screen during discussion.

The Rev. Gregory R. Pile, bishop of the Allegheny Synod, notified the assembly that he would propose adding a rule to require a two-thirds vote on all matters pertaining to ministry policies.

The Rev. Steven R. Frock [Western Iowa Synod] notified the assembly that he would propose to amend Part Ten (Section I, page 13) by adding wording that would include in its requirement of a two-thirds vote any resolution that would likely result in a change of practice or policy in the ELCA.

The Rev. Heidi W. Punt [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] sought clarification of the sequence of voting on the resolutions in the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. Presiding Bishop Hanson said that he could not rule on motions when he did not yet know the form they would take. He noted that the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality and the Church Council could recommend procedures, but neither could bind the Churchwide Assembly to any particular process.

Mr. George C. Watson [Southeast Michigan Synod] stated that he would offer an amendment to the rule on “Speeches” in Part Three (Section I, page 8), mandating a minimum of three speakers on each side of an issue before debate could be ended.

Mr. John R. Emery [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] indicated that he would propose amending the rule on “Speeches” in Part Three (Section I, page 8), reducing the length of speeches from three minutes to two.

The Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod] notified the assembly that he would propose to amend the rules by addition to require that sequential votes be taken on the resolutions offered in the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

Mr. Paul Bedker [Greater Milwaukee Synod] said that he would ask for separate discussion of two paragraphs in Part Ten (Section I, page 13) on the vote to adopt social statements and the vote to adopt certain recommendations.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on Secretary Swartling, who identified those items to be removed from *en bloc* consideration: in Part Three the rule on “Speeches” would be removed

for two possible amendments; and in Part Ten the rule “Vote to Adopt Social Statements,” and the rule “Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws” would be removed.

Presiding Bishop Hanson instructed the members to vote on the “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” with the exception of the portions just removed.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-976; NO-26**

**CA09.01.01**

**To adopt the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force) and excluding the material identified in Parts Three and Ten.**

**“Rules of Organization and Procedure”  
for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly**

**PART ONE: Authority and Duties**

***Authority of the Churchwide Assembly***

The legislative function of the churchwide organization shall be fulfilled by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 11.31.).

The Churchwide Assembly shall be the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization and shall deal with all matters which are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church. The powers of the Churchwide Assembly are limited only by the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, and the assembly’s own resolutions (ELCA 12.11.).

Any matter for which adoption by a vote of two-thirds of those voting in a prior Churchwide Assembly was required by the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall require a two-thirds vote to be amended or repealed by a subsequent Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.12.).

***Duties of the Churchwide Assembly***

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. Review the work of the churchwide officers, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- b. Review the work of the churchwide units, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- c. Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.
- d. Establish churchwide policy.
- e. Adopt a budget for the churchwide organization.
- f. Elect officers, board members, and other persons as provided in the constitution or bylaws.
- g. Establish churchwide units to carry out the functions of the churchwide organization.
- h. Have the sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws.



- i. Fulfill other functions as required in the constitution and bylaws.
- j. Conduct such other business as necessary to further the purposes and functions of the churchwide organization (ELCA 12.21.).

### ***Assembly Presiding Officer***

The presiding bishop shall preside at the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.21.c.).

The vice president shall serve . . . in the event the bishop is unable to do so, as chair of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.31.).

### ***Assembly Secretary***

The secretary shall be responsible for the minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.41.02.a.).

### ***Notice of Meeting***

The secretary shall give notice of the time and place of each regular assembly by publication thereof at least 60 days in advance in this church's periodical (ELCA 12.31.02.).

Written notice shall be mailed to all voting members not more than 30 days nor less than 10 days in advance of any meeting (ELCA 12.31.02.).

### ***Agenda***

The presiding bishop shall provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.21.c.).

### ***Program and Worship***

The arrangements for agenda, program, and worship shall be under the supervision of the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.04.).

### ***Arrangements***

Physical arrangements for churchwide assemblies shall be made by the secretary or by an assembly manager working under the secretary's supervision. Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.05.).

## **PART TWO: Members of Assembly**

### ***Assembly Voting Members***

Each synod shall elect one voting member of the Churchwide Assembly for every 5,800 baptized members in the synod. In addition, each synod shall elect one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. The synodical bishop, who is *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. There shall be at least two voting members from each synod. The secretary shall notify each synod of the number of assembly members it is to elect (ELCA 12.41.11.).

The officers of this church and the bishops of the synods shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. They shall have voice and vote (ELCA 12.41.21.). The total number of voting members at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly is 1,045.

**Eligibility to Serve as Voting Member**

Each voting member of the Churchwide Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church . . . [and] shall cease to be a member of the assembly if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church within the synod from which elected. The criterion for voting membership in the congregation from which the voting member is elected shall be in effect regarding minimum age for that voting member (ELCA 12.41.13.).

**Certification of Voting Members**

The secretary of each synod shall submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly (ELCA 12.41.12.).

**Seating of Alternate Voting Members**

If a voting member elected by the Synod Assembly is unable to serve, the name of an eligible person chosen by the Synod Council shall be submitted by the secretary of the synod to the secretary of this church. . . . If a vacancy occurs or exists within 30 days or less of the convening of the Churchwide Assembly or during the meeting of the Churchwide Assembly, the synodical bishop may submit the name of an eligible person to the secretary of this church. The individual whose name is submitted to the secretary of this church shall be registered and seated by the Credentials Committee as a voting member from the synod (ELCA 12.41.12.).

**Inclusive Representation**

Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the churchwide organization, through the Church Council, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies . . . be laypersons; that as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of these assemblies . . . shall be female and 50 percent shall be male, and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both female and male. At least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies . . . shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English (ELCA 5.01.f.).

The term, “persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English,” shall be understood to mean African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people. This definition, however, shall not be understood as limiting this church’s commitment to inclusive participation in its life and work (ELCA 5.01.C00.).

**Additional Voting Members Provided**

Additional voting members have been allocated by the Church Council as follows:

	<i>Additional Members</i>
<i>Synod</i>	
Caribbean . . . . .	2

*Stipulation:* Both members must be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English (total voting members from synod would be four: two clergy, including bishop, one lay woman and one lay man)

Alaska . . . . .	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be an Alaska Native person	
Arkansas-Oklahoma . . . . .	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English	
West Virginia-Western Maryland . . . . .	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English	
Slovak Zion . . . . .	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be a lay person	

***Assembly Properly Constituted***

Each assembly . . . of the churchwide organization . . . shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly . . . may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly . . . (ELCA 5.01.j.).

***Advisory Members***

Members of the Church Council and board chairpersons and program committee chairpersons or their designees, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Executive directors of churchwide units, executives for sections related to the officers, presidents of separately incorporated churchwide units, the executive for administration, and executive assistants to the presiding bishop shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.41.31.).

Advisory members shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.32.).

The president of the Lutheran Youth Organization or a designee, unless elected as a voting member, shall serve as an advisory member of the Churchwide Assembly.

***Other Non-Voting Members***

Other categories of non-voting members may be established by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.41.41.).

Presidents of the colleges, universities, and seminaries of this church, unless elected as voting members of the assembly, shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.A89.).

In addition, one faculty member of each seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, appointed by the president, and one teaching theologian appointed by the Association of Teaching Theologians in the ELCA, shall serve as faculty resource persons with voice but not vote (ELCA 12.31.B07.).

An individual whose term of office as a bishop of a synod commences within one month of the assembly, unless elected as a voting member of the assembly, shall have the privilege of seat and voice, but not vote, during the assembly.

An individual whose term of office as a bishop of a synod either commences or expires during the course of the assembly shall have the privilege of seat and voice, but not vote, during that portion of the assembly before commencement or after termination of such term.

An individual who served as a churchwide or presiding bishop in a predecessor church body or this church, unless elected as a voting member of the assembly, shall have voice but not vote.

An individual who is an advisory member of the Church Council, unless elected as a voting member of the assembly, shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.31.).

### ***Resource Members***

Resource members shall be persons recommended by the presiding bishop of this church or by the Church Council who, because of their position or expertise, can contribute to the work of the Churchwide Assembly. Resource members shall have voice only with respect to matters within their expertise, but not vote.

### ***Congregation Observers***

Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may register with the secretary of this church one congregation observer for the Churchwide Assembly prior to May 31 in the year of a Churchwide Assembly. Such observers shall have neither voice nor vote (ELCA 12.41.C04.).

### ***Official Visitors***

Official visitors shall be persons invited by the presiding bishop of this church or the Church Council to address the Churchwide Assembly. They shall not have vote.

### ***Access to Seating***

A person will be admitted to restricted seating areas only upon display of proper credentials.

### ***Assembly Costs***

The churchwide organization shall be responsible for the costs of the Churchwide Assembly, including the reasonable costs for travel, housing, and board for voting and advisory members (ELCA 12.31.06.).

## **PART THREE: Quorum and Procedure**

### ***Quorum***

At least one-half of all persons elected as voting members must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum for the legal conduct of business. If such a quorum is not present, those voting members present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place, provided that only those persons eligible to vote at the original meeting may vote at the adjourned meeting (ELCA 12.31.07.).

### ***Absence of Members***

Members shall not absent themselves from any session of the assembly without valid excuse, under penalty of forfeiture of the meal allowance for the day of absence and proportionate reimbursement of travel expenses.

### ***Parliamentary Procedure***

The Churchwide Assembly shall use parliamentary procedures in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly (ELCA 12.31.09.).

(Note: the 10th edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, is, therefore, the governing parliamentary law of this church, except as otherwise provided.)

No motion shall be out of order because of conflict with federal, state, or local constitutions or laws.

### ***Proxy and Absentee Voting Precluded***

Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted at a Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.31.08.).

### ***Obtaining the Floor***

In plenary sessions of the Churchwide Assembly, the voting members, including the *ex officio* members, have prior right to obtain the floor, unless the chair determines that it is in the best interests of the assembly to call upon an advisory member, a resource member, or another individual with voice.

### ***Alternating Speeches***

Insofar as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side.

To facilitate alternating speeches, assembly members awaiting recognition at the floor microphones shall approach the appropriate microphone (marked green for those in favor of the pending matter on the floor; marked red for those opposed to the pending matter on the floor).

### ***Purpose and Use of "White Card"***

A white card, provided in the registration packet of voting members, is to be used to identify a member who wishes to offer an amendment to the pending matter, or some other motion that would be in order. Except when authorized to interrupt a speaker by *Robert's Rules of Order*, voting members seeking to bring a motion shall line up at any microphone and await recognition by the chair.

### ***Motion to Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted at This Assembly***

A two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required to rescind or to amend something previously adopted during this Churchwide Assembly. This rule does not apply to constitutional or bylaw amendments previously adopted by this assembly ( *see* Part Fifteen: Amendments to Governing Documents *below*).

### ***Suspending or Revising the Rules***

After the adoption of the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" and any amendments thereto offered prior to the adoption of the Rules, any further amendment to, revision in, or suspension of the Rules shall always require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

### ***Moving the Previous Question***

A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question(s).

### ***Applause***

In the give-and-take of debate on issues before the Churchwide Assembly, members of the assembly and visitors shall refrain from applause.

### ***Departing from Agenda***

With the consent of a majority of the voting members, the chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order he or she considers most expedient for the conduct of the assembly's business.

A motion to alter the agenda shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

### ***Unfinished Business***

Upon adjournment of the Churchwide Assembly, all remaining unfinished items of business shall be referred to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for disposition.

### ***Audit of Credentials Report***

At the request of the chair of the Credentials Committee or of the assembly, the chair may order an audit of the report of the Credentials Committee. When so ordered, the Credentials Committee will provide the bishop of each synod with a list of the registered voting members from such synod. Each bishop (or other voting member duly appointed by the bishop) shall then make appropriate corrections on such list and certify the accuracy of the list with such corrections as may be indicated. Each bishop (or other voting member duly appointed by the bishop) shall promptly return the certified list to the chair of the Credentials Committee.

## **PART FOUR: Committees of Assembly**

### ***Mandated Committees***

The Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, and a Nominating Committee (ELCA 12.51.).

### ***Reference and Counsel Committee***

A Reference and Counsel Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review all proposed changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws and other items submitted that are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly (ELCA 12.51.11.).

### ***Memorials Committee***

A Memorials Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review memorials from synodical assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for assembly action (ELCA 12.51.21.).

### ***Nominating Committee***

A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate two persons for each position for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly and for which a nominating procedure has not otherwise been designated in the constitution and bylaws of this church (ELCA 12.51.31.).

The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that at least two of the voting membership of the Church Council shall have been younger than 30 years of age at the time of their election (ELCA 19.21.A98.).

The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position [on the Nominating Committee] (ELCA 19.21.01.).

### ***Other Committees***

The Churchwide Assembly may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary (ELCA 12.51.).

Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.05.).

### ***Elections Committee***

The Elections Committee shall oversee the conduct of elections in accordance with election procedures approved by the Churchwide Assembly. (*See Part Thirteen: Elections below.*)

In the election for presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary, the Elections Committee shall report the results of any balloting by announcing the number of votes received by each nominee and the names of those nominees qualified to remain on the next ballot or the name of the nominee who is elected.

The Elections Committee shall report the results of balloting in other elections by announcing the name of the person elected or by announcing the names of nominees qualified to remain on the ballot. Vote totals shall be reported to the secretary of this church and recorded in the minutes of the assembly. Based on the written report of the Elections Committee, the chair shall declare elected those who received the required number of votes.

A written report showing the results of a ballot shall be distributed to the voting members concurrently with, or as soon as possible after, the announced report of the Elections Committee.

### ***Credentials Committee***

The Credentials Committee shall oversee the registration of voting members and shall report periodically to the Churchwide Assembly the number of voting members registered.

### ***Churchwide Assembly Planning Committee***

The Churchwide Assembly Planning Committee shall assist officers of this church in planning the agenda, program, worship, and arrangements at the Churchwide Assembly.

### ***Minutes Committee***

The Minutes Committee shall review minutes of the Churchwide Assembly prepared under the supervision of the secretary of this church. The Minutes Committee shall review and recommend approval of the minutes to the secretary and presiding bishop. The presiding bishop and secretary shall then have the authority to approve the minutes on behalf of the Churchwide Assembly and shall deposit in the archives of this church the protocol copy of the assembly's minutes.

### ***Additional Appointments***

Additional officials or committees (sergeants-at-arms, parliamentarians, chairs for hearings, chairs for unit lunches, tellers, pages, etc.) of the Churchwide Assembly shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.

## **PART FIVE: Voting Procedures**

### ***Voting by Electronic Device***

Voting generally shall occur through use of a wireless electronic device at each voting member's seat.

A voting device will be placed on a pad in front of every voting member. The device should remain there throughout the assembly when not being used for voting. The device and pad must not be removed from the table. A voting device must not be used by anyone except the voting member to whom it has been assigned.

Synodical bishops (or their designees) will check at the end of every plenary session to ensure that all voting devices are in place.

A voting member must be seated at the table that contains his or her assigned voting device in order to cast a vote.

Voting by electronic device shall be in accordance with instructions from the chair or the Elections Committee. The chair will announce when voting is to commence.

Once the voting period has begun and a voting member has registered her or his vote, confirmation will appear on the device's screen. If this message is not received, the synodical bishop or a member of the Elections Committee should be notified immediately.

At any time prior to the announcement that the voting period has ended, a voting member may change his or her mind and register a different vote. A second vote will cancel the first vote. Confirmation of the second vote will be sent.

Periodically during the assembly, a test vote will be taken to ensure that all devices are in working order.

If a voting device is inoperative or lost, or if a voting member for any reason cannot use the voting device, please see the secretary's deputy (seated next to the podium) or a member of the Elections Committee (stationed around the plenary hall).

### ***Various Other Methods of Voting***

As directed by the chair, voting also may take place by voice, by show of hands, by standing, or by written ballot. Any member who because of physical limitation cannot raise her or his hand or stand to vote should contact the Elections Committee for assistance.

Each voting member's registration packet contains a paper ballot to be used if the chair so directs. If a paper ballot is called for by the chair, it should not be folded. The ballot will be collected at the voting member's table in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.

### ***Division of the House***

When a division of the house is ordered, the vote shall be by electronic device, by standing vote, or by written ballot as directed by the chair. No division of the house is in order when a vote has been taken by electronic device, by a counted standing vote, or by written ballot.

## **PART SIX: Relation of Assembly to Church Council and Churchwide Units**

### ***Relationship to Church Council***

This church shall have a Church Council which shall be the board of directors of this church and shall serve as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.11.).



“Interim legislative authority” is defined to mean that between meetings of the Churchwide Assemblies, the Church Council may exercise the authority of the Churchwide Assembly so long as:

- a. the actions of the Church Council do not conflict with the actions of and policies established by the Churchwide Assembly; and
- b. the Church Council is not precluded by constitutional or bylaw provisions from taking action on the matter (ELCA 14.13.).

### ***Responsibilities of Church Council***

The Church Council shall act on the policies proposed by churchwide units, subject to review by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.01.).

The Church Council shall review all recommendations from churchwide units for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.03.).

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets (ELCA 14.21.05.).

The Church Council shall arrange the process for all elections as specified in this constitution and bylaws for churchwide units to assure conformity with established criteria (ELCA 14.21.22.).

The Church Council shall report its actions to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.08.).

### ***Status of Church Council Recommendations***

The recommendation of the Church Council with respect to any proposal by a churchwide unit or any other matter shall be treated as a motion made and seconded, unless the Church Council shall otherwise determine.

### ***Relationship to Churchwide Units***

Each unit shall be responsible to the Churchwide Assembly and will report to the Church Council in the interim. The policies, procedures, and operation of each unit shall be reviewed by the Church Council in order to assure conformity with the governing documents of this church and with Churchwide Assembly actions (ELCA 16.12.; see also 16.31.02., 16.41.03., 17.41.05., 17.51.03., 17.61.05., 17.61.A05.e.).

### ***Relationship to the Board of Pensions***

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. approve the documents governing the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program that have been referred by the Church Council; and
- b. refer any amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of members with respect to their pension accumulations (ELCA 17.61.01.).

The Church Council shall: . . . refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program to the Churchwide Assembly for final action (ELCA 17.61.02.d.).

The Board of Pensions shall manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes, and shall invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts (ELCA 17.61.A05.a.).

The Board of Pensions shall report to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council, with the Church Council making comments on all board actions needing approval of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 17.61.A05.e.).

## **PART SEVEN: Resolutions and Motions**

### ***Written Resolutions and Motions Required***

Substantive resolutions or motions, or amendments to either, must be presented in writing to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy immediately after being moved. A form is provided for this purpose. This form is included in each voting member's registration packet; other forms are available on the tables of voting members.

### ***Nature of Resolutions and Motions***

► **Germane Resolutions and Motions:** A germane resolution or motion is one closely related to or having bearing on the matter before the assembly. A resolution or motion that is germane to the matter before the assembly may be offered when in order by any voting member from the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair.

► **Non-Germane Resolutions and Motions:** Any resolution or motion not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda must be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy in writing prior to the established deadline (*see Part Eighteen: Deadlines below*). Each resolution or motion must be supported in writing by one other voting member. At least 24 hours must elapse before such resolution may be considered in plenary session. The secretary shall refer such resolution to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may:

- (a) Recommend approval;
- (b) Recommend referral to a unit of this church;
- (c) Recommend a substitute motion to the assembly; or
- (d) Recommend that the assembly decline the proposed resolution.

► **Same or Similar Subjects:** The Reference and Counsel Committee may group together in a single recommendation resolutions or motions on the same or similar subjects. A resolution or motion on the same subject as a recommendation already on the agenda of the assembly, such as a memorial, will not be submitted to the assembly for separate action by the Reference and Counsel Committee. The chair of the committee will inform the voting member of the committee's decision.

► **Beyond Deadline for Submission:** Any resolution or motion not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda that a voting member submits because of circumstances that develop during the assembly and that cannot be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see Part Eighteen: Deadlines below*) must be submitted to the secretary in writing or the secretary's deputy and supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such resolutions or motions to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may:

- (a) Decline to refer the resolution or motion to the assembly;
- (b) Recommend approval;
- (c) Recommend referral to a unit of this church;
- (d) Recommend a substitute motion to the assembly; or
- (e) Recommend that the assembly decline the proposed resolution or motion.

Consideration of a resolution or motion submitted beyond the deadline will require suspension of the rules prior to presentation of the matter to voting members by the Reference and Counsel Committee.

►On Societal Issues: In its recommendation, the Reference and Counsel Committee, following consultation with the Church in Society program unit, shall inform the Churchwide Assembly when a resolution or motion requires action on a societal issue for which this church does not have an established social policy. Should such resolution or motion be adopted by the Churchwide Assembly, the matter shall be referred to the Church in Society unit, which shall bring to the next regular meeting of the Church Council a plan for appropriate implementation.

### ***Substitute Motions***

When a substitute motion is made, secondary amendments may be offered first to the original motion. After all secondary amendments to the original motion have been disposed of, secondary amendments to the substitute motion may be offered. When all amendments to the substitute motion have been disposed of, the vote shall be taken on whether the substitute motion is to be substituted as the original motion or be rejected.

## **PART EIGHT: Memorials from Synodical Assemblies**

### ***Definition of Memorials***

Memorials are proposals for action involving broad policy issues submitted by synodical assemblies to the churchwide organization. Memorials from synodical assemblies are reviewed by the Memorials Committee, which makes appropriate recommendations for assembly action (ELCA 12.51.21.).

### ***Status of Committee's Recommendations***

When the Memorials Committee has recommended the passage of a memorial considered by the committee, the committee's recommendation and text of the memorial recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended the adoption of a substitute recommendation for the memorial(s) on a subject, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended referral of a memorial(s), the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended that the assembly decline a memorial(s) without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or closely related subject, the memorial, if then moved by a voting member from the synod originating the memorial and seconded, shall be the main motion, and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

### ***En Bloc Resolution in Response to Certain Memorials***

The responses to the synod memorials, as recommended by the Memorials Committee in a printed report distributed to assembly members prior to, or at, the first business session of the assembly, may be approved by *en bloc*<sup>1</sup> resolutions when so proposed by the Memorials Committee.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Adoption of several motions by a single assembly resolution; sometimes known as an omnibus bill or resolution.

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 written notification to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*) on the form entitled Notice Related to Recommendations of the Memorials Committee. A copy of that form is included on page three of the Report of the Memorials Committee. Additional forms will be available from the secretary's deputy.

### ***Substitute Proposal***

With respect to any recommendation made by the Memorials Committee in a printed report distributed to the assembly members prior to or at the first business session of the assembly, a voting member of the assembly may offer a substitute motion to the committee's recommendation only if such member has given written notice by the deadline. For such written 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 (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*). In addition, the text of the proposed substitute should be submitted on a Motion Form to the secretary or 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.

### ***Recommendation on Same Matter***

A voting member's resolution or motion dealing with the same or similar matter as a subject being reported by the Memorials Committee cannot be considered prior to the Memorials Committee's recommendation and motion with respect to that matter. This rule does not apply to a resolution or motion that proposes an amendment to a constitutional provision, bylaw, or continuing resolution.

## **PART NINE: Recommendations of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

### ***Status of Committee's Recommendations***

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended the approval of a resolution or motion considered by the committee, the committee's recommendation and text of the resolution or motion recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended the adoption of a substitute recommendation for the resolution(s) or motion(s) on a subject, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended referral of a resolution(s) or motion(s), the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended that the assembly decline a proposed resolution or motion without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or a closely related subject, the voting member's resolution or motion, if then

moved by that voting member and seconded, shall be the main motion and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

## **PART TEN: Votes on and Amendments to Social Statements and Related Actions**

### ***Definition of Social Statements***

Social statements are major documents addressing significant social issues. They meet the criteria of and are prepared in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Addressing Social Concerns," adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 1997.

### ***Deadline for Submission***

Any amendment to a social statement, or to recommendations or resolutions concerning a social statement, must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*).

Voting members who submit amendments may be requested to meet with the staff of the unit that developed the statement.

If in the opinion of the chair of the assembly the amendments to a social statement, or to recommendations or resolutions concerning a social statement, are either too voluminous or too complex for the assembly to consider expeditiously, all amendments may be referred by the chair to either the Reference and Counsel Committee or to an *ad hoc* committee appointed by the chair with the consent of the assembly for its recommendations for the consideration of the statement or recommendations or resolutions and the proposed amendments by the assembly.

If a voting member wishes to offer a substantive amendment that was not submitted prior to the deadline, the assembly, by a majority vote, may consent to the consideration of such an amendment.

## **PART ELEVEN: Votes on Proposals for Church-to-Church Agreements**

This church may establish official church-to-church relationships and agreements.

Establishment of such official relationships and agreements shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 8.71.).

Each church body votes on a relationship of full communion using the same resolution. Amendments to a resolution establishing full communion, therefore, are not in order.

## **PART TWELVE: Nominations**

### ***Nominations Desk***

Nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church (ELCA 19.61.B98.a.). A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary of this church. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's "Rules of Organization and Procedure." This form also is included in each voting member's registration materials (ELCA 19.61.B98.b.). It also is available online at [www.elca.org/nominations](http://www.elca.org/nominations).

Information and additional forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk on Monday, August 17, 2009, from NOON to 4:00 P.M. and from 5:45 P.M. to 7:30 P.M., on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., and on Wednesday, August 19, 2009, from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

### ***Congregational Membership***

Each nominee for an elected or appointed position in this church shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 19.05.).

### ***Term Limit***

Other than elections of officers and executive directors of units, elections shall be for one six-year term, without consecutive re-election, and with one-third of the members of the Church Council and of each board, program committee, or advisory committee elected each biennium (ELCA 19.04.).

### ***Nominations Form***

The required form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the nominee's name, address, phone number, gender, lay or clergy status, white or person of color or primary language other than English status, congregational membership, synodical membership, and affirmation of willingness to serve, if elected; the name, address, and synodical membership of the voting member who is making the nomination; and such other information as the secretary of this church shall require (ELCA 19.61.B98.c.). It also is available online at [www.elca.org/nominations](http://www.elca.org/nominations).

For purposes of nomination procedures, "synodical membership" means:

- 1) In the case of a layperson, the synod that includes the congregation in which such person holds membership; *and*
- 2) In the case of an ordained minister, the synod on whose roster such ordained minister's name is maintained (ELCA 19.61.B98.d.).

### ***Making Floor Nominations***

Floor nominations for positions on a board or committee of a churchwide unit require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least ten other voting members. Floor nominations for the Nominating Committee or other churchwide committee to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least twenty other voting members (ELCA 19.61.C05.a.).

A nomination from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary) shall be made by filing the completed nomination form with the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's "Rules of Organization and Procedure" (ELCA 19.61.C05.b.). It also is available online at [www.elca.org/nominations](http://www.elca.org/nominations).

Nominations from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, secretary) shall be made by filing the completed prescribed form with the Nominations Desk on Monday, August 17, 2009, from NOON to 4:00 P.M. and from 5:45 P.M. to 7:30 P.M., on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., or on Wednesday, August 19, 2009, from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Nominations will be considered made in the order in which filed at the Nominations Desk (ELCA 19.61.C05.c.).

### ***For Boards and Committees: Restrictions on Nominations***

The Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each board or committee position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.21.02.).

It shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to make certain that every synod has at least one person serving on the churchwide boards or committees. Among those persons elected by the assembly, no more than two persons from any one synod shall serve on any one board or committee (ELCA 19.21.04.).

Nominations from the floor for positions on churchwide boards or committees shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.61.D05.a.). *[See Section VII for details on restrictions.]*

A former full-time or part-time employee of the churchwide organization shall not be eligible, for a minimum of six years subsequent to such employment, for nomination or election to the board or committee related to the churchwide unit in which the employee served (ELCA 19.61.J00.).

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given synod serving on a board or committee with terms not expiring plus the number of positions on the same board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of two individuals from the same synod who may serve on that board or committee, an individual from the same synod may be nominated for another position on that board or committee, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Individuals from the same synod may be nominated for a position on a board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated, provided other criteria and restrictions are met (ELCA 19.61.D05.b.).

### ***For Church Council: Restrictions on Nominations***

Each biennium the Church Council shall determine how this church's commitment to inclusive representation will affect the next election to the Church Council. The Nominating Committee shall invite each eligible synod to submit suggested nominees and shall then nominate persons who fulfill the categories assigned by the Church Council. Excluding the churchwide officers, there shall not be more than one member of the Church Council from a synod nor shall more than two-thirds of the synods in a region have members on the Church Council at the same time. The Church Council shall have at least one member from each region. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Church Council by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected (ELCA 19.02.).

The Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in

the nomination process, shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.21.02.).

Nominations for positions on the Church Council shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.61.E05.).

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the first half of the biennium preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly—shall solicit from eligible synods on a rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the representation principles of this church, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their selection by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall submit a replacement name from the same synod as the original nominee. In the event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 19.21.B05.) [*See Section VII, page 2, for details on restrictions*].

#### ***For Nominating Committee: Restrictions on Nominations***

The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position. The committee shall consist of at least one member but no more than three members from any region. Nominations from the floor shall also be permitted, but each floor nomination shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Church Council and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Church Council shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.21.01.).

Nominations from the floor for positions on the Nominating Committee shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.61.F98.a.).

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Nominating Committee with terms not expiring plus the number of Nominating Committee positions to which individuals from the same region have already been nominated (whether by the Church Council or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of three individuals from the same region who may serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Nominating Committee position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Nominating Committee position for which someone from the same region has already been nominated (ELCA 19.61.F98.b.).



## **PART THIRTEEN: Election Procedures**

### ***Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot***

The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used (ELCA 19.61.G02.a.).

In each case in which there are floor nominations, there shall be a preliminary ballot that shall include the names of the nominees presented by the Nominating Committee or the Church Council, and the person or persons nominated from the floor. The names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the final ballot (ELCA 19.21.03.).

For the first common ballot, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from the synod (ELCA 19.61.G02.b.).

Upon recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, the second common ballot may be conducted by electronic device. Unless the second common ballot is conducted by electronic device, the distribution of ballot forms for the second common ballot will be in the same manner as the first common ballot (ELCA 19.61.G02.c.).

Any discrepancy between the number of ballots given to a synodical bishop and the number of voting members (including the synod bishop) from such synod must be reported by the synodical bishop to the Elections Committee (ELCA 19.61.G02.d.).

Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot (ELCA 19.61.G02.e.).

A voting member may vote for only one nominee on each ticket (ELCA 19.61.G02.f.).

Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate a ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked (ELCA 19.61.G02.g.).

Ballots must be marked in accordance with the instructions presented in plenary session (ELCA 19.61.G02.h.).

Ballot forms shall not be folded (ELCA 19.61.G02.i.).

Marked ballot forms must be deposited at the designated Ballot Stations at certain exits of the hall in which plenary sessions are held (ELCA 19.61.G02.j.).

If a ballot is damaged so that it cannot be scanned, a replacement ballot may be obtained at the Ballot Station upon surrender of the damaged ballot (ELCA 19.61.G02.k.).

Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's "Rules of Organization and Procedure" (ELCA 19.61.G02.l.) (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*).

On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes (ELCA 19.61.G02.m.).

Unless the second ballot is conducted by electronic device, polls for the second common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's "Rules of Organization and Procedure" or as otherwise ordered by the assembly (ELCA 19.61.G02.n.) (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*).

On the second ballot, whether by common ballot or by electronic device, the first position on each ticket shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. If two nominees are tied for the highest vote, the first position on the ticket shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee (ELCA 19.61.G02.o.).

### ***Majority Required for Election***

Other than in elections of presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, a majority of votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for election. If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the second ballot. On the second ballot, a majority of legal votes cast shall be necessary for election (ELCA 19.11.01.b.).

### ***Breaking Ties***

On the first common ballot, the blank ballots of the treasurer and vice president shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee to be presented to the treasurer for her or his vote only in those elections where a tie would otherwise exist, and to be presented to the vice president for his or her vote only in those elections to break a tie remaining after the ballot of the treasurer has been counted (ELCA 19.61.198.b.).

On the second common ballot, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist (ELCA 19.61.198.c.).

## **PART FOURTEEN: Budget Proposals**

### ***Budget Procedures***

The presiding bishop shall provide for the preparation of the budget for the churchwide organization (ELCA 13.21.f.).

At the direction of the presiding bishop, the executive for administration shall develop the budget for the churchwide organization and report to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council with regard to the preparation of the budget (ELCA 15.11.A04.d.).

A Budget and Finance Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council and the treasurer of this church as an *ex officio* member with voice but not vote in the committee. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer (ELCA 14.41.A05.).

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets (ELCA 14.21.05.).

The Churchwide Assembly shall adopt a budget for the churchwide organization (ELCA 12.21.e.).

Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage of all donor-unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod, such percentage to be determined by the Churchwide Assembly. Individual exceptions may be made by the Church Council upon request of a synod (ELCA 10.71.).

Proposed amendments to the budget must be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy in writing prior to the established deadline ( *see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*). Each amendment must be supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such proposed amendments to the Budget and Finance Committee. During the consideration of the budget by the assembly, the Budget and Finance Committee shall report on the implication of each proposed amendment.

Any amendment to the budget that increases a current program proposal of, or adds a current program proposal to, a churchwide unit must include a corresponding decrease in some other

current program proposal of the same or another churchwide unit(s) and/or increase in revenues. Any amendment to the budget that proposes an increase in revenues shall require an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting.

The assembly may refer to the Church Council for final action any amendment to the budget that has been presented in accordance with these “Rules of Organization and Procedure.” Such referral shall not preclude the assembly from acting on other budget amendments or from adopting the budget.

### ***Appropriations***

When a motion calling for an appropriation comes before the Churchwide Assembly from any source other than the Church Council or a memorial from a synod, it shall be referred at once to the Reference and Counsel Committee. The Reference and Counsel Committee shall refer the proposed appropriation to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council. The Budget and Finance Committee may consult with the churchwide unit(s) affected by the proposed appropriation. The Budget and Finance Committee may conclude that it cannot evaluate adequately the proposed appropriation prior to assembly adjournment and may request that the Church Council be designated to receive the evaluation later and to determine whether or not the proposed appropriation shall be authorized. The findings of the Budget and Finance Committee shall be forwarded to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which shall then make its recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly. If the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee is negative, a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

A proposed appropriation that originates with a synod through a memorial will be handled in the same way as in the preceding rule, except that reference shall be to the Memorials Committee rather than to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

### ***New Studies or Research Proposals***

Each proposal by a voting member for a study or research project shall be made as a main motion and shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee. The Reference and Counsel Committee shall refer the proposal to the Research and Evaluation section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. This section, in consultation with the churchwide unit to which the proposal is directed, will seek to determine the purpose, relationship to existing studies and research projects or current programs, potential value, overall costs including staff requirements, and availability of budget and staff. The Research and Evaluation section may conclude that it cannot evaluate adequately the proposal prior to assembly adjournment and request that the Church Council be designated to receive the evaluation at a later time and determine whether or not the study or research project should be initiated. The findings of the Research and Evaluation section shall be submitted to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may make its recommendation to the assembly. If the recommendation calls for a new appropriation, the matter also shall be referred at once to the Budget and Finance Committee for consideration and report to the Reference and Counsel Committee. If the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee is negative, a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

A proposal that originates with a synod through a memorial shall be handled the same way, except that reference shall be to the Memorials Committee, rather than to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

### ***Process for Initiation or Reconsideration of Social Statements***

The process for initiating the preparation of a social statement or commencing a revision or removal of a social statement adopted at a prior Churchwide Assembly shall be governed by the document, "Policy and Procedures for Addressing Social Concerns," which was adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly (CA97.05.21) and revised by the Church Council in 2006 (CC06.11.51).

## **PART FIFTEEN: Amendments to Governing Documents**

### ***Constitutional Amendments***

The constitution of this church may be amended only through either of the following procedures:

- a) The Church Council may propose an amendment, with an official notice to be sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of the members of the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting.
- b) An amendment may be proposed by 25 or more members of the Churchwide Assembly. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation, following which it shall come before the assembly. Adoption of such an amendment shall require passage at two successive regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting (ELCA 22.11.).

A constitutional amendment may only be proposed by a main motion.

A proposed constitutional amendment must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*).

### ***Bylaw Amendments***

Bylaws not in conflict with the constitution may be adopted or amended at any regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly when presented in writing by the Church Council or by at least 15 members of the assembly. An amendment proposed by members of the assembly shall immediately be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation. In no event shall an amendment be placed before the assembly for action sooner than the day following its presentation to the assembly. A two-thirds vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary for adoption (ELCA 22.21.).

A bylaw amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed bylaw amendment must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*). The secretary first shall report to the assembly any bylaw amendments so submitted and the amendments then shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

Any floor amendment that is to be offered to a bylaw amendment proposed by the Church Council must be submitted in accordance with the requirement for bylaw amendments that are proposed by voting members.

### ***Continuing Resolutions***

Matters related to the administrative functions of this church shall be set forth in the continuing resolutions. Continuing resolutions not in conflict with the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council (ELCA 22.31.).

Should the board or standing committee in question disagree with the action of the Church Council in amending a continuing resolution, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 15.31.03., 16.31.04., 16.41.07., and 17.61.07.).

A continuing resolution amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed continuing resolution amendment must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*).

### ***Amendments to the Constitution for Synods***

The *Constitution for Synods* contains mandatory provisions that incorporate and record therein provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. Amendments to mandatory provisions incorporating constitutional provisions of this church shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in ELCA Chapter 22 for amendments to the constitution of this church. Amendments to mandatory provisions incorporating bylaw provisions of this church and amendments to non-mandatory provisions shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in ELCA Chapter 22 for amendments to the bylaws of this church. Non-mandatory provisions shall not be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church (ELCA 10.13.).

An amendment to the *Constitution for Synods* may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed amendment to the *Constitution for Synods* must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*).

### ***Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations***

A *Model Constitution for Congregations* shall be provided by this church. Amendments to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in ELCA Chapter 22 for amendments of the bylaws of this church (ELCA 9.53.02.).

An amendment to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed amendment to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*).

### ***En Bloc Resolution for Amendments to Governing Documents***

Amendments to the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as recommended by the Church Council in a printed report distributed to assembly members prior to, or at, the first

business session of the assembly, may be approved by *en bloc*<sup>2</sup> resolutions when so proposed by the Church Council.

If a voting member desires the assembly to discuss a particular amendment that is included in the *en bloc* resolutions, she or he may request that the particular amendment be removed from the proposed *en bloc* resolutions, 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 particular proposed amendment. After removals, the *en bloc* resolutions shall be voted upon without amendments or debate.

To call for such separate consideration, a voting member, with the support of ten other voting members, must submit written notification to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see* Part Eighteen: Deadlines *below*) on the form entitled "Notice Related to Proposed Amendment to the Governing Documents." This form may be obtained from the secretary's deputy seated to the side of the speakers' platform.

Notice shall be given by the secretary of this church to the assembly of which constitutional provisions or bylaw proposals have been removed from the *en bloc* resolutions by specific voting members.

### ***Reconsideration or Rescission Prohibited***

After the adoption by the assembly of a constitutional or bylaw amendment, a motion for reconsideration or a motion to rescind or amend such action is not in order.

## **PART SIXTEEN: Elections of Officers**

### ***Election Procedures***

Set forth hereafter are the procedures for the elections of the presiding bishop, the vice president, and the secretary, whether or not there will be an election at this assembly for any of these positions. Elections are required because of completion of the specified term for a position or when a vacancy otherwise occurs.

### ***Restrictions on Nominations for Officers***

The presiding bishop shall be an ordained minister of this church. The presiding bishop may be male or female, as may other officers of this church (ELCA 13.21.).

The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term (ELCA 13.22.).

The presiding bishop shall be a full-time, salaried position (ELCA 13.22.02.).

The vice president of this church shall be a layperson (ELCA 13.31.).

The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 13.32.).

The vice president shall serve without salary (ELCA 11.33. and 13.32.02.).

The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 13.42.).

The secretary shall be a full-time, salaried position (ELCA 13.42.02.).

The secretary may be either an ordained minister or a lay person.

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<sup>2</sup> Adoption of several motions by a single assembly resolution; sometimes known as an omnibus bill or resolution.

### ***Ecclesiastical Ballot Defined***

An “ecclesiastical ballot” for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an election process:

- a. In which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;
- b. Through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;
- c. That precludes spoken floor nominations;
- d. In which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;
- e. In which the first ballot defines the total slate of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations;
- f. That does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;
- g. In which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;
- h. That does not preclude an assembly’s adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and
- i. In which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents (ELCA 19.61.A94.).

### ***Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot***

For each election by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, the exact number of appropriate ballot sets equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each of the voting members from the synod (ELCA 19.61.H98.a.).

Unless otherwise ordered by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the appropriate ballot set is to be used on each ballot for elections determined by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot. The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the appropriate ballot set that is to be used for each ballot. Failure to use the correct numbered ballot will result in an illegal ballot (ELCA 19.61.H98.b.).

On the first two ballots for each office being selected by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, both the first and last names of a nominee should be used. Members should endeavor to use correct spelling and should provide, on the first ballot, any additional accurate information identifying the nominee, such as title, synod, or residence. (ELCA 19.61.H07.c.).

On the third and subsequent ballots conducted by written ballot, only the last name of the nominee need be used, provided there is no other nominee with the same or similar name (ELCA 19.61.H98.d.).

A member may vote for only one nominee on each ballot (ELCA 19.61.H98.e.).

Ballots should not be marked prior to the time the chair advises the voting members to do so (ELCA 19.61.H98.f.).

Written ballots shall not be folded (ELCA 19.61.H98.g.).

Written ballots will be collected from the voting members in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair (ELCA 19.61.H98.h.).

When the results of the first ballot are presented, the chair will announce when and how persons nominated may withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot (ELCA 19.61.H98.i.).

Whenever the number of names of nominees that will appear on a ballot is nine or less, on recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, voting may be by means of electronic device (ELCA 19.61.H98.j.).

When voting by electronic device, the first position on each ballot shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, with the remaining positions assigned to the other nominees in descending order of the number of votes received on the immediately preceding ballot. If two or more nominees were tied with the same vote on the immediately preceding ballot, their respective positions shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee (ELCA 19.61.H98.k.).

On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit voting members to record their votes (ELCA 19.61.H98.l.).

### ***Election of the Presiding Bishop***

The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot (ELCA 19.31.01.a.).

Prior to the third ballot for presiding bishop, biographical data will be distributed for the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot.

Prior to the third ballot for presiding bishop, a forum shall be held in which the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot are invited to respond to questions submitted by voting members. From the questions submitted by voting members, the Executive Committee of the Church Council, excluding officers, shall select a sample of questions and determine the process to be followed in the forum. An individual nominee may choose to respond to those questions he or she wishes to address. Each response shall be no longer than 90 seconds. The forum shall be limited to 60 minutes.

Prior to the third ballot for presiding bishop, the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the bishop of the synod of such person's roster shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

Prior to the fourth ballot for presiding bishop, the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to participate in a question and answer period moderated by an individual appointed by the Executive Committee of the Church Council.



### ***Election of the Vice President***

The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.31.01.b.).

Prior to the third ballot for vice president, biographical data will be distributed for the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot. Each of the seven nominees (plus ties) will be asked in rotating order to respond to three questions as determined by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Each nominee's response to each question shall be limited to 90 seconds.

Prior to the fourth ballot for vice president, the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not available to address the assembly, the bishop of the synod of such person's congregation membership shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

### ***Election of the Secretary***

The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.31.01.c.).

Prior to the third ballot for secretary, biographical data will be distributed for the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot. Each of the seven nominees (plus ties) will be asked in rotating order to respond to three questions as determined by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Each nominee's response to each question shall be limited to 90 seconds.

Prior to the fourth ballot for secretary, the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the bishop of the synod

of such person's roster of ordained ministers, or such person's congregation membership, shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

### ***Majority Required for Election***

On the final ballot for the election of presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary of this church, when only two names appear on the ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election (ELCA 19.11.01.e.).

### ***Breaking Ties***

On the ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist (ELCA 19.61.198.a.).

## **PART SEVENTEEN: Status of Reports**

### ***Assembly Reports***

At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a pre-assembly report (ELCA 12.31.03.).

### ***Reports of the Presiding Bishop and Secretary of This Church***

Following presentation, the presiding bishop's report and the secretary's report shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

### ***Status of Reports***

All reports published in the *Pre-Assembly Report* shall be treated as having been received by the assembly without formal vote.

### ***Distribution of Materials***

Materials may be distributed on the floor of the assembly only with the written consent of the secretary of this church. In cases where the secretary does not consent, appeal may be made to the Reference and Counsel Committee. That committee's decision shall be final.

## **PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines**

### ***August 18, 2009***

11:15 A.M. Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of responses to synodical memorials  
Substitute responses to synodical memorials

2:00 P.M. Amendments to the proposed social statement and implementing resolutions

### ***August 19, 2009***

11:15 A.M. Amendments to governing documents (including constitutional amendments, bylaw amendments, continuing resolution amendments, amendments to the

*Constitution for Synods, and amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations)*

Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of recommended constitutional, bylaw, and continuing resolutions amendments  
Amendments to ministry policies recommendation

2:00 P.M. Nominations from the floor

**August 20, 2009**

11:15 A.M. Non-germane resolutions

6:00 P.M. First common ballot

**August 21, 2009**

8:30 A.M. Amendments to 2010–2011 budget proposal

6:00 P.M. Second common ballot

**PART NINETEEN: Hearings**

Certain proposals that are scheduled for assembly action or information are the subject of hearings. Voting members, advisory members, other members, resource members, official visitors, and other categories approved by the Churchwide Assembly may attend with voice. Others may attend only if space permits and shall not have voice. Hearings have no legislative authority.

The chair of the hearing shall endeavor to maintain decorum and order and may call upon the assistance of sergeants-at-arms. Insofar as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side.

**PART TWENTY: Other Matters**

***College Corporation Meetings***

The voting members of the Churchwide Assembly also constitute the voting members of certain college corporations that hold meetings as part of the agenda of the assembly. The assembly will recess to conduct the corporation meeting(s) and reconvene at the conclusion of the corporation meeting(s), or at the beginning of the next scheduled session of the assembly. Quorum requirements for college corporation meetings are specified in the governing documents of each college. The quorum requirement for the Churchwide Assembly does not apply to college corporation meetings.

***Electronic Devices***

Use of cell phones, “Blackberries,” and other wireless electronic communication devices in the plenary hall during assembly sessions is precluded. Cell phones, pagers, and other such electronic devices must be turned off in the plenary hall and worship center throughout the course of the assembly.

The chair declared the rules contained in the *en bloc* motion to be adopted. He then asked for amendments to rules on “Speeches” in Part Three.

Mr. George C. Watson [Southeast Michigan Synod] offered the following amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend Part Three, page 8, by addition:*

***Speeches***

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to three minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down. Any motion which would have the effect of terminating debate shall not be in order until there has been opportunity for at least three voting members to address each side of any question before the assembly.

Mr. Watson observed that, as the week of assembly goes by, voting members begin to tire, but he expressed his conviction that shutting off discussion would not be helpful. The chair asked if this proposed rule was to apply to all motions or only to the main motion. Mr. Watson indicated he intended that it apply to all motions.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] asked for clarification of whether this proposed rule would also apply to an objection to the consideration of a question. The parliamentarian advised the chair that such motions were not debatable, so it would not.

There being no further speaking, Presiding Bishop Hanson instructed members to vote on the amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-653; NO-360**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend Part Three, page 8, by addition:*

***Speeches***

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to three minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down. Any motion which would have the effect of terminating debate shall not be in order until there has been opportunity for at least three voting members to address each side of any question before the Assembly.

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the amendment had failed.

Mr. John R. Emery [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] then offered his amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend Part Three, page 8, by substitution:*

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to ~~three~~ two minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down.

Speaking to his amendment, Mr. Emery stated that a similar rule had been adopted for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly and that the shorter time helped speakers focus their comments.

Mr. Albert H. Quie [Minneapolis Area Synod], speaking in opposition, said that, in light of the significant issues to be discussed, the assembly should allow three minutes for discussion.

The Rev. Steven R. Frock [Western Iowa Synod] spoke against the amendment, declaring it to be “discriminatory against clergy.”

The Rev. Paul R. Messner [Upstate New York Synod] asked whether, if this amendment were rejected, it would preclude a later limitation on the length of speeches. The chair replied that such a motion would still be in order at a later time in the assembly.

The Rev. Jeffrey C. Ruby [Grand Canyon Synod] spoke against the amendment and said that, with such substantive matters before the assembly, it would be premature in the process to adopt this limitation.

The Rev. Katrina D. Foster [Metropolitan New York Synod] asked if the time remaining for a speaker could be projected on the screen. Presiding Bishop Hanson said the technicians were working on that matter.

There being no further speaking to the amendment, Presiding Bishop Hanson called for a vote, reminding the assembly that a majority would be needed for this amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-390; NO-635**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend Part Three, page 8, by substitution:*

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to ~~three~~ two minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker’s time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down.

The chair declared the amendment failed and then put before the assembly the proposed rule on “Speeches” as originally printed.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To adopt the following rule, Part Three, page 8:*

***Speeches***

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to three minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker’s time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down.

The vote was then taken.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-943; NO-94**

**CA09.01.02**

*To adopt the following rule, Part Three, page 8:*

## *Speeches*

**Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to three minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down.**

The chair declared the rule was adopted and then called for the proposed amendments to Part Ten.

The Rev. Gregory R. Pile, bishop of the Allegheny Synod, moved an amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend Part Ten by addition:*

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations, resolutions, and memorials, or any other motions (including motions to amend or substitute motions) originating from or relating to the "Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies."

Speaking to his amendment, Bp. Pile stated that assembly members were standing on the shoulders of those who had come before them. He argued that his proposed rule would encourage the assembly to "remember the long view" of 2,000 years of Church life and experience as it considered these questions.

Speaking in opposition, Mr. Ronald L. Pittman [Oregon Synod] pointed out that policies on ministry standards had never required a super-majority for adoption, and stated his opinion that to do so at this point would be "changing the rules at the end of the game." Because the current policy was put in place by a majority, he reasoned, a simple majority should be the requirement to alter the policy.

Mr. David E. Laden [Saint Paul Area Synod], speaking in support of the amendment, affirmed that the Churchwide Assembly was called to speak for this entire church, and urged its adoption for the sake of unity and well-being. He invoked the words of Acts 15:28: "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us. . . ." He concluded, "If the Holy Spirit is at work, then a two-thirds vote should not be a problem."

The Rev. Robert A. Rimbo, bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod, opposed the amendment. He declared that he supported the Church Council's "strong recommendation" to make these decisions by majority votes.

Mr. John T. Gates Jr. [Florida-Bahamas Synod] said that at the beginning the Church was able to do much because of its unity in "heart and soul," but that the task force had concluded that there was no consensus on the issues of blessing same-sex unions or ordaining non-celibate homosexual people. He asked, "Doesn't it make sense to require a large majority on a vote so significant and far-reaching? Doesn't it make sense to require a two-thirds vote on divisive issues so that [this] church can speak with one voice, one heart, and one soul?"

Ms. Susan E. Hernandez [Rocky Mountain Synod] opposed the amendment because those areas where the rules and governing documents required two-thirds were very limited. She

expressed her opinion that to impose this margin would go well beyond what the constitution and bylaws required.

The Rev. Judith A. McKee [Lower Susquehanna Synod] pointed out that the Church Council had adopted “Vision and Expectations” by a unanimous vote, but added that the vote had in effect affirmed the teaching and practice of 2,000 years.

The Rev. Jay M. McDivitt [Rocky Mountain Synod] urged defeat of the amendment, and asked that the assembly not impose “bad order” out of fear. He reminded voting members that Article Seven of the Augsburg Confession identified the center for this church. “We need not agree on non-sacramental rites in order to be one Church founded on Christ.”

The Rev. Harold L. Usgaard, bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, voiced support for the amendment. He said that the ELCA’s candidacy process was rigorous and that a two-thirds vote by congregations to extend a call was required because it indicated serious support. He argued that the questions before the assembly also required serious support, as would candidates in same-gender relationships, who would be affected by the assembly’s decision.

Mr. Larry A. Christensen [Southeastern Iowa Synod] opposed the amendment, urging a clear “up or down” vote.

The Rev. Ryan D. Mills [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] supported the amendment. He said that this church uses the two-thirds threshold to say important things and that it would better express this church’s speaking “with one voice.”

Mr. Jason S. Glombicki [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] argued that this church should not allow a minority of one-third to decide the issue. He asserted that faith in the Gospel not fear should rule.

The Rev. Thomas A. Skrenes, bishop of the Northern Great Lakes Synod, supported the amendment, following the recommendation of his synod’s assembly. He further stated that a two-thirds vote would allow this church to tell its ecumenical partners that any decision was a strong statement by this church.

The Rev. Ann M. Tiemeyer [Metropolitan New York Synod] opposed the amendment. She asked, “What is good order for us?” She suggested that addressing this question was taking the long view. She reminded the assembly that the vote on women’s ordination had not required a super-majority and expressed gratitude for those who had made that decision.

The Rev. Terri K. Stagner-Collier [Southeastern Synod] said, “I urge the two-thirds majority because there does come a time in our life, as individuals and as a body, to take a stand, but if two-thirds in this little corner of the church cannot take a stand against the vast majority of Christendom, then we don’t have anything near a consensus.”

The Rev. Jennifer L. Czarnota [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] urged defeat of the amendment, noting that a majority of synods had requested passage both of the proposed social statement on human sexuality and of the ministry policy recommendations. A two-thirds vote requirement would work against that request, she reasoned.

Mr. Johannes Olsen [Upstate New York Synod] advocated for the amendment, saying that the assembly’s decisions should be as close to consensus as possible. He advised that “We had better be sure this is a good and widely supported decision, and one we are sure that God agrees with.” He concluded, “We can achieve that only with a two-thirds vote.”

Mr. Fernando Mercado [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] asked what would be required to adopt this amendment. The chair answered that it would require a two-thirds vote.

The Rev. Mark B. Lepper [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke against the amendment, reminding members that two-thirds of the synods in assembly either had expressed a desire for a simple majority vote or had not considered this question.

The Rev. Richard A. Fitzer [Eastern North Dakota Synod] agreed with the arguments advanced by Bp. Usgaard. He supported the amendment out of concern for our “weaker brothers or sisters.” He said that this position was not one taken out of fear, but rather that it modeled good Christian witness.

Ms. Karen S. Matthias-Long [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] disagreed with the amendment and declared that it could create a circumstance in which a minority would make the decision.

Ms. Kirsten M. Nelson Roenfeldt [Rocky Mountain Synod] asked if current policies had been adopted by a majority or by a two-thirds vote. Secretary Swartling responded that all had been passed by a majority vote.

The Rev. Scott A. Bryte [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod], speaking for the amendment, stated, “If we can’t get two-thirds, we’re not ready to talk about this.”

Ms. Rosalind S. Moldwin [Southeast Michigan Synod] opposed the amendment. She asserted that no policy in ELCA history had required such a margin for adoption. She pointed out that the concerns about ecumenical partners and abandoning Scripture were raised also in 1970 when The American Lutheran Church was considering the ordination of women, but they had not stopped the adoption of the decision by a margin of only 57 votes.

The Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod] declared that his support for the amendment was in keeping with the action of his Synod Assembly. He referred to a graph in *The Lutheran* magazine depicting declines in worship attendance. He connected these declines to an earlier draft sexuality statement and to the current discussion.

Mr. Steven M. Krefting [Sierra Pacific Synod] opposed the amendment. He referred to Luther’s explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed: “It is the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Church on earth and keeps it in union with Christ.” He continued, “Unity should not be confused with uniformity. Things do not need to be the same everywhere and every place, and throughout the Church not everyone must agree with all things. Our unity is in Christ; it is not in our agreement about sexuality.”

The Rev. Jeffrey C. Ruby [Grand Canyon Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, noting that a two-thirds vote would be required for an agreement with The United Methodist Church. He identified three global partner Lutheran churches that had provided written objections to any change in ELCA policy.

Mr. Timothy J. Mumm [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against the amendment. He expressed his view that, from his perspective as a gay man, the assembly’s discussion of him and the lives of other gay and lesbian people was unfair because it required standards that would not be expected of others.

The Rev. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe, bishop of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, supported the amendment, declaring it to be consistent with the positions of his Synod Assembly and Synod Council. The simple majority requirement behind previous policy documents was consonant with “the wisdom of the ages,” he argued, in contrast to the current proposals.

The Rev. Maria C. Pederson [Minneapolis Area Synod] opposed the amendment, expressing her belief that it would encumber the process to perfect the proposals. The assembly should seek the best motion possible, she urged. This amendment would hamper that goal, in her opinion.

Mr. Matthew M. Riak [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] supported the amendment. He stated that he believes in the Holy Spirit, not unity. He expressed confidence that the Holy Spirit would care for the Church.



Ms. Kim M. Winchell [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] opposed the amendment, and expressed her view that the decision on the rule would be a vote taken in fear and would be “the wrong place to start.”

The Rev. Callon W. Holloway Jr., bishop of the Southern Ohio Synod, supported the proposed rule, saying, “I believe that we have a policy or practice for ordering our ministries which is time-honored and tested and to move away from it at this time with less than a super-majority . . . will not be serving our church well.”

Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez [Rocky Mountain Synod] opposed the amendment. He pointed out that Jesus started as an individual with twelve disciples, a minority. The Church was not built on large majorities.

Mr. Y. T. Chiu [Northeastern Ohio Synod] moved the previous question.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-906; NO-100**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

The chair called on the Rev. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson of the Church Council to lead the assembly in prayer before the vote on the proposed rule.

The assembly then voted on the amendment.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-436; NO-584**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend Part Ten by addition:*

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations, resolutions, and memorials, or any other motions, (including motions to amend or substitute motions) originating from or relating to the “Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies.”

The chair announced that the amendment had failed. He then called on the Rev. Steven R. Frock [Western Iowa Synod], who had given notice of his intent to add to the section of Part Ten entitled “Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws” the words: “or any related resolution that would be likely to result in a change of the practice and/or policy of the ELCA.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked Pr. Frock to explain how his amendment differed from the proposal that had just been rejected.

Pr. Frock explained that if it were true that policies such as those in “Vision and Expectations” had been passed with simple majorities, then it was time to change that possibility. He stated his belief that a two-thirds vote should be the standard to change any of the policies of the ELCA.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked for a moment to consider the parliamentary status of the proposed amendment, suggesting that Pr. Frock’s intent might be achievable only through a constitution or bylaw amendment.

Pr. Frock proposed that he could further amend his amendment by striking the words “Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws” from the title of the rule.

The chair suggested that Pr. Frock move his amendment.

**MOVED;**  
**SECONDED:**

*To amend Part Ten, page 13, by deletion and addition:*

**Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force ~~Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws~~**

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations or resolutions originating from or relating to the subject of a social statement task force report or amendments or substitute motions related to such recommendations or resolutions that require amendment of a constitution or bylaw provision for implementation or any related resolution that would be likely to result in a change of the practice and/or policy of the ELCA.

Pr. Frock spoke once again to his intentions, arguing that major policy decisions should never be made on the basis of a majority vote. He added: “It is high time we started requiring a two-thirds majority for any resolution which is going to make, or is likely to make, a substantial change to the practice and policies of [this] church, whether it has to do with sexuality or any other subject. And that is my intent here—that we put control over the policies and practices of [this] church back into the hands of the assembly, and take it out of the hands of the [Church] Council, and take it out of the hands of a simple majority, and make it a true effort to drive at consensus.”

The Rev. Serena S. Sellers [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] inquired whether the intent of the motion would not be broader than the scope of the matters coming before this Churchwide Assembly. She asked for clarification that the rules under consideration would apply to this assembly only. The chair affirmed her understanding.

The presiding bishop articulated the dilemma he was facing, as the intent of the motion would appear to be beyond the scope of the rules of an assembly, and would enter into the territory of amendments to the governing documents. He stated that he was struggling with whether the motion was in fact in order.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] objected to consideration of Pr. Frock’s amendment. After confirming that Pr. Carrier had in fact been at the microphone to make his motion before speaking had begun on the amendment, the chair ruled his motion to object to consideration to be in order. Such a motion requires no second and allows for no debate, according to *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

**MOVED:** To object to consideration of the question.

After consultation with the parliamentarian, the chair explained to the assembly that a two-thirds vote in the negative would sustain the objection. The issue was whether the motion to amend should be considered. He then asked the assembly to vote on the motion:

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-228; NO-754**

**MOVED;**  
**SUSTAINED:**

**To object to consideration of the question.**

The chair declared that the objection to consideration of Pr. Frock's amendment was sustained. He then asked Pr. Hahn to offer his amendment to Part Ten.

The Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod] moved to amend Part Ten by addition.

**MOVED:**

**SECONDED:** *To amend Part Ten, page 13, by addition:*

That this assembly follow the process recommended by the Sexuality Task Force for consideration of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, to wit: The four ministry policy resolutions shall be considered sequentially as numbered, and each resolution shall "be considered only if the preceding one has been approved."

Speaking to his amendment, Pr. Hahn voiced his support for honoring the task force's recommendation to consider the resolutions in sequence.

Mr. Y. T. Chiu [Northeastern Ohio Synod] asked for clarification of the log-in process for calling upon speakers, with reference to white cards and their priority in being recognized.

The chair explained that the microphone queuing system alternated between green and red microphones and between speakers for and against the question, and that people at microphones with white cards to make motions did not take precedence over other speakers. He added that he would recognize speakers according to their sequence in the queue. Those who chose microphone lines with fewer people could, in fact, be recognized ahead of those who stood in longer lines. He promised further clarification in the next plenary session.

Mr. David L. Lillehaug [Minneapolis Area Synod] opposed the amendment. He declared that the amendment would ask the assembly to bind itself to a procedure before it had even gotten to consideration of the resolutions in question. He argued that it was not consistent with *Robert's Rules of Order* or with the governing documents of this church and that the proponents of the motion were "prejudging" what would occur on Friday of this assembly. He suggested that the goal of the amendment was the defeat of the first resolution in order to cut off debate on the subsequent resolutions. Mr. Lillehaug stated that, in his experience, special rules of this sort were the efforts of minorities to rule over the majority. Finally, he argued that its adoption would create a "procedural nightmare" for the chair, who would be forced to determine whether an amended resolution would qualify as the predecessor of a subsequent resolution.

The Rev. Corinne R. Johnson [Northern Great Lakes Synod] identified herself as one of the three task force members who had voiced dissent to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. Stating that she was now speaking as a pastor of this church and not as a member of the task force, she nonetheless asked that the assembly acknowledge the collective wisdom of the task force's recommendation on sequential consideration of the four resolutions. She urged that the assembly follow the original recommendation and gave her support to Pr. Hahn's amendment.

Ms. Cheryl G. Stuart [Florida-Bahamas Synod] opposed the amendment, arguing that the task force recommendation was only one way to proceed. She said the assembly's concern should be only, "What is the clearest, simplest, most forthright way for [the assembly] to debate and discuss these four proposals?" She urged voting members not to allow themselves "to be held hostage to convolution and confusion."

The Rev. Randall V. Baldwin [Northeastern Iowa Synod] supported the amendment, arguing that it would honor the process that had been suggested by the report and that many in this church had long understood would be the procedure.

Mr. Steven R. Chapman [Northwest Washington Synod] moved the previous question.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-879; NO-114**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, the chair instructed the assembly to vote on Pr. Hahn's amendment.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-414; NO-592**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend Part Ten, page 13, by addition:*

That this assembly follow the process recommended by the Sexuality Task Force for consideration of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, to wit: The four ministry policy resolutions shall be considered sequentially as numbered, and each resolution shall "be considered only if the preceding one has been approved."

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the amendment had failed.

The chair then called on Mr. Paul Bedker [Greater Milwaukee Synod], who had called for separate consideration of Part Ten with no indication of a requested action. The chair clarified that Mr. Bedker wished to address the two sections, "Vote to Adopt Social Statements" and "Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws."

Mr. Bedker asked whether these sections were governed by the governing documents, or whether there were cases under *Robert's Rules* under which such resolutions could be considered were this section not adopted.

The chair called on Secretary David D. Swartling to address Mr. Bedker's question. Secretary Swartling pointed out that the section on social statements was simply a restatement of the constitutional provision governing such matters. The second paragraph, he explained, merely stated that resolutions requiring a change in constitutional provisions or bylaws necessarily would require a two-thirds vote. In essence, both paragraphs were restatements of the requirements of the governing documents. Thus, any applicable resolutions would be ruled by the governing documents, rather than by *Robert's Rules*. However, he pointed out, the recommended resolutions on ministry policies, as proposed, would not come under either of these two paragraphs because they did not call for constitution or bylaw changes.

No amendments having been adopted, and no further amendments being offered, Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the assembly to vote on the two sections of Part Ten as printed in the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" in the *Pre-Assembly Report*.

## **ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

### **ACTION:**

**YES-861; NO-137**

### **CA09.01.03**

**To adopt the final two sections of Part Ten of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” as originally printed.**

#### ***Vote to Adopt Social Statements***

A two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting in the Churchwide Assembly shall be required for adoption of a social statement.

A social statement, which is developed by the appropriate churchwide unit and presented to the Churchwide Assembly as a proposed social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall require for adoption a vote of two-thirds of those voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly. The text of a proposed social statement shall be approved and recommended to the assembly by the Church Council (ELCA 12.12.01.).

#### ***Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws***

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations or resolutions originating from or relating to the subject of a social statement task force report or amendments or substitute motions related to such recommendations or resolutions that require amendment of a constitution or bylaw provision for implementation.

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” to be adopted.

## **Organization of the Churchwide Assembly: Constitution of Assembly Committees**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, page 9–10 and pages 39–40.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked that the voting members address the matter of the committees that would help the assembly in its work: the Nominating Committee (elected by previous assemblies), the Reference and Counsel Committee, and the Memorials Committee (the latter two appointed by the Church Council as required by the bylaws of this church). In addition, he reported, the rules just adopted provided for additional committees to aid the assembly. These committees were listed in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section I, pages 39–40. The chair declared that all these committees were duly authorized and constituted.

### **Memorials Committee**

Bp. Wm. Chris Boerger  
Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth  
Pr. Joseph G. Crippen  
Ms. Katherine L. Cruson  
Mr. Jason S. Glombicki  
Bp. H. Julian Gordy  
Ms. Gail M. Olson

Mr. John M. Pederson  
Pr. John C. Richter, *co-chair*  
Pr. Kay S. Richter  
Mr. Willie G. Scott  
Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, *co-chair*  
Ms. Suzanne Gibson Wise

## **Nominating Committee**

Ms. Gwen E. Arenson  
Ms. Judith M. Bailey  
Mr. David H. Black  
Pr. Daniel B. Bollman  
Ms. Rita J. Dudley  
Pr. Jonathan L. Eilert  
Ms. Virginia K. Frantz  
Pr. Kathryn J. “Kathy” Gerking  
Ms. Jeannine G. Grimm

Mr. James M. Hushagen  
Mr. Larry D. Iverson  
Ms. Linda N. Lovell  
Pr. Thomas E. McKee  
Pr. Loren D. Mai  
Pr. Raymond A. Miller  
Mr. Jeremy D. Posadas  
Pr. Martin J. Russell, *chair*  
Mr. Daniel F. Wilson

## **Reference and Counsel Committee**

Ms. Linda Chinnia  
Bp. Jessica R. Crist  
Pr. Drew E. Flathmann  
Mr. Mark S. Helmke, *co-chair*  
Mr. William B. Horne II  
Ms. Julie R. Johnson  
Pr. Susan Langhauser, *co-chair*  
Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr.

Bp. James F. Mauney  
Pr. Fred S. Opalinski  
Ms. Lynette M. Reitz  
Ms. Lori J. Splinter  
Pr. Melissa L. Stoller  
Mr. Joshua D. Thornton  
Ms. Susan A. Zahrbock

## **Additional Committees**

### **Churchwide Assembly Planning Committee**

Ms. Kristi S. Bangert  
Mr. John R. Brooks  
Pr. Ruth E. Hamilton  
Bp. Mark S. Hanson  
Mr. John J. Hessian III  
Ms. Ava O. Martin

Ms. Mary Beth Nowak  
Pr. Robert G. Schaefer  
Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, *chair*  
Mr. David D. Swartling  
Mr. Scott C. Weidler

### **Local Arrangements Committee**

Ms. Barbara A. Brown, *co-chair*  
Ms. Mariana P. Campbell  
Ms. Paula J. Carter  
Ms. Terri J. Endres  
Pr. Delwayne Hahn  
Ms. Beth Helgen  
Pr. Robert Hoyt  
Mr. Dale A. Kennen  
Ms. Vernita M. Kennen  
Ms. Lynne D. Moratzka  
Ms. Diane L. Nimmer

Ms. Mary Beth Nowak, *assembly manager*  
Ms. Roberta G. Olson, *co-chair*  
Pr. Melissa G. Pohlman  
Ms. Kris M. Stedje  
Ms. Karen M. Walhof  
Pr. Glen T. Wheeler

### **Credentials Committee**

Mr. David D. Swartling, *ex officio chair*  
Mr. David A. Ullrich, *vice chair*  
Ms. JoAnne N. Brady, *registrar*

## **Elections Committee**

Mr. Phillip H. Harris, *chair*  
Ms. Deborah K. Myers, *vice chair*  
Pr. Karen G. Bockelman

Mr. Kenneth W. Inskip  
Mr. Daniel S. Taylor  
Mr. David A. Ullrich

## **Minutes Committee**

Mr. David D. Swartling, *ex officio chair*  
Mr. N. Keith Fry, *editor*  
Pr. Susan L. Gamelin  
Pr. Ruth E. Hamilton, *vice chair*  
Ms. Cynthia J. Johnson  
Pr. James G. Krauser

Ms. Catherine Lundeen  
Pr. Thomas E. McKee  
Pr. Karl J. Nelson  
Pr. William J. Sappenfield  
Pr. Leslie G. Svendsen

## **Worship Committee**

Bp. Mark S. Hanson  
Pr. Robert G. Schaefer, *executive for  
worship and liturgical resources*

Ms. Myrna J. Sheie  
Mr. Scott C. Weidler, *music coordinator*

## **Ad Hoc Committee to Consider Amendments to a Major Statement**

The presiding bishop then appointed members to an additional committee, the *Ad Hoc* Committee to Consider Amendments to a Major Statement. This committee will be charged with processing any amendments that might be proposed to the social statement on human sexuality or to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. The members of the committee were: Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, the Rev. Steven P. Loy (*chair*), Pr. J. Paul Rajashekar, and Ms. Sandra Schlesinger, members of the Church Council; Bp. Leonard H. Bolick and Bp. Murray D. Finck, representatives of the Conference of Bishops; the Rev. Peter Strommen, chair of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality; the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society program unit; the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education program unit; the Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for studies for Church in Society; and the Rev. Kaari M. Reiersen, associate director for studies in Church in Society.

## **Adoption of the “Order of Business”**

Reference: “Order of Business.”

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked members to consider the published “Order of Business.” He noted that the agenda included consideration of full communion with The United Methodist Church, the proposed social statement on human sexuality, the ministry policies recommendation, the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, funding for this church’s HIV and AIDS Strategy, and many other items.

Secretary David D. Swartling offered the motion to adopt the “Order of Business.”

### **MOVED:**

### **SECONDED:**

To approve the “Order of Business” as the agenda of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in keeping with the provisions of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the calling of items of business before the assembly.

There being no discussion, the chair called for a vote.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

**YES-979; NO-24**

#### **CA09.01.04**

**To approve the “Order of Business” as the agenda of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in keeping with the provisions of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the calling of items of business before the assembly.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared the “Order of Business” to be adopted.

## **Announcements**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson made announcements concerning the prayer centers that would be operating throughout the assembly and told voting members how they could make prayer requests. Secretary David D. Swartling made several announcements concerning logistics and deadlines. He informed voting members that there would be a daily news update called *The Assembly Digest*, along with a daily “Legislative Update” that would include the texts of motions and amendments as they stood each day. He also mentioned that members of the Communal Discernment Task Force would be present throughout the assembly, and he encouraged members to share their assembly experiences with the task force.

## **Hymn and Prayer**

Ms. Judith Anne Bunker, member of the Church Council, led the assembly in prayer. The assembly then sang “We Walk By Faith” from the *Worship and Song* booklet.

## **Recess**

The first plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 10:45 P.M. CDT.



# Plenary Session Two

Tuesday, August 18, 2009

8:00 A.M.–11:15 A.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), lit a candle and rang a bell, and he then called Plenary Session Two of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 8:07 A.M. CDT on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn. Presiding Bishop Hanson called on Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, a member of the Church Council from Des Moines, Iowa, to lead the assembly in Morning Prayer, which included the hymn, “Oh, Sing to God Above,” a reading from 1 John, and prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson acknowledged the worship leadership of the musicians, including the National Lutheran Choir and its director, Mr. David Cherwien. The presiding bishop praised the variety of musicians who would enrich the assembly’s worship and plenary experience throughout the week. The assembly expressed its gratitude with applause.

The presiding bishop also called attention to information in the program booklet about *The Book of the Gospels: The Saint John’s Bible Edition* that the assembly would be using in worship, and expressed gratitude to Saint John’s Abbey in Collegeville, Minn., for allowing use of the Gospel book.

The chair thanked the assembly for a good beginning in the first plenary session and noted that the day ahead would be full, with two plenaries, a morning worship service, and hearings in the afternoon and evening. He then invited the assembly to “warm up” the voting machines with some practice questions concerning the “greening” of the assembly.

Presiding Bishop Hanson then clarified some issues raised by voting members during Plenary Session One:

1. According to assembly rules on the timing of speeches, a one-minute time-limit warning for those speaking from the floor microphones will appear on the projection screens in the assembly hall, and no oral warnings will be given. Each speaker will need to monitor the time clock in order to avoid being shut off mid-speech.
2. Those queuing up with white cards at microphones will be recognized in the order in which they are logged into the system. The chair emphasized that the white card afforded no special priority, except in urgent circumstances spelled out by the assembly rules and by *Robert’s Rules of Order*.
3. Parliamentary issues that come up in the course of debate will be clarified as they arise.

## Report of the Nominating Committee

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VII, pages 1–88.

Presiding Bishop Hanson turned the chair over to Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president of the ELCA, who called on the Rev. Martin J. Russell, chair of the Nominating Committee, to give that committee’s report. Pr. Russell noted that the Report of the Nominating Committee was printed in Section VII of the 2009 Pre-Assembly Report. He reported that the Nominating Committee had met in Chicago in April 2009 and, subsequently, in a telephone conference call. He spoke of the care and diligence exercised by the Nominating Committee in finding faithful, conscientious leaders to fill the slate of nominees. Pr. Russell expressed gratitude both for the

work of the Nominating Committee and for those who had agreed to stand for nomination. He explained that nominations need to comply with the representational principles outlined in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*. Other factors that need to be taken into account in selecting nominees included the composition of the Church Council, boards, and committees; geographical distribution; experience; expertise; and age, among other matters. Pr. Russell observed that this church's governing documents required the committee to submit the names of two nominees for each position to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly.

Pr. Russell explained that no additional nominations from the floor were permitted for Church Council positions, and pointed out that biographies for each of the nominees were located in Section VII of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, beginning on page 20. Nominees for the various boards and committees were listed on pages 9–17. He also highlighted several provisions in Part Twelve of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” including rules related to nominations made from the floor, the deadline for which is 2:00 P.M. on Wednesday, August 19. He also reminded voting members that the deadline for turning in ballots is 6:00 P.M. on Thursday, August 20.

Pr. Russell concluded by thanking the members of the Nominating Committee for their work, and the staff of the Office of the Secretary for their assistance. He noted that the work of identifying and nominating leaders for the boards and committees of this church was important and ongoing. Pr. Russell encouraged voting members to look for potential leaders and to invite people to submit nominations. He concluded by asking voting members to prayerfully consider for whom they would cast their votes.

Vice President Peña thanked Pr. Russell and invited Presiding Bishop Hanson to bring his report.

## Report of the Presiding Bishop

Reference: *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section II, pages 1–6.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson began his report to the assembly by asking: “What shall be our witness this week?” He reminded members that this had been the question with which he began his sermon on Monday and stated that it was a question that would be considered in a variety of ways throughout the assembly. The presiding bishop read from Hebrews 12:1–2 and asked members of the assembly to tell one other person sitting near them about someone in that “great cloud of witnesses” from whom they drew strength. He stated that he would be drawing upon the powerful witness of the 37,000 youth who had assembled in New Orleans a few weeks earlier for the Youth Gathering under the theme, “Jesus, Justice, Jazz.” He showed a video from that gathering.

The presiding bishop reframed his opening question to imagine the future of the ELCA: “Looking back from 2017 [the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation], what do we want our witness to have been?” He asked members to consider how the work of this assembly would shape that witness.

Presiding Bishop Hanson said that he prayed that this church would become, because of the Book of Faith initiative, more fluent in the “first language of faith,” the language of Scripture. He cited the example of Ms. Janelle Curry, a 17-year-old from Minnesota, who told the story of losing her father while she was on a mission trip. Because she had received support from many different people and believed that God sent these people to watch over her and let her know that God was there, she reported that she now turns frequently to God's Word for comfort, healing, and guidance. The presiding bishop added that Ms. Curry was just one of the 37,000 powerful young witnesses gathered in New Orleans, all of whom had received a *Lutheran Study Bible*.

Presiding Bishop Hanson expressed his hope that members would continue to read and interpret the Scriptures evangelically—“that is, what shows forth Christ”—and that this church’s witness would be that “we are a Book of Faith church, hearing, studying, sharing, praying, and singing the Scriptures.”

The presiding bishop said that, looking back from 2017, he hoped this church’s witness would be that “God’s work. Our hands.” had become much more than a tagline and instead had become a powerful and memorable way to witness to “whose we are.” He declared that this church’s witness begins with God and what God is doing, and not with ourselves.

Presiding Bishop Hanson held up a cross that he had received in Tanzania that symbolizes this church’s witness to “God’s work. Our hands.” Showing the cross to the assembly, he noted the dove of the Holy Spirit in the center, surrounded by hands. He said it reminded him of three things about this church’s witness: the center is the cross of Christ; the scope of this church’s witness is the whole world; and the source of that witness is the Holy Spirit. He also noted that the ELCA tagline belongs with the ELCA emblem, a cross centered within the four quadrants of a globe.

As he continued his reflection upon the Tanzanian cross, the presiding bishop commented on the carved hands and asked the voting members to look at their own hands. He wondered aloud what he would see if he were to videotape those hands for several weeks. He asked voting members to share with another person what of God’s work they might see done with their hands.

Presiding Bishop Hanson reported that, in response to a competition organized by the Communication Services unit, 224 videos on the theme of “God’s work. Our hands.” had been received from across this church, and that 20 finalists had been selected by those who viewed the video on the ELCA Web site. The finalist videos will be shown throughout the assembly, with winners to be announced on Saturday, August 22. A video produced by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in New Castle, Pa., was then shown.

Looking back from the vantage point of 2017, the presiding bishop stated his hope that by that time, every one of the 10,464 ELCA congregations would have grown as a “center for evangelical mission.” He asked members to consider which image of the Church would shape this church’s witness in these complex and challenging times: a fortress providing sanctuary from the storms of life and the onslaught of change; a retreat center named “nostalgia”; a franchise trying to compete for members in a consumer-oriented and competitive religious marketplace; or a military outpost in hostile territory?

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared, “Let this be our witness, that we are a church going with the flow . . . the flow of God’s Holy Spirit being poured out.” He assured the assembly that this was God’s promise, quoting from Joel 2, John 20, Romans 5, and Titus 3; and he affirmed that “evidence abounds that God’s Spirit is being poured out.” He asked those in the assembly hall to share with another person one sign of the Spirit’s presence.

The presiding bishop made it clear that the call for every congregation to be a growing center for evangelical mission is not about the survival of a denomination but rather about the Holy Spirit “being poured out, bringing renewal in and through us.” He suggested that the members of this church should not be able to keep themselves from witnessing because the good news is so incredibly good that “it is just itching to be told.” Yet, he pointed out, nearly a half million baptized members had left this church since 2001, and he proposed that all the members of this church needed to assume responsibility for evangelizing.

Presiding Bishop Hanson went on to say that the story this church tells should not be that the members are anxiously holding their breath over decisions concerning human sexuality but rather that they are breathing in deeply God’s Holy Spirit that is being poured out. His prayer was that, rather than seeing dissension and division, this church would see itself as a Pentecost

church in which the people speak in their various languages about God's deeds of power. The presiding bishop asked the assembly to envision what a powerful witness it would be if all ELCA congregations, in their varied responses to the decisions of this assembly, were to say, "We are committed to growing as an evangelical center of mission."

Presiding Bishop Hanson paused to call on Mr. Robera Battal of Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minneapolis, one of the fastest-growing congregations in the Minneapolis Area Synod and one of the largest African-descent congregations in the ELCA, to address the assembly concerning his congregation's evangelical outreach. Mr. Battal reported that the majority of Our Redeemer's members were people who had fled persecution in Ethiopia. The congregation started as a Bible study in 1987, became a congregation of the ELCA in 1995, and now has 700 people worshipping weekly. The community is starting an English-language service for its youth. This congregation is only one of many African ministries in the United States. Mr. Battal ended his presentation by saying, "We are missionaries among you to help you and to collaborate and participate with you in God's mission." The presiding bishop thanked Mr. Battal for his witness.

Presiding Bishop Hanson affirmed that congregations were not on their own; synodical bishops and directors for evangelical mission were working with leaders from congregations to become re-rooted in their communities and were working with the ELCA seminaries and synodical lay schools to prepare evangelical leaders for congregations in mission. The presiding bishop voiced his hope that, looking back from 2017, this entire church's witness would be that seminary graduates would not be so burdened with educational debt that they would be unable to flourish as faithful and courageous leaders. He suggested that members make this happen by building upon the \$1,000,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment and by giving to the Fund for Leaders in Mission.

Presiding Bishop Hanson went on to say that he hoped that the ELCA's witness in 2017 will include 1,000 trained evangelists linked to congregations and sent into communities, sharing the story of Jesus, inviting people to prayer and Scripture study, and exploring new ministry possibilities; that this will be a church committed to becoming more multicultural, not because it needs people of color to preserve a White denomination, but because without the gift and witness of people of color, this church is not the community Christ calls the Church to be; that this will not be a church that passes ethnic ministry strategies at the Churchwide Assembly, and then goes home to ministry as usual; and that this will be a church in which each synod has a renewed or new ministry that reflects a commitment to working among people who live in poverty.

Presiding Bishop Hanson stated that all of the things he had described depended upon the power of the Holy Spirit, the interdependent "ecology" of the ELCA, full-communion relationships, prayer, evangelical imagination, and growing financial support.

He asked, "Now that we don't have to do anything to earn God's favor and mercy, what are we going to do?" and quoted from Martin Luther's *Freedom of a Christian*:

I will therefore give myself as Christ to my neighbor, just as Christ offered himself; I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ.

Looking back from 2017, the presiding bishop stated that he hoped that the ELCA's witness in the midst of trying economic times would be advocating for public policies, business practices, personal financial decisions, and churchly budget decisions that would reduce poverty in local communities and throughout the world and that ELCA members would model this

commitment by personal stewardship of at least a tithe, along with growing support of the World Hunger appeal.

Further, he expressed his hope that the ELCA's witness would be that it offered leadership in welcoming new migrants into communities and congregations; that the ELCA had supported just immigration reform, health care reform, and a fully implemented HIV and AIDS Strategy with global companion churches and local partners; that this church had achieved the goal of eradicating malaria by 2015; that it had exercised leadership in the care of God's creation and achieved a completely "green" Churchwide Assembly in 2013; that it had developed a social statement on justice for women in a manner as lively and participatory as the social statement on human sexuality; and that the ELCA had celebrated the signing in 2011 of a just two-state agreement between Israel and Palestine.

Presiding Bishop Hanson remarked that a question remained: "What will be our witness regarding human sexuality and the rostering of people who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships?" He invited those present to see this assembly as an opportunity for "faith-filled witness to the larger human family that struggles with division, that yearns for healing and wholeness that is real and true. . . . We have the opportunity to offer the witness of our unity in Christ." He stated that we finally meet one another not in our agreements or disagreements, "but at the foot of the cross, where God is faithful, Christ is present, and where, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are one in Christ."

The presiding bishop concluded his report with Paul's benediction to the Romans: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

The assembly responded with a standing ovation.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked the presiding bishop for his words, his leadership, and his challenge to the assembly. The vice president noted that, under the rules of the assembly, the presiding bishop's report was received and referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee without further action.

## **2010–2011 Budget: First Presentation**

Reference: *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section I, pages 6, 10, 16–17; and Section IV, pages 55–86.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña, continuing as chair of the assembly, called on the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, for the first presentation of the 2010–2011 biennial budget. The vice president pointed out that the budget recommendation was printed in Section IV of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*.

Pr. Bullock observed that she was taught early that giving is a way of life, that God's mission is important for the world, that mission requires finances, and that God cares about how we Christians handle money. Stewardship, she said, means to take responsibility to care for something that one does not own, so the Office of the Treasurer and the staff of the churchwide organization are committed to implementing the best stewardship and accounting practices to ensure efficient use of the funds received for the ELCA's ministries. She offered a word of deep gratitude for the generosity and faithfulness in giving that allows the Gospel to be proclaimed and lives to be transformed through churchwide ministries, noting that "We are able to do so much more together than any one of us could ever do alone."

She presented the following facts about the proposed budget:

- The proposed 2010 churchwide budget totaled \$95,392,000.
- This amount anticipated a current fund income of \$76,692,000, a 6.5 percent decrease from the 2009 income proposal approved by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.
- The World Hunger portion of the budget was \$18,700,000.

- Mission support accounted for 81 percent of the current fund income.
- In 2009, churchwide ministry budgets were reduced by \$7,500,000, of which \$1,900,000 was in World Hunger funds.
- Staff salaries at grade 20 and higher were reduced by three percent, and the positions of 23.5 full-time staff members and 12 vacant positions were eliminated.

A video was shown to illustrate the mission made possible by mission support.

Pr. Bullock then shared some specific details of the 2010 budget proposal that were based on the strategic directions and commitments for implementation of the churchwide Plan for Mission:

- Evangelical Outreach: \$22,700,000,
- Hunger-related Ministries: \$20,700,000,
- Global and Ecumenical Partnerships: \$13,000,000,
- Leadership (colleges, seminaries, and campus ministries): \$12,100,000,
- Churchwide Organization: \$5,400,000,
- Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Program Committees: \$1,600,000; and
- Offices of the Presiding Bishop, Secretary, and Treasurer: \$19,800,000.

She noted that more details on the 2010–2011 budget proposal were presented in Section IV of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report* and encouraged voting members to study these materials and to come to the budget hearing to be held that day at 4:30 P.M.

Vice President Peña thanked Pr. Bullock and reminded the assembly that any amendments to the budget would need to be submitted by 8:30 A.M., Friday, August 21. He returned the chair to Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson.

## **Introduction: Funding of the HIV and AIDS Strategy**

Reference: *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section IV, pages 11–13; Section V, pages 45–73.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson thanked the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock for her exceptional leadership as executive for administration, then announced that the assembly would move to consideration of funding the HIV and AIDS Strategy. The 2007 Churchwide Assembly [CA07.06.35] had called upon the Church Council to develop a plan for funding the strategy. The chair noted that background material, including the text of the strategy, could be found in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report* in the sections noted above. He welcomed the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator for the HIV and AIDS Strategy; the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit; the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit; and Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, president of the ELCA Foundation and executive director of the Development Services unit.

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl called on Pr. Malpica, who likened this church’s response to the HIV and AIDS crisis to the quilt stitched by the Women of Hope. These are Nigerian women who have been stigmatized and excluded because of their age and HIV status. Pr. Malpica said that they had chosen to break the silence of stigma and go from community to community to educate others about HIV and to bring hope to those who live with the virus. He reminded the assembly that the ELCA had pledged in 2001 and 2004 to “Stand with Africa” in a World Hunger campaign. He added that this assembly had the opportunity to act boldly to continue this commitment by providing funds so that the ELCA could become an even more effective piece of the patchwork quilt of service and justice that is the Church’s response to HIV and AIDS.

Ms. Halverson noted that fundraising for this strategy was placed within the scope of the ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal in order to underscore the connection between hunger, poverty, and disease. As with malaria, she pointed out that AIDS is a disease “intensified by poverty and a cause of poverty.” She lifted up this church’s proposal to raise \$10

million over the next five years for the HIV and AIDS Strategy and indicated that, while it may seem daunting with so many economic concerns across the country, this church moves forward in confidence and hope because “we understand what abundance is all about.”

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl showed the image of Presiding Bishop Hanson washing the feet of two HIV-positive women at the World AIDS Conference in Mexico City in 2008. In doing this, she said, the presiding bishop astonished the women and everyone else who witnessed the event. The presiding bishop represented the ELCA as a church that knows itself to be HIV-positive. Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl concluded the report, reading a portion of the strategy.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl, notified the assembly that deliberation on the HIV and AIDS Strategy would continue on Wednesday, August 19, and called attention to the hearing on the HIV and AIDS Strategy to be held at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, August 18.

## **Introduction: Social Statement on Human Sexuality**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, page 13; Section IV, pages 19–39; Section V, pages 75–83.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson welcomed to the stage members of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality, including its chair, the Rev. Peter Strommen, to introduce *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, the proposed social statement on human sexuality.

The chair noted that the assembly was running behind schedule but expressed his commitment to receiving the introduction to the proposed social statement and to going into quasi committee of the whole for a discussion of the proposed social statement. He was also mindful of the commitment to worship at 11:30 a.m. With the assembly’s assent, he declared that the discussion would end at 11:10 a.m., with any remaining time to be carried over to the afternoon session. He called on Pr. Strommen and invited the assembly to express with applause its gratitude to the task force.

Pr. Strommen began by referring to the August 2007 collapse of the Interstate-35 West bridge in Minneapolis, proclaiming that a social statement is not unlike a bridge design. It matters, he stated, even if, like most infrastructure, it is not what one notices. He pointed out that ELCA social statements are teaching documents that help the ELCA and its members in moral deliberation and in forming judgments on social issues. They set institutional policy for the ELCA. While they are rooted in the biblical and confessional witness of this church, he emphasized that they also take seriously the contributions of disciplines such as medicine, science, ethics, and economics.

He reminded the assembly that the 2001 Churchwide Assembly had called for a study and recommendations regarding approval of people in same-gender relationships for rostered leadership and for a social statement on human sexuality, tasks which the Church Council had assigned to a single task force.

Pr. Strommen introduced the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality, noting that, after seven years, 18 meetings, three study documents, a number of rounds of response to the study documents, and other duties of the process, the task force had completed its work in February. The assembly expressed its appreciation with applause.

He acknowledged that there were differences in opinion among task force members, but their prayers, dialogue, and forgiveness coalesced around the belief that they were one in Jesus Christ.

The members of the task force were Pr. Strommen (chair), pastor, Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church, Prior Lake, Minn.; Ms. Erin Clark, Oregon, Ill., social worker; Mr. Julio A. Fonseca, Dorado, Puerto Rico, clinical psychologist; the Rev. Carol S. Hendrix, Carlisle, Pa., former bishop, Lower Susquehanna Synod; the Rev. Corinne R. Johnson, Palmer, Mich.,

development director for Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp; the Rev. Gary J. Liedtke, Waukesha, Wis., pastor, St. Luke's Lutheran Church; Mr. Peter O'Malia, Pasadena, Calif., youth worker, Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church; the Rev. Kevin R. Maly, Denver, Colo., pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church; Ms. Susan Salomone, Syracuse, N.Y., homemaker; the Rev. Scott J. Suskovic, Charlotte, N.C., pastor, Christ Lutheran Church; Ms. Connie D. Thomas, Chicago, Ill., retired school principal; the Rev. David L. Tiede, Shoreview, Minn., professor, Augsburg College; Ms. Marit Trelstad, Tacoma, Wash., professor, Pacific Lutheran University; the Rev. Timothy J. Wengert, Moorestown, N.J., professor, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; Ms. Diane Yeager, Arlington, Va., professor, Georgetown University.

Pr. Strommen explained that there was no single Lutheran approach to matters of ethics. He said that the task force could have approached the questions before it from several perspectives, but that, following the example of Martin Luther and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, it had chosen the Lutheran ethic of vocation in the service of the neighbor as its guide. He then identified several considerations that led to the task force's approach:

1. Because a shared understanding of Christianity's core beliefs or Lutheran ethics can no longer be assumed, the task force thought it necessary to clearly articulate the biblical and Lutheran theological assumptions that undergird the statement.
2. As important as issues of human sexuality might be, the task force felt it necessary to make clear what is most important in regard to the faith, the twin pillars of the Reformation: "God's unconditional love for all people in Jesus Christ, and our vocational calling to love the neighbor as oneself in all of life's arenas."
3. The document attempts to respond theologically and ethically to the attitudes and perceptions of human sexuality that challenge the most fundamental Christian perspectives.
4. In response to society's emphasis on sexual rights for the individual, the document takes seriously the social dimension of sexual ethics.

He noted two additional emphases:

- the importance of trust, which is a "fundamental characteristic of right relationship"; and
- the concept of "bound conscience." Believing that disagreements need not be church-dividing, the statement looks to the historic Lutheran understanding of the bound conscience for guidance.

Pr. Strommen called on task force member Pr. Wengert to further explain the concept of bound conscience.

Pr. Wengert explained that "respect for the bound conscience of the neighbor" is one of the great legacies of the early Lutheran reformers. He pointed out several ways in which this principle surfaced in Luther's own life: first, begging his accusers to show him "from Scripture and clear reason" that he was wrong; and, second, referring to Luther before Cardinal Cajetan at Augsburg, where Luther appealed that his superior not violate Luther's conscience by dismissing his arguments and what he held to be central to the faith.

Other examples of "bound conscience" that Pr. Wengert provided regarded specific ethical dilemmas, similar to those dealt with by St. Paul in Romans and 1 Corinthians, which helped the reformers understand that they had to respect people where they were—their consciences—in considering these dilemmas. Pr. Wengert stated that there were echoes of this principle in the Augsburg Confession in the discussion of fasting, the rules for which were confusing and "a heavy burden to consciences."

He explained that this concern was at the heart of the proposed social statement and that respecting bound conscience means that Christians who hold different, opposing viewpoints on a particular moral issue based upon their understanding of Scripture, reason, and tradition must



recognize and respect the bound conscience of their neighbor who disagrees, and must then behave in ways that would not cause the other person to reject the faith.

Pr. Strommen concluded the report by reading from the final paragraph of the social statement, which acknowledged the complexities and conflicts, the discoveries and joys of social and individual life but noted that “simultaneously captive to sin and yet liberated and forgiven people of faith, we walk together both humbly and boldly toward God’s promised future.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Pr. Strommen and Pr. Wengert, then called the assembly’s attention to the hearing on the proposed social statement to be held at 4:30 P.M. that afternoon.

## **Quasi Committee of the Whole: Social Statement on Human Sexuality**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, page 25; and “Order of Business.”

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson proposed that the assembly move into a time of discussion of the proposed social statement on human sexuality in the form of a quasi committee of the whole. He explained that the quasi committee of the whole would allow the assembly to talk about a matter without moving to formal action. Nonetheless, the conversation still would be guided by the rules of the assembly in terms of length of speeches, and no applause or other displays of support or opposition would be allowed. He called on Secretary David D. Swartling to make the motion to go into a quasi committee of the whole, but first he asked the consent of the assembly to extend the agenda to 11:15 A.M. Hearing no opposition, he so ordered.

Secretary Swartling pointed out a slight modification in the wording of the motion:

### **MOVED:**

### **SECONDED:**

To go into a quasi committee of the whole for a period of one hour, the initial portion of which will end at 11:10 A.M. and the conclusion will be in Plenary Three, to discuss the proposed recommended social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, the proposed implementing resolutions, and responses proposed by the Memorials Committee to synodical memorials on issues related to human sexuality. (This discussion does not include issues related to the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies, which will be the subject of a later discussion in a quasi committee of the whole.) The discussion will begin with brief conversations within the plenary hall, followed by discussion in the whole assembly. During the time of the discussion in the whole assembly, the rules regarding speaking on the floor in Part Three of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” will apply; people who are undecided or who want to ask questions may so indicate with a white card. In addition, during the quasi committee of the whole, no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.

Presiding Bishop Hanson instructed the voting members on the use of the voting pads and directed them to vote.

### **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

### **CA09.02.05**

**YES-880; NO-32**

**To go into a quasi committee of the whole for a period of one hour, the initial portion of which will end at 11:10 A.M. and the conclusion will be in Plenary Three, to discuss the proposed**

**recommended social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, the proposed implementing resolutions, and responses proposed by the Memorials Committee to synodical memorials on issues related to human sexuality. (This discussion does not include issues related to the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies, which will be the subject of a later discussion in a quasi committee of the whole.) The discussion will begin with brief conversations within the plenary hall, followed by discussion in the whole assembly. During the time of the discussion in the whole assembly, the rules regarding speaking on the floor in Part Three of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” will apply; people who are undecided or who want to ask questions may so indicate with a white card. In addition, during the quasi committee of the whole, no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.**

The motion having passed, Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the assembly was in a quasi committee of the whole. He called on the Rev. Stephen G. Marsh, bishop-elect of the Southeast Michigan Synod and a member of the prayer team, to pray.

The chair reminded voting members of the rules that would guide the discussion: no applause, three-minute time limits, and alternating speakers. He also reminded the assembly that a motion to amend would be out of order, and he warned that he would be strict in ruling any commentary on the ministry policies out of order, because those matters would be the subject of a separate discussion later in the assembly. He invited members to turn to their neighbors and briefly share their overall response to the proposed social statement. He then opened the floor to speaking.

Speaking in opposition, Mr. Robert D. Benne [Virginia Synod] stated that the most powerful words of the twentieth century were President Ronald Reagan’s command to President Mikhail Gorbachev: “Tear down this wall.” Mr. Benne said that his own words concerning the proposed social statement were “Call this off” because this decision would alter dramatically this church’s teachings on sexual behavior, leaving it with no teachings with which it could evaluate homosexual conduct. He argued that it would be intrinsically wrong to go forward with the social statement, stating that the Word of God should not be put to a vote. He expressed his belief that, if the assembly were to go forward with the social statement—which he thought would happen—that this church would no longer be part of the Church. He concluded by saying that the assembly should not be voting on the binding doctrine of the Church, but, failing that, he urged the assembly to vote against the social statement.

Mr. Y. T. Chiu [Northeastern Ohio Synod] stated that he had a proposal to offer for how to deal with speakers with white cards.

The chair ruled that he was out of order because the assembly was not in plenary.

Mr. Chiu indicated that, if he could not speak to the white card issue, he would speak to the social statement instead. He noted that he was not part of a White majority and that he had come to this country from a different land with a different belief. He declared, “I am homophobic.” He recounted that his pastor had given him the earlier 1993 proposed social statement to read. After studying it, Mr. Chiu said that he had discovered that he was wrong and was now a “reformed homophobic.” He commented that he knew he was a “poor miserable sinner” who

did not know much about theology—only that you should love your neighbor as you love yourself. He recalled that, when he was married some 45–50 years ago, he was not permitted to be married in his wife’s church, but now he had been accepted.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked him if he was speaking for or against. Mr. Chiu replied that he was speaking in favor.

Presiding Bishop Hanson urged him to bring his concern about the white card to the parliamentary.

Mr. Roy L. Gibbs [Northwestern Ohio Synod] stated that he was neither a bishop nor a pastor, but rather a farmer who works with God’s creation every day with his hands, living God’s faith every day. Each person present, he said, knows what is right and what is wrong; it had been written on people’s hearts and was reinforced when people read God’s Word, which he believes to be God’s law and which cannot be changed. Neither, he noted, could this assembly change what is right and what is wrong. He read from 2 Peter 2, and he asked assembly members to read that chapter that evening.

The Rev. Gladys G. Moore [New England Synod] expressed deep thanksgiving to the task force and encouraged passage of the social statement. She stated that it was a gift to be part of a Christian body that had studied, prayed, listened, and discussed, and was now ready to offer the gift of its theological and moral discernment to the Church and world. It was also a gift, she added, to be part of a church that models such a deliberative process in which people of faith can be different but not alienated from one another. She mentioned other ways that the proposed social statement was a gift and a trust and concluded by saying that the world was waiting for this church’s witness that sexuality does not have to divide the human family.

The Rev. Phillip R. Nielsen [Nebraska Synod] commented that his difficulty with the proposed social statement was that it oversimplified homosexual experience and did not address bisexual, transgender, or different kinds of homosexual experience, or what is dysfunctional or dissatisfying in those persons’ lives. He stated that both sides offered arguments from experience in one’s relationships—what is a joy and what is not—but asserted that such arguments from experience would always leave people divided. He said that this church’s unity comes from the Spirit working through the Word, so members have to wrestle with each other’s biblical and theological arguments, which he believed were not clearly and explicitly stated in the statement. He characterized the social statement as an “unstatement” because it did not make a public record of the theological and biblical arguments that members find compelling.

Mr. Phillip W. Moeller [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] spoke in favor, saying he resonated with the concept of serving the neighbor. He said, “I stand here as a gay man, but I stand here most centrally as one who has received the grace of Christ.” He told of his spiritual background and the importance of the interpretation of Scripture in his life. His father, a pastor, would read to him the Sunday texts when he was a small boy, ask him what they meant to him, and leave him to contemplate their meaning. This, he stated, was the way he grew to understand the love of Christ and to deal, as he became an adult, with his sexuality—within the concept of the Gospel and Scripture.

The Rev. Zachary N. Thompson [Saint Paul Area Synod] said he recently had heard a story about the daughter of a former bishop who announced that she was going to live with a man outside of marriage. While her parents were upset and stated that they still loved their daughter, they did not ask this church to change its historic position on sexuality or marriage. Personal experience, personal preference, or personal conscience, Pr. Thompson declared, could never “trump” the Word of God, and he stated that he saw this as the proposed statement’s fundamental flaw. He encouraged defeat of the statement.

Mr. Steven R. Chapman [Northwest Washington Synod], speaking in favor of the social statement, pointed out that it was already doing its job: teaching. He spoke about the Scripture reading—regarding the teaching on the wheat and the weeds in the field together—at his wedding to his partner, David. He stated that they had been together for 19 years, had two children, and were active in their community and congregation. Mr. Chapman gave witness to the strength of their relationship and said that they had promised to make their marriage one that would provide shelter and hospitality for all creation.

Mr. Wayne A. Jacobson [Northeastern Iowa Synod] stated that he had yet to be convinced from Scripture, the Confessions, or Church tradition that changing the current teaching and practice would be the right thing to do. He asserted that there were no passages in Scripture that spoke positively of homosexual practice, while there were many passages that spoke approvingly of heterosexual relationships and the covenant of marriage. If this church cannot construct an argument for blessing same-sex unions, he asked, how could it call itself a biblical, Book of Faith church? If Scripture does not bless same-sex unions, how can this church do so? he asked. Because he believed scriptural support to be missing, he urged the assembly to vote against the statement.

Mr. Larry A. Christensen [Southeastern Iowa Synod] spoke of growing up in the Calvinist tradition, then becoming Lutheran, in part because Lutherans identify that all are sinful, with the remedy being the grace of God. He said he was astounded at what he heard as self-righteousness in the arguments being made, expressing his astonishment that apparently some felt that they were in a position to judge others, exactly what Jesus had told his followers not to do. If this church were looking for a biblical basis for the social statement, he suggested, it should look to Jesus' teaching: "Judge not that you be not judged."

The Rev. David N. Glesne [Minneapolis Area Synod] asserted that he was stating the obvious when pointing out that, if the ELCA were to embrace the social statement on human sexuality, it would mean that the official teaching of the ELCA was that sexual intimacy outside of marriage is acceptable. He reasoned that same-sex intercourse was sex outside of marriage. If this exception were allowed, he asked, what about cohabitation, bisexuality, transgenderism, polygamy, and polyandrous relationships? He argued that, for the sake of faithfulness to Christ and love of the neighbor, not least of whom are children, this church should reflect very deeply before taking that step. He stated his belief that this church must hold fast to Christ's "original line," and he urged defeat of the proposal.

The Rev. Ann M. Tiemeyer [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke in favor of the social statement, observing that the biblical passage in which Christ said that he came that people might have life and have it abundantly was at the heart of the biblical witness. She acknowledged that all members agreed on the authority of Scripture, even though they held various interpretations of it. But, she said, Jesus' words about the abundant life provided a lens for her to interpret Scripture and evaluate the social statement before the assembly. When this statement speaks against commercialization of the human body, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking, and when it calls for sex education and for this church to challenge the stigmatization and discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS, it speaks a biblical mandate for life abundant. It also offers hope to this church's teenagers and to all who wrestle with their sexual orientation and contemplate suicide. She urged the assembly to stand on this biblical mandate and adopt the social statement.

Mr. John G. Barnes [Pacifica Synod] observed that the proposed sexuality statement made a great deal of what it called the "bound conscience," which it claimed to originate with Martin Luther. He stated that neither Luther nor St. Paul ever talked about conscience in the way the sexuality statement does. The study, he said, made it sound as if everyone's conscience was

automatically right, true, and not subject to error, while St. Paul recognized that conscience could be stained by sin, and Luther knew that conscience without Scripture could never be a moral compass. He asserted that adopting the social statement, which in his opinion redefined marriage and the ethic of marriage, would “trash the moral foundation of every Christian conscience in the ELCA.” He concluded that this church must be bound to the Word of God, not to members’ own inclinations and desires and urged defeat of the social statement.

The Rev. John K. Stendahl [New England Synod] expressed his appreciation for the social statement’s insightful thinking in the matter of trust, stating that this hermeneutical key made the statement “the most Lutheran one that Lutherans have ever produced.” Faith is relational trust, he explained, and not just a set of propositions. He said that, as he thought about the expression and nurture of a blessing of trust in relationships and families, he was reminded of the story of Bruce and David, who, in losing one of their twin daughters shortly after baptism, were surrounded by a community of love and trust that continues to bless them. Referring to Jesus’ words in Mark 3, he commented that if this church were to say to people like Bruce and David that their love, faithfulness, and partnership was unclean, unacceptable, disordered, and an abomination, he prayed that members would hear Jesus saying, “Don’t you dare do that. That’s inexcusable.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the initial time for a quasi committee of the whole to discuss the proposed social statement had expired and would conclude during Plenary Three.

## **Announcements**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson indicated that before other announcements, he wanted to recognize a remarkable group of 80 young people who were present at the Churchwide Assembly as part of a young rostered leaders’ event for those in their first call who were age 31 or younger. The assembly applauded.

Presiding Bishop Hanson then called on Secretary David D. Swartling for announcements. Among other announcements, Secretary Swartling reminded the assembly of the deadline of 2:00 P.M. that afternoon for offering amendments to the proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*. He told voting members that the deadline was not applicable to proposed amendments to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. That deadline was 11:15 A.M. on Wednesday, August 19. He said worship would begin at 11:30 A.M. in Hall D.

Presiding Bishop Hanson introduced another of the finalist videos in the “God’s work. Our hands.” video competition.

He then called on the Rev. David E. Jensen, member of the Church Council from Minocqua, Wis., to pray.

## **Recess**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared the second plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to be in recess at 11:17 A.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Three

Tuesday, August 18, 2009

2:00 P.M.–4:15 P.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), called Plenary Session Three of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 2:00 P.M. CDT on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

The members of the assembly joined together in singing “Praise the One,” page 30 in *Worship and Song*. An additional video entry in the “God’s work. Our hands.” competition was projected for the assembly. The presiding bishop recognized those who had led in worship over the noon hour: the Rev. Megan L. Torgerson, St. Paul, Minn., preacher; the Rev. Marva M. Jenkins, St. Albans, N.Y., presider; and Mr. Roosevelt A. Credit, New York, N.Y., singer. The assembly responded with applause.

## Review of the Agenda

Reference: “Order of Business.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson reviewed the agenda for the afternoon’s session:

- consideration of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative;
- the final 20-minute portion of the quasi committee of the whole discussion on the proposed social statement;
- the report of the vice president and Church Council;
- greetings from the Lutheran Youth Organization president;
- a report of the Memorials Committee;
- an update from the *Ad Hoc* Committee;
- an orientation to the hearings; and
- announcements, closing hymn, and prayer.

The chair informed the assembly that the report of Secretary David D. Swartling has been rescheduled for Wednesday.

## Consideration: Lutheran Malaria Initiative

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 15–18.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson introduced the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI), saying that this was an initiative with both new and familiar partners and with an amazing goal. He welcomed the following to the stage for a presentation of the LMI: Ms. Elizabeth McKee-Gore, executive director for partnership alliances for the United Nations Foundation (UNF); the Rev. John A. Nunes, president and chief executive officer of Lutheran World Relief (LWR); the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission program unit; Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, president of the ELCA Foundation and executive director of the Development Services unit; and the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator for the LMI and for the HIV and AIDS Strategy in the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl explained how the LMI fits into the mission of the ELCA and into its World Hunger appeal. She proposed that Lutherans had something in common with Susan Boyle, a contestant on the television show, “Britain’s Got Talent.” Lutherans may seem awkward on the world’s stage and a little self-conscious of their involvement with

malaria-fighting efforts alongside the “star power” that has arisen to support these efforts. Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl affirmed, “This is a song we can sing; this is a dream we can achieve; this is a stage which we can stand on with our partners.” She continued, “This is God’s work, but uniquely in our hands, brought to this task for the sake of the world.” The UNF had been looking for faith-based organizations with which to partner to end malaria, and Lutheran World Relief (LWR) rose to the surface in their deliberations. LWR then turned to the ELCA and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), its partners in mission, and from this alliance the LMI had been proposed. It embodies the dream of eliminating malaria in sub-Saharan Africa. Malaria and HIV and AIDS are intensified by poverty, and the corresponding initiative and strategy are placed under the umbrella of the World Hunger appeal. Both offer new donor possibilities, plus a strengthening of offerings from those who already give generously. The UNF has provided a \$2.8 million startup grant.

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl introduced to the assembly Ms. Elizabeth McKee-Gore, who thanked leaders of the ELCA for their support when they were approached with this proposal and said that the UNF was proud to partner with the ELCA and the LCMS. She reported that 500,000,000 people each year are infected with malaria, and 1,000,000 die annually. Pregnant women, refugees, and children are the most vulnerable. In fact, one child dies every 30 seconds from this disease. This mosquito-borne disease is both preventable and treatable; anti-malarial drugs are available, and insecticide-treated bed nets can prevent the spread of the disease. “Nothing But Nets” is a special program that provides long-lasting, insecticide-treated nets for a \$10 fee that includes transportation for the nets and training sessions for those who will be teaching people how to use them. Ms. McKee-Gore said that the UN has set a goal of eliminating malaria deaths by 2015. The LMI reflects one of the ELCA’s core values, which is to reach out and respond to God’s graciousness by helping to bring health, justice, and hope to people who might otherwise have very little of those things. Ms. McKee-Gore concluded by saying that she looks forward to working with everyone in the ELCA to make the LMI a success.

The Rev. John A. Nunes began his address to the assembly by proclaiming, “Malaria kills.” He reminded participants that LWR is a witness to the power of cooperative work. He gave the example of the malaria prevention and treatment program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), by which 135,000 community members and 27,000 Sunday school children have been reached through 500 trained ELCT leaders. Pr. Nunes unveiled the official LMI logo, which features a weave of crosses, of lines representing Lutheran partners, and the interweaving of people who work to make a difference as malaria is eradicated. Pr. Nunes suggested that an unanticipated benefit of this program, particularly the “Nothing But Nets” initiative, will be to energize people, particularly young people, who may have withdrawn from the Church. He shared his hope that the LMI would break malaria’s death grip on the developing world. “Together, we can become God’s answer to some mother’s prayers for her dying child.”

The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit, reminded voting members that missionaries first brought health care concerns to mission fields around the world. That concern continues today as the ELCA supports hospitals and provides doctors, nurses, and health care professionals for its companion churches. Pr. Malpica cautioned against a “quick-fix” mentality. “Malaria is about more than a virus and the mosquitoes that spread it. It is about poverty,” he stressed. People living in poverty are more likely to suffer from malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV and AIDS. Many do not have access to health education, health care, and life-saving drugs. Adequate nutrition is a serious concern. That is why the LMI is under the umbrella of the World Hunger appeal. Gifts to the LMI will augment the \$3.8 million given to Lutheran World Relief through the World Hunger appeal. Beginning with churches in Kenya

and Tanzania, new ground-breaking partnerships are being created with Lutheran communions in southern Africa.

Pr. Malpica introduced a video of a conversation among the Rev. Naison Shave, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe; Ms. Verna Mzezewa, HIV and AIDS coordinator for the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa; and Bishop Ambrose Moyo, executive director, Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa. Bp. Moyo told of a trip he took to Malawi to study HIV and AIDS, not malaria. But while he was there, he met a small child who was suffering from malaria. Bp. Moyo realized that he could not ignore this disease, even as his church studied another one. Bp. Shave urged that health care facilities be brought close to the people so that they would have access to treatment. His goal was that the church and the government work together to fight malaria. Bp. Moyo expressed his hope that bishops and pastors would be agents of change, mobilizing people so that the incidence of malaria would be reduced. Ms. Mzezewa spoke of the church being rooted in the community and reported that the church is well situated to influence the government and to mobilize community efforts.

Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson stated that, as this church deepens its work to alleviate disease, hunger, and poverty in the world, it provides a new opportunity to engage more of its members, especially young people and those not currently involved in the mission and ministry of this church. The plan is to begin this work in the next two years, working in concert with LWR and LCMS to develop resources and materials, to build awareness, to develop six or more pilot synodical campaigns, and to engage major donors. Before the end of 2009, a plan should be in place to initiate a Lutheran “Nothing But Nets” program that will enable Lutherans across this church to raise millions of dollars by inviting both members and others in the community to purchase insecticide-treated bed nets for \$10 each. However, nets alone will not end malaria, so moving into 2011 this church will intensify its efforts to challenge this whole church to join with the second-mile giving that will enable the ELCA to reach the collective \$75 million goal over five years. Ms. Halvorsen informed the assembly that 70 percent of the dollars raised through the ELCA will support ELCA-related malaria work through Global Mission, the companion churches, and LWR, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, an effort will be made to implement programs with a special emphasis on building this church’s capacity and that of this church’s companions to manage new efforts and to access other resources. Thirty percent of the money raised will be shared with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. The Global Fund provides grant assistance in developing countries based on the proposals and decisions of local leaders, government officials, and nonprofit and faith-based organizations. The engagement of the LMI with the Global Fund will help provide the efforts with sustainability. The additional funding specifically for nets will be raised through the Lutheran “Nothing But Nets” program. LWR will help decide where the nets are most needed.

Ms. Halverson said that the task will be one requiring great effort, but as she has seen in her work over and over again, this church has the capacity to do unbelievable things because it knows and believes that “with God all things are possible.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked Secretary David D. Swartling to read the motion to be considered.

**MOVED:** To approve continued development of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in partnership with Lutheran World Relief (LWR), The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), and the United Nations Foundation (UNF);



To join with domestic and global partners to address malaria as a disease intensified by poverty within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development and in close cooperation and partnership with this church's companion churches in Africa and the Lutheran World Federation;

To begin work related to LMI in the next biennium (2009–2011), specifically involving preparation of resources, pilot projects at sites to be determined, solicitation of individual donors, and collaboration with synods and congregations for anticipated LMI fundraising engagement following the 2011 Churchwide Assembly;

To develop the Lutheran Malaria Initiative in ways that reinforce efforts by the World Hunger appeal both to achieve its \$25 million goal and to continue to raise designated funds to address another disease intensified by poverty: HIV and AIDS;

To authorize continued receipt of designated LMI gifts under the auspices of the World Hunger appeal, with such funds to be allocated through a specific budget for this initiative;

To request that a report and recommendations for a possible churchwide campaign for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative be brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and

To anticipate that this whole church—members of every age, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, agencies and institutions, the Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, the Lutheran Youth Organization, colleges and universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, camping ministries, and all others—will learn about malaria and other diseases intensified by poverty and prayerfully support the Lutheran Malaria Initiative as it grows into readiness for a possible major fundraising campaign in synods and congregations following authorizing action by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

The presiding bishop informed the assembly that the recommendation could now be discussed because it had come from the Church Council and did not require a second.

The Rev. Paul A. Tidemann [Saint Paul Area Synod] proposed an amendment to line 6, paragraph 2:

**MOVED:**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend paragraph 2, line 6, by addition:*

To join with domestic and global partners to address malaria as a disease intensified by poverty within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development and in close cooperation and partnership with this church's companion churches in Africa, South America, especially Guyana, and India, and the Lutheran World Federation;

Pr. Tidemann addressed his motion by testifying that he had served in Guyana and was aware of malaria there and in the other areas that he proposed be added to the initiative.

The Rev. James F. Mauney, bishop of the Virginia Synod, asked if the LMI were an intentional strategy focusing on sub-Saharan Africa.

Pr. Malpica responded that mortality due to malaria in sub-Saharan Africa was the highest in the world, so the initiative will focus there initially. As time went on, he stated, consideration will be given to adding other areas.

The Rev. Robin M. Ramos [Northeastern Iowa Synod] asked that the amendment be rewritten to indicate that Guyana is not part of South America. The presiding bishop assured the assembly that Guyana is in fact part of South America.

Mr. John M. Prabhakar [Northern Illinois Synod] rose to support the amendment, affirming that malaria is a prevalent disease in India.

The Rev. Paul J. Owens [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] asked whether adding other areas of the world would make this motion problematic for this church's partners.

Ms. McKee-Gore replied that the UNF had decided to focus on Africa, where deaths from malaria are the highest, and then move to subsequent areas.

Hearing no further debate, the chair called for a vote on Pr. Tidemann's amendment. The chair called for a voice vote, because of reports of voting machine malfunctions.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**VOICE VOTE**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend paragraph 2, line 6, by addition:*

To join with domestic and global partners to address malaria as a disease intensified by poverty within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development and in close cooperation and partnership with this church's companion churches in Africa, South America, especially Guyana, and India, and the Lutheran World Federation;

The chair declared that the motion was defeated. The presiding bishop informed the assembly that the entire action on the LMI was now before the assembly.

The Rev. Gladys G. Moore [New England Synod] told the assembly that she was thankful for the initiative. She reminded the assembly of the death from malaria seven years previously of the Rev. Will L. Herzfeld, associate executive director of the Global Mission unit. She encouraged the assembly members not only to vote for this initiative during the assembly but to go home and vote for it with their dollars.

The Rev. Jan A. Ruud [Southwestern Washington Synod] announced his support of this initiative. He spoke of his time in Cameroon, where in one month he conducted four funerals for children two years of age and younger who had died from malaria.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] asked if the LMI would be an umbrella initiative for water-borne diseases.

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl replied that the LMI would focus on malaria.

Mr. John M. Prabhakar [Northern Illinois Synod] spoke in favor of the initiative and encouraged the emphasis to be on more than just raising funds. The ELCA has many additional gifts to bring to the table, he asserted.

Mr. Renato A. Rodriguez [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] asked if the funds to begin the initiative were included in the budget that was presented earlier.

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl stated that the UNF was giving start-up funds of \$2.8 million to the LMI.

Ms. Linda S. Gotthardt-Allende [Northeastern Ohio Synod] asked with what were the nets treated.

Ms. McKee-Gore responded that the nets were treated with a chemical that is non-toxic for humans and approved by the World Health Organization.

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] spoke in favor of the initiative, affirming that the disease is directly related to poverty.

Mr. Richard T. Wintersteen [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] supported the initiative, reporting that he had worked in sub-Saharan Africa and seen with his own eyes the effectiveness of nets. He stressed the necessity of getting medical treatment to rural areas.

Mr. Joseph S. Roberts [Minneapolis Area Synod] said that he has had malaria and had lost a sister to the disease. He reported that while in Liberia, he transported a child sick with malaria, who died on the way to treatment.

Mr. Eric D. Wong [Northeastern Minnesota Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-829; NO-9**

**CARRIED**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, Presiding Bishop Hanson requested that the Rev. Marie C. Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, lead the assembly in prayer.

The chair called for the vote on the main motion on the Lutheran Malaria Initiative.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION**

**YES-989; NO-11**

#### **CA09.02.06**

**To approve continued development of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in partnership with Lutheran World Relief (LWR), The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), and the United Nations Foundation (UNF);**

**To join with domestic and global partners to address malaria as a disease intensified by poverty within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development and in close cooperation and partnership with this church’s companion churches in Africa and the Lutheran World Federation;**

**To begin work related to LMI in the next biennium (2009–2011), specifically involving preparation of resources, pilot projects at sites to be determined, solicitation of individual donors, and collaboration with synods and congregations for anticipated LMI fundraising engagement following the 2011 Churchwide Assembly;**

**To develop the Lutheran Malaria Initiative in ways that reinforce efforts by the World Hunger appeal both to achieve its \$25 million goal and to continue to raise designated funds to address another disease intensified by poverty: HIV and AIDS;**

**To authorize continued receipt of designated LMI gifts under the auspices of the World Hunger appeal, with such funds to be allocated through a specific budget for this initiative;**

**To request that a report and recommendations for a possible churchwide campaign for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative be brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and**

**To anticipate that this whole church—members of every age, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, agencies and institutions, the Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, the Lutheran Youth Organization, colleges and universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, camping ministries, and all others—will learn about malaria and other diseases intensified by poverty and prayerfully support the Lutheran Malaria Initiative as it grows into readiness for a possible major fundraising campaign in synods and congregations following authorizing action by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.**

The chair declared that the motion had passed, and the assembly responded with applause.

### **Quasi Committee of the Whole: Social Statement on Human Sexuality**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, page 25; and "Order of Business."

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that the assembly would next move back into quasi committee of the whole for continuation of the discussion of the proposed social statement on human sexuality.

Mr. Roald W. Haugan [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] asked if the assembly could express support for those organizations that have been distributing treated mosquito nets.

The presiding bishop ruled Mr. Haugan out of order because the assembly had moved into a quasi committee of the whole and no other matters could be considered at the present time.

The Rev. Janice A. Campbell [Southwestern Texas Synod] stated that the Bible contains passages that condemn slavery and support the rights of women. However, she asserted, no one could make a positive case from Scripture about same-gender unions. Given her belief that a biblical case for same-gender unions cannot be made, she argued that this church could not bless same-gender unions.

Ms. Nicole M. Garcia [Rocky Mountain Synod] told the assembly that she had been on the verge of suicide when she went to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Denver. Her pastor told her, "Read your Bible." She reported that she found Matthew 22:36 and Acts 8:26–39 particularly important to her. As a transgendered Latina, she saw in these passages that she could be baptized, that she is a child of God, and that she is saved. She added that during a seven-year period, the congregation had helped her to grow into being a strong, confident Latina, a minister, and an evangelist. Now she preaches to those who doubt that this Gospel is for them and that they are saved because Jesus is Lord. At the same time, she reported that the congregation supported its pastor as he served on the Task Force on ELCA Studies on Sexuality. She declared that it was now time for the ELCA to step forward and realize that members must put more effort into loving their neighbors as themselves.

Mr. Karl E. Moyer [Lower Susquehanna Synod] stated that Lutherans continue to confuse Law and Gospel, wanting God and God's grace on their own terms. When God does not satisfy people's terms, they reject God's expectations for them, he argued. He warned that, if the assembly were to approve the proposed social statement, this church should anticipate greater frustration among its members.

Ms. Joanne Chadwick [Sierra Pacific Synod] told of beginning a 40-year period of searching Scriptures with regard to women's issues and gay and lesbian issues. She asked that the assembly support the proposed social statement.

The Rev. N. Craig Werling [South Dakota Synod] spoke of all being in bondage to sin. He declared that emotions unrestrained by reason were merely instinct and argued that feelings must be put aside in order to follow the Lord. He defined the central issue in the debate as one of authority.

The Rev. Erik T. R. Samuelson [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] related his experience of preaching the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. He wondered how Philip was changed by being in contact with the profound other. Pr. Samuelson raised the question, "Will we be in community together to proclaim the Gospel?" He called on members of this church to lead others to the font.

The Rev. Judith A. McKee [Lower Susquehanna Synod] thanked the three dissenting members of the task force. She raised the concept of bound conscience and asked how the assembly could adopt a statement that says, "Some of us believe this. Some of us believe that."

The Rev. Jay M. McDivitt [Rocky Mountain Synod] expressed gratitude that this church was confronting a "scandalous and demonic culture." He called this church to spread the grace that enfolds all. He expressed his conviction that this proposal was a good statement, not a perfect statement.

The presiding bishop called an end to the quasi committee of the whole. He informed the members of the assembly that their places in the queues would not carry over to the next session.

The Rev. Karol E. Hendricks-McCracken [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege. She asked that the assembly pause every 20 minutes for prayer during consideration of the proposed social statement on human sexuality.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that he hated to vote on whether or not to pray and instead would accept her proposal as good spiritual advice. He then requested the assembly's consent to extend the plenary to 4:10 P.M. Hearing no objection, it was so ordered.

## **Report of the Ad Hoc Committee**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9–10, and 13.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee, brought a brief update on the work of the committee. He stated that the committee had two responsibilities: One was to work with people who sought changes to the proposed social statement on human sexuality and the Recommendation on Ministry Policies; the second was to facilitate the assembly's process. The report and recommendations from the *ad hoc* committee would be distributed to the assembly on Wednesday afternoon prior to consideration of the social statement.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Pr. Loy and the members of the *ad hoc* committee for their work on behalf of the assembly.

## **Report of the Vice President and Church Council**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 6, 10, 31, and 38; Section IX, pages 1–33.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Vice President Carlos E. Peña to give the report of the vice president and Church Council. The presiding bishop expressed his profound gratitude for Mr. Peña's leadership and service.

Mr. Peña began his report by reading to the assembly Philippians 3:7–11 and leading the assembly in prayer.

He stated that this assembly was special for him because it represented the end of his six-year term as vice president of this church. He reported that he had attended 17 Church Council meetings, 41 Executive Committee meetings, 27 Synod Assemblies, six regional

consultations, and 12 meetings of the Conference of Bishops. The vice president said that he had learned that his business could do without him. He spoke of the growth he has experienced in his faith and knowledge. He stated that he knew that his heart had grown, his outlook of the world had broadened, and that he was incredibly blessed.

Mr. Peña related that Hurricane Ike had hit his hometown of Galveston, Texas, on September 13, 2008. It seemed to him that all that he and his father had worked for had been ruined. He said he did not know how he would have handled this situation without his faith. He expressed appreciation to all who came to help, including his synodical bishop, Presiding Bishop Hanson, his pastor, and 300 Lutheran Disaster Response volunteers. At a prayer service, he realized that he was not alone. "I survived Ike. My growth as a Christian made it possible."

Mr. Peña informed the assembly that he would allow his name to be put forward for a second term as vice president.

The vice president thanked the members of the Church Council, asking them to stand to receive the gratitude of the assembly. The assembly expressed its appreciation with applause. Mr. Peña informed the assembly that the work of the Church Council between assemblies was described in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* (14.11.): "This church shall have a Church Council which shall be the board of directors of this church and shall serve as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly." He explained that this description meant that part of the Church Council's work had been responding to 2007 Churchwide Assembly actions, as well as preparing for and transmitting recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. A full report of Church Council actions for the biennium was provided in Section IX of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*.

Mr. Peña noted that there were eight specific recommendations transmitted by the Church Council to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. All were included in Section IV of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*. He pointed out that the Church Council had transmitted to this Churchwide Assembly recommendations related to the following:

1. full communion with The United Methodist Church;
2. funding of the HIV and AIDS Strategy;
3. the Lutheran Malaria Initiative;
4. the proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*;
5. the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies;
6. a future social statement topic: Justice for Women;
7. proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions*; and
8. the budget proposal for 2010–2011.

The Church Council also had received updates on the reports and informational items included in Section V of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*. These included the following:

- the Report of the Communal Discernment Task Force;
- the Report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding;
- an update on the Plan for Mission;
- the HIV and AIDS Strategy; and
- background material on justice for women, ethnic ministry strategies, and other topics.

Mr. Peña closed with words of thanks to the churchwide officers and staff, to his wife Diane, and to his fellow Lutherans.

The assembly responded to the vice president's report with applause.

## Orientation to Hearings

Reference: "Order of Business."

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson urged voting members to attend the various hearings slated for that afternoon and evening. He explained that the hearings had two main purposes: First, to help voting members get oriented to the specific legislative items that they would be asked to consider and to get answers to specific questions about them; and second, to have a smaller setting for members to share their thoughts about the proposals that will be coming before the body, while learning what other voting members were thinking about those matters. He explained that hearings are scheduled early in the assembly so that voting members will have a less formal opportunity to learn what the key issues are and to talk with others about them. This process offers the possibility of a more informed discussion when the assembly debates and acts on the proposals in plenaries. In addition, the hearings for this assembly would include updates or information sessions about non-legislative items.

The chair explained that visitors and non-voting members were welcome to attend hearings as space permits. He reminded all present that only voting members, advisory members, other members of the assembly, resource members, official visitors, and other categories of people approved by the Churchwide Assembly would be permitted voice in the hearings.

Secretary David D. Swartling referred voting members and others to the "Order of Business," Plenary Session Three, page 5, for the schedule. He noted that there would be two sets of hearings, one from 4:30 to 5:30 P.M. and another from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. Dinner would be served between 5:30 and 6:30 P.M.

## Announcements

Secretary David D. Swartling announced a number of important deadlines for the following day. Wednesday, August 19, at 11:15 A.M. would be the deadline for submission of proposed amendments to the governing documents; removal from *en bloc* consideration of amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions*; and proposed amendments to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. He also pointed out that the deadline for nominations from the floor was at 2:00 P.M., Wednesday, August 19.

He made a number of additional logistical announcements.

The secretary informed the assembly that the *College Corporation Meetings* booklet would be distributed on Wednesday, August 19, in advance of the college corporation meetings to be held at 4:30 P.M.

The secretary stated that all voting members should have received the book, *They Are Us: Lutherans and Immigration*, by the Rev. Stephen Bouman and Mr. Ralston Deffenbaugh. The authors would be available at 6:30 P.M. to autograph their book.

He announced that the parliamentarian, the Rev. Lyle A. Kleman, and the Rev. Duane E. Miller [Southeastern Iowa Synod], a registered professional parliamentarian, would be available to voting members with parliamentary questions.

Presiding Bishop Hanson informed the assembly that the morning offering totaled \$8,986.47. He expressed his gratitude to the assembly for its generosity.

The presiding bishop urged assembly members to continue reflecting on their work together by contemplating the question, "What has been our witness this day?" He encouraged them to capture their reflections on this question in their journals.

## Recess

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called upon Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr., a member of the Church Council from Harrisburg, Pa., to lead the assembly in a closing hymn and prayer. The

assembly sang, “The Church of Christ in Every Age.” Mr. Lloyd then led the assembly in prayer.

The third plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 4:15 P.M. CDT.



# Plenary Session Four

Wednesday, August 19, 2009

8:00 A.M.–11:00 A.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), lit a candle and rang a bell, and he then called Plenary Session Four of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 8:00 A.M. CDT on Wednesday, August 19, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn. He called upon the Rev. J. Paul Rajashekar, member of the Church Council from Philadelphia, Pa., to lead the assembly in prayer. Pr. Rajashekar invited the assembly to sing the hymn, “Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?” He then offered a reading from 1 Peter and led the assembly in prayer.

## Opening Remarks

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson alerted voting members to the fact that several items from the agenda for Plenary Session Three had been moved to the current session, including the Report of the Secretary, a greeting from the newly elected president of the Lutheran Youth Organization, and testimony from one of the ELCA’s congregations that are growing in evangelical mission. Presiding Bishop Hanson called upon the Rev. William T. Tesch, director for evangelical mission, South Dakota Synod.

Pr. Tesch spoke of Springdale Lutheran Church, Springdale, S.D., a congregation that had faced a crisis of survival. For 30 years it had continued its ministry largely intent on surviving. Several years ago, though, five members of Springdale and its pastor had attended a transformational ministry event with other congregations in the ELCA’s Region Three. Today, Springdale Lutheran is imbued with new-found evangelical passion and is spending its funds for mission, instead of for survival. It plans on calling a lay evangelical leader to train members in discipleship and to organize them to reach out to new neighbors with the good news that God, in Jesus Christ, does not leave us alone. The assembly received Pr. Tesch’s message with applause.

## Consideration: Funding of the HIV and AIDS Strategy

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 11–13; Section V, pages 45–73.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson turned the assembly’s attention to the consideration of the resolution on funding the HIV and AIDS Strategy. He called on Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA, to read the proposed action.

### **MOVED:**

To request the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to approve the initiation of efforts over the next three years (2009–2012) to raise \$10 million to support the HIV and AIDS Strategy through additional designated gifts within the World Hunger appeal, acknowledging that the \$1 million goal encouraged by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly is to be included in the \$10 million goal.

Because the recommendation came from the Church Council, no second was necessary.

Presiding Bishop Hanson recognized Ms. Faith A. Ashton [North Carolina Synod], who moved to amend the rules to limit speaking during debate to two minutes.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** To amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” Part Three: “. . . [A]ll speeches during discussion shall be limited to ~~three~~ two minutes.” [*The rest remains unchanged.*]

The chair invited Ms. Ashton to speak to her motion. Ms. Ashton noted that at the end of the quasi committee of the whole in Plenary Session Three, 30 people had been left standing at microphones, unable to address the assembly. She expressed her belief that the change in the rules would address a question of fairness by allowing additional people to speak.

Presiding Bishop Hanson inquired of the parliamentarian whether or not Ms. Ashton’s motion was in order, since there was a pending motion before the assembly. After consultation, the chair ruled that the motion was in order and that it pertained to all matters before the house.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the assembly whether there was any further debate on the motion to limit speeches.

The Rev. Steven R. Frock [Western Iowa Synod] questioned whether the motion was in order, arguing that it had already been considered in Plenary Session One.

The chair replied that the motion was in order because, in the course of its work, the body can reconsider its rules, with a two-thirds vote required to amend those rules.

Ms. Susan D. Ruggles [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke against the motion, observing that there were groups of people who could coordinate their efforts in speaking for or against an issue, and thus she believed that the assembly should continue to allow three minutes for speeches.

Ms. Katherine N. Knoerzer [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] moved to close debate.

Before considering the motion, the chair recognized Pr. Frock again, who stated that he believed that in Plenary Session One the assembly had passed a resolution requiring that there be opportunity for at least three speakers on each side of any issue being debated before the house. The chair replied that the motion had been made but had been defeated. He then called on the assembly to vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-827; NO-55**

**CARRIED:** The previous question.

Debate having ended, Presiding Bishop Hanson instructed the assembly to vote on the main motion.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-438; NO-200**

**CA09.03.07** To amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” Part Three: “. . . [A]ll speeches during discussion shall be limited to ~~three~~ two minutes.” [*The rest remains unchanged.*]

The chair declared that the amendment to the rules was adopted.

The presiding bishop turned the assembly’s attention to the motion before the body pertaining to funding for the HIV and AIDS Strategy. Bishop Hanson opened the floor to discussion.

The Rev. Matthew D. Bode [Southeast Michigan Synod] spoke in favor of funding the strategy, relating stories of ministry at Spirit of Hope Lutheran Church, Detroit, Mich., which included a community kitchen, a food pantry, and a program to distribute condoms.

The Rev. Paul W. Stumme-Diers, bishop of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, spoke in favor as well, expressing his hope that this church would develop “a faith-born program to battle this blood-borne disease.”

The Rev. Melissa L. Stoller [Northeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke in favor of the strategy, citing her experience as an intern at a congregation in Moscow, Russia, where she had heard from people working for international agencies and non-governmental organizations about the need to fight this disease now.

Mr. John M. Prabhaker [Northern Illinois Synod] spoke in favor of funding the strategy, sharing with the assembly that he had treated patients with HIV and AIDS in many countries and had seen the devastation of this illness in families, countries, and churches.

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] spoke in favor of the funding proposal, describing a long-term care facility in Germantown, Pa., for people living with AIDS. He observed that it was the Church that had worked to end the stigma attached to HIV and AIDS, and he saw this strategy as an opportunity to be able to report that this church is saying that fighting HIV and AIDS is worthy of its attention, resources, and time.

Mr. Caleb L. Geleske [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

*TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED*

**SECONDED;**

*YES-887; NO-32*

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson instructed the assembly to vote on funding for the HIV and AIDS Strategy.

## **ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

*YES-884; NO-41*

**CA09.03.08**

**To request the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to approve the initiation of efforts over the next three years (2009–2012) to raise \$10 million to support the HIV and AIDS Strategy through additional designated gifts within the World Hunger appeal, acknowledging that the \$1 million goal encouraged by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly is to be included in the \$10 million goal.**

The chair declared that the action had passed. Noting that he had failed to do so before the vote, Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson, member of the Church Council from Garretson, S.D., to lead the assembly in prayer.

## **Greeting: Lutheran Youth Organization**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson introduced Ms. Nicolette Faison, Elmont, N.Y., the newly elected president of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO). Ms. Faison brought greetings from the LYO, which had met in convention July 26–30, 2009, in Hattiesburg, Miss. She reported that the youth had come together for one reason: Christ. They embraced different styles of praise and worship, spent hours in the ballroom, and considered many resolutions, all of

which eventually were voted on. One resolution that had little debate and the near unanimous approval of the LYO was its Resolution 15, which advocated that LYO show support for the proposed social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and for the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, and called on LYO voting members at the Churchwide Assembly to share the substance of this resolution with the other voting members. At the conclusion of her remarks, the assembly gave Ms. Faison a standing ovation.

### **Video Contest: “God’s Work. Our Hands.”**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson introduced an additional video entry in the “God’s work. Our hands.” video contest. The video, “Let It Shine,” was submitted by Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bozeman, Mont.

### **Report: Credentials Committee**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9 and 40.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. David A. Ullrich, associate general counsel and vice chair of the Credentials Committee, to give its report. Mr. Ullrich reported that 1,043 voting members had registered for the assembly as of 8:00 A.M.

### **Elections: First Ballot for Vice President**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15–16, 18–20; Section IV, page 1.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson invited voting members to turn their attention to the next item of business, the first ballot for the election of the vice president of the ELCA. He outlined from the governing documents the duties and responsibilities of the vice president, the eligibility requirements, and the length of term. He invited members to refer as well to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” Part Sixteen, which described the election process for vice president.

After briefly explaining the balloting process for vice president, Presiding Bishop Hanson noted that any lay member of the ELCA who is a voting member of an ELCA congregation could have his or her name submitted for nomination on the first ballot and that rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament were not eligible for nomination. He also alerted voting members to the fact that, after the initial nominating ballot, no additional nominations could be made. He then asked the synodical bishops to distribute the ballots to the voting members from their synods. After the ballots were distributed, the presiding bishop led the assembly in prayer. After time for voting members to complete their ballots, the chair declared the first ballot for vice president closed.

### **Evangelical Outreach Testimony**

The chair invited the Rev. Darryl D. Thompson Powell, pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church, Chicago, Ill., to share Bethany’s story as an ELCA congregation growing in mission.

Pr. Powell related that at Bethany Lutheran Church, an African-descent congregation, members realized that to reach youth and young adults, their congregation needed to speak to them in their own language. As a result, Bethany started “The Joint,” a hip-hop ministry based on the four pillars of hip-hop: deejaying, rap, graffiti, and dance. “The Joint” sponsors hip-hop worship, end-of-school and back-to-school festivals, and Juneteenth celebrations to commemorate the ending of slavery in the United States. In addition to reaching young people, Bethany recognized that there was another generation that had not grown up in the church, so it started “Jazz on the Grass,” an outdoor live-music series. Pr. Powell observed that having the

activities outdoors enabled the entire community, not just the congregation, to experience the excitement of Bethany's mission statement: "Going, Growing, and Glowing in Christ."

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Pr. Powell for sharing his testimony, then yielded the chair to Vice President Carlos E. Peña.

## **Greeting: Youth Convocation**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña introduced members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly Youth Convocation. Participants in the convocation each shared a statement of belief and then collectively affirmed that Jesus loved each of them. A representative reported that the youth were present at the assembly to gain insight into its proceedings and the "inner workings" of the ELCA. The youth thanked God for calling them to participate in the 2009 Youth Convocation and the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. They also expressed their gratitude to the assembly for giving them the opportunity to address it. Vice President Peña thanked the youth for bringing their greeting, and the assembly responded with applause.

## **Reports of the Treasurer and Mission Investment Fund**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section II, pages 23–46; Section III, Part 2, pages 13–26.*

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the ELCA, to bring the report of the treasurer and of the Mission Investment Fund.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton reported that the churchwide organization had completed fiscal years 2007 and 2008 with revenue exceeding expense in its current budgeted operations. She informed the assembly that the full consolidated and audited financial statements were included in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*.

She indicated that revenue available for current operations increased from \$83.3 million in 2007 to \$83.4 million in 2008, a slightly favorable increase of \$0.1 million. This was the fifth consecutive year of increases in total operating revenue. Operating expenses of approximately \$80.2 million in 2008 reflected a decrease of \$0.6 million from 2007. Expenses were kept within the approved spending level, she noted.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton indicated that net revenue exceeded expenses by approximately \$2.5 million in 2007 and \$3.2 million in 2008. This surplus was important because it will assist in building cash reserves. Cash reserves will help maintain liquidity, cover capital expenditure needs, and allow for responses to new mission opportunities not anticipated in the normal operating budget.

She reported that mission support, the unrestricted income from congregations through synods to the churchwide organization, declined from \$66.1 million in 2007 to \$65.3 million in 2008, a decrease of \$842,000, or 1.3 percent.

Other categories of revenue, which in 2008 represented approximately 21 percent of total revenue available for current operations, increased from 2007 by \$0.9 million. Most of this favorable balance came in the area of bequest and trust income, which was more than \$5 million, \$2.5 million greater than the amount normally anticipated in the annual operating budget.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton pointed out that 2007 mission support exceeded that for the prior three years, with growth initially continuing into 2008. It had decreased, however, in the final quarter to close the 2008 fiscal year down more than \$800,000 from 2007. She reported that the total amount of mission support received in 2008 was roughly equal to that of 1989, however, the inflation-adjusted value of those dollars had significantly changed over the past 20 years. Since 1989, the adjusted value of mission support had decreased about 42 percent.

Further commenting on the trends in mission support, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton related that 41 synods increased the dollar amount of their mission support shared with the churchwide

organization in 2007 as compared to the prior year. Comparing 2008 to the previous year, 29 synods increased their mission support, and 36 synods decreased their mission support in terms of total dollars.

The treasurer used a pie chart to illustrate the percentage of income received in 2008 by major source. Of the income received in 2008, mission support represented approximately 78 percent of revenue available for current expenses in 2008. Bequest and trust income represented \$5.0 million, or 6 percent, of total current revenue. Missionary sponsorship represented approximately \$3.8 million, or 4.5 percent. Of the remaining income sources, endowment income was \$2.6 million; Mission Investment Fund support for new congregation starts, \$1.5 million; investment income, \$1.3 million; Vision for Mission appeal, \$1.1 million; and other income, \$2.9 million.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton next reported on the World Hunger appeal and pointed out that, because income to the World Hunger appeal is restricted income, it is not part of the current operating revenue and expense but is budgeted and accounted for separately. World Hunger income was 20.4 percent of the \$104.8 million in total income received for budgeted programs of the churchwide organization. The ELCA World Hunger appeal had seen consecutive record income levels for the previous four years. In 2007, contributions to the ELCA general World Hunger appeal reached \$21.3 million, an increase of \$2.1 million over the 2006 level. In 2008, income for World Hunger again increased slightly, to \$21.4 million, driven largely by an extraordinarily high level of gifts from bequests and trusts, totaling \$3.9 million. An additional \$1.0 million was received over the two-year period for the “Stand with Africa” campaign. The treasurer expressed appreciation for ELCA members’ generosity through current gifts and remembrance of World Hunger in wills and estate plans, which has allowed this church to respond in significant ways to those in need.

While the overall financial results for the biennium were positive, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton noted that congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization were not immune to the impact of the economic downturn. For the churchwide organization, the economy began to affect income noticeably in the final two months of the 2008 fiscal year. Most affected were mission support and World Hunger income, which had sizeable decreases in the amount of gifts received. Because of the high level of World Hunger income from bequests, and through spending controls, deficit spending was avoided. However, income projections had been adjusted, resulting in a reduction in budgets for 2009 and 2010.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton next turned the assembly’s attention to fiscal year 2009. During the first five months of the current fiscal year, the churchwide organization continued to experience the negative impact of the economy on giving. The largest decreases on a comparative monthly basis were seen between December 2008 and April 2009. For May and June 2009, income had been stable, with mission support slightly favorable to the same months in 2008. At the end of the five-month period, mission support was down \$1.3 million, or 5.2 percent, from the same period in 2008, but was congruent with the revised budget with a \$95,000, or 0.4 percent, positive variance.

The treasurer informed the assembly that for the five months ending June 30, 2009, total revenue available for current budgeted expenses had decreased \$2.7 million, or 8.0 percent, from the same period in 2008 but was favorable to the revised budget by \$0.3 million, or 1.0 percent. Expenses were within budget, resulting in a modest seasonal deficit that was favorable to expectations.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton stated that total contributions to the ELCA’s World Hunger appeal in the first five months of 2009 were unfavorable to the same five-month period in fiscal 2008 by \$1.0 million. A reduction in bequest and trust income of \$0.6 million was the primary

unfavorable variance. Gifts submitted through synods for World Hunger also were less than in 2008 by \$0.4 million.

The treasurer reminded the assembly that these were interim period results and warned that the financial picture could change considerably by year's end. Noting this time of higher economic instability, she reported that the churchwide organization was committed to monitoring closely income estimates and making adjustments as advisable; increasing communication and consultations with synods to estimate income more accurately and to plan for any changes; developing contingency plans in order to respond in a timely fashion to any income reductions; consulting with partners, to the degree possible, on the impact of changes in financial support levels; and reviewing operations, programs, and structures to ensure maximum efficiency.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton turned the assembly's attention to the report on the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA (MIF) as printed in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*. She reported that the fund had experienced significant growth in 2007 and 2008. During the precipitous downturn in financial markets, MIF continued to grow and expand the reach of its work across this church. She noted that prudent management and a conservative investment policy had served MIF well during the previous two years of economic turmoil. She observed that, in its nearly 100-year history, the MIF and its predecessors had always paid investors the principal and interest in accordance with the terms of the investment.

Between 1988 and 2006, the fund's total assets grew from \$171 million to \$491 million, the treasurer stated. During the previous two years, the fund realized an additional \$126 million in growth to reach \$617 million in total assets at the end of 2008. Net assets, or equity, at the end of 2008 were \$163 million, which were several times higher than the amount required by regulators.

In terms of the MIF loan portfolio, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton noted that, in 1988, the loan balance was \$81 million, and at year-end 2008, the fund had in place 797 loans with ELCA congregations and ministries, totaling \$498 million. There was a net increase of 89 loans and \$105 million for the two-year period since December 2006. Over the course of the two years, a total of 205 new loans had been approved, with a total disbursement of \$218 million.

At year-end 2008, the fund held \$24 million in real estate for new-start congregations, primarily as land for future building construction. By purchasing land for new-start ministries, MIF attempted to ensure that property would be available for young congregations when they were ready to build.

The treasurer continued her report by saying that loans to ELCA congregations and ministries are made possible by investment obligations that are purchased by ELCA members, congregations, synods, and other ELCA-related institutions. Between 1988 and 2008, investment obligations grew from \$66 million to \$451 million. She said that 2007 had been a year of strong growth, and 2008 a year of unprecedented growth for the MIF in the area of investment obligations. Total investment obligations increased more than \$125 million, or almost 40 percent, from December 2006 to December 2008.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton reported that between 2006 and 2008 the number of investors increased to 14,099, a net growth of 3,000. Approximately 71 percent of MIF investors are individuals, she observed, but congregations and institutions are significant partners in this ministry, accounting for 67 percent of the investment dollars. Nearly all synods of the ELCA and one in three congregations have an MIF investment.

The treasurer then highlighted some of the initiatives undertaken by MIF in the past biennium. One key initiative has focused on building awareness of MIF and strengthening partnerships through ministries with this church. MIF developed new resources and introduced an advertising campaign built around the ELCA tagline "God's work. Our hands." Each ad in

the MIF campaign shows an image that includes a cross and tells the story of a ministry assisted by an MIF loan.

The treasurer explained that another important initiative began in 2007, when MIF announced a \$1.5 million matching grant over three years to the ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission to establish the MIF Mission Developer Scholarship Fund. The resulting endowment will provide scholarship assistance to eligible students enrolled in a qualified developer program at any of the eight ELCA seminaries. Through this scholarship, MIF will assist the development of pastors who will lead outreach efforts in coming years. It is at the core of MIF's ministry to support the growth of this church.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton indicated that MIF has six church building consultants and two architects deployed throughout the country to help guide congregations through the entire building process—from conception through construction. These services include assistance with creating building designs that support the mission of the congregation and developing financial plans to support the building process. MIF consultants have become certified in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) in order to assist congregations in implementing “green” strategies to improve building efficiency and stewardship of the environment.

Another key partnership highlighted by the treasurer was MIF's involvement with the ELCA Youth Gathering. MIF handled registration payments for the recently concluded gathering. For the past two gatherings, MIF has provided a service center at which youth leaders could cash checks on their congregation's MIF accounts.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton concluded her report by thanking the many individuals and ministries participating in the fund for their confidence and support. She invited those who had not yet joined MIF to participate in this ministry. She conveyed what a privilege it had been to serve the past seven years as ELCA treasurer, and thanked the assembly for its prayers and support.

At the conclusion of the report, a video was shown that portrayed the Mission Investment Fund's story and explained how the fund has helped ELCA ministries to share God's boundless love with the world.

## **Ecumenical Greeting: Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson welcomed the Rev. Susan C. Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). Bishop Hanson expressed his gratitude for this church's strong partnership with the ELCIC in joint projects and shared mission. He also thanked Bp. Johnson for the collegial relationship and support they shared, not only in their calls as leaders of the two churches, but also in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Bp. Johnson brought greetings from the ELCA's sisters and brothers “to the north.” She acknowledged the partnership in mission and ministry that the ELCIC shares with the ELCA, including the ELCIC's participation in the Book of Faith initiative and in global mission, where the two church bodies are moving toward shared administration of their programs. She also lifted up the strong collegial relationship between the bishops of each church and their shared pilgrimage to the Holy Land in January 2009. Bp. Johnson spoke of the ELCIC's renewed commitment to its partner relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) and to advocacy for a sustainable and just peace in the Middle East. She noted that, at the ELCIC's national convention at the end of June 2009, participants adopted a resolution on the Holy Land, outlining that church's commitment to ongoing awareness, accompaniment, and advocacy.

She submitted that the ELCIC was striving to live out its vision of being a church in mission for others, similar to the ELCA's commitment to “God's work. Our hands.” She observed that



the ELCIC's desire to be a church in mission for others was in some ways a confession that for too long it had been a church in mission for itself. She explained that the ELCIC's renewed commitment to mission included five foci: compassionate justice, diverse faces, effective partnerships, focused framework, and spirited discipleship.

Bp. Johnson then named another shared reality: declining church membership. She reported that, since the ELCIC's formation in 1986, its membership had decreased 20 percent, and it had experienced a decline in financial resources as well. The national expression of the ELCIC has one-third of the purchasing power in its budget that it had in 1986, Bp. Johnson reported. She indicated that, because of the realities of declining membership and financial resources, the ELCIC had created a structural renewal task force to examine the following areas: the size and function of its national convention; the way ministry was shared between the national and synodical expressions; the number of synods the church could afford to maintain; and governance issues.

Bp. Johnson observed that the final reality was that the Church is God's Church. Christians' hope and trust is grounded in Christ. She shared with the assembly a passage from Romans 15 that was the basis of the ELCIC's national convention theme: "In Mission for Others, Signs of Hope." In closing, Bp. Johnson invited the assembly to join her in singing the Doxology.

## **Greeting: Military Chaplains**

Before receiving the greeting of the military chaplains, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson invited all those who had served as federal chaplains to stand so that the assembly could express its gratitude for their ministries. He then introduced Commander Harry W. Griffith, U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps, who currently is serving as Division Chaplain at Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville, N.C.

In his remarks, Chaplain Griffith thanked Presiding Bishop Hanson, the churchwide staff, voting members, and all gathered at the assembly for their support of ELCA chaplains. He shared that when asked through the years what it was that he needed, he could respond, "Nothing, really." The chaplains had Bibles, songbooks, *Sundays and Seasons* online, and care packages—even 3,000 cases of Girl Scout cookies. He encouraged continued support for the troops and their families.

Chaplain Griffith turned the assembly's attention to "Care for Returning Veterans," the DVD resource of a program administered by the Rev. Edgar W. Hatcher. Hatcher is an ELCA pastor and a retired United States Air Force chaplain, who assists congregations in understanding the challenges facing soldiers as they return from their tours of duty.

Chaplain Griffith conveyed the need for ELCA pastors to serve as federal chaplains. He noted that the ELCA's stance on open communion and its full-communion relationships with other denominations enabled its chaplains to serve a variety of faith groups. He observed that chaplains must be willing to travel, ready to assist people in matters of faith and life, and prepared to deal with combat. Federal chaplains might celebrate Word and Sacrament on the fantail of a ship, in a hangar on a flight line, in a forward deployed position, in the enlisted dining area of a submarine, or even on the tailgate of a Humvee in a rainstorm.

In closing, Chaplain Griffith invited those interested in serving as federal chaplains to see either him or his fellow chaplains present at the assembly. He again thanked the Churchwide Assembly for its support of chaplains, their families, and the men and women they serve in the armed forces. Upon finishing his remarks, Chaplain Griffith received a standing ovation from the assembly.

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited people to remain standing and sing the Navy hymn, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save."

## Report of the Secretary

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section II, pages 7–22.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson turned the assembly's attention to the report of Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA. Presiding Bishop Hanson noted that this was Secretary Swartling's first report to a Churchwide Assembly. He expressed deep gratitude for the way Secretary Swartling has taken up his call and for the gifts he had brought as a layperson and former synod vice president, as well as his work with the ELCA Foundation and planned giving.

Secretary Swartling began his report by reflecting on the multidimensional journey that he had experienced the past two years. Geographically, he had witnessed the Gospel being proclaimed and the ministry of this church accomplished from California to Connecticut, from Minneapolis, Minn., to McAllen, Texas. Climatologically, he had experienced Fargo, N.D., in the winter and Houston, Texas, in August. Despite the challenges, Mr. Swartling reported that he and his wife were more or less acclimated to life in the Midwest.

He commented that in the midst of these odysseys he remained energized by the call to be the secretary of the ELCA, to work alongside Presiding Bishop Hanson and the dedicated staff at the churchwide organization, to collaborate with synodical and congregational leaders, and to participate on a full-time basis in the mission and ministry of this church.

He related that frequently he described the role of the Office of the Secretary as the "oil in the engine" of the ELCA. He reported that the "engine" had, for the most part, been "well lubricated" the previous two years.

Secretary Swartling wished to lift up several priorities among the responsibilities of the Office the Secretary. He observed that, from his perspective, the most important priority for this church was to thrive—not only to survive. To do so, he maintained, this church must develop synergistic leadership among rostered and lay leaders. While speaking of the priority of leadership development, Secretary Swartling invited synodical vice presidents, secretaries, and treasurers to stand. He also invited synodical bishops to rise, and he thanked them for the collegiality they had shown him in the past biennium.

While continuing to speak of leadership development, Secretary Swartling focused on another group of leaders: youth and young adults. He then showed video clips from a restored film, *Christ Above All*, the subject of which is the 1949 Augustana Luther League Convention in Duluth, Minn. The film, restored by the ELCA archives using a national film preservation grant, had premiered at the Augustana Heritage Association gathering in June 2008.

He noted that Lutherans consistently have placed a priority on ministry *to* youth. He asked participants to consider how effective this church was in receiving ministry *from* youth, at learning from young people, and at integrating youth and young adults into its governance.

He observed that, later in the week, voting members would consider amendments to the governing documents of this church that would include proposals to increase the number of youth and young adults in the governance of this church in each of its expressions. He invited persons under 30 attending the plenary to stand. He asked the assembly to show its appreciation to these persons who are an important part of the future of this church.

Then Secretary Swartling touched briefly on several other important aspects of the work of the Office of the Secretary. He noted that the Office of the Secretary is the keeper of rosters and the collector of data from congregations in this church. In this capacity, it works collaboratively with the Research and Evaluation section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. He provided examples of the data compiled by the office as it pertains to congregations. He noted that, in Appendix B of his report, the 2008 data reflected a drop in baptized membership and in the number of congregations in the ELCA. As he had reported to the Conference of Bishops the

previous year, the secretary was particularly concerned about declining worship attendance because that figure continued to decline.

Secretary Swartling observed that, amid the negative data, there continued to be elements of good news. Congregational reports showed that in the past five years there had been approximately 330,000 child baptisms, more than 32,000 adult baptisms, more than 260,000 affirmations of faith, and more than 216,000 confirmations. An additional piece of good news was that the ELCA continues to be a wealthy church that has sustained a high level of giving at the congregational level. Regular giving to ELCA congregations amounted to \$1.94 billion in 2008, down one-half percent from 2007. He commented that, despite the economic turmoil, reported congregational assets amounted to approximately \$20.6 billion—almost the same as the total for assets in 2007. He observed that the challenge in this church was to use these assets imaginatively and to translate their economic value into enhanced ministry.

The secretary stated that he was pleased to report that the annual Congregational Report Form A, after considerable evaluation, had been revised. The goal was to reduce the time necessary to complete the report and to provide more useful information for synods and the churchwide organization. He expressed thanks to the Research and Evaluation section and to a number of other colleagues in synods and at the churchwide organization for assisting in the revision.

He then reported that one of the special tasks undertaken by the Office of the Secretary this biennium had been an oral history project, spearheaded by the archives of the ELCA. He expressed gratitude for a generous grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans that had enabled the archives, working with an advisory committee, to conduct oral histories with a number of leaders in the ELCA. He noted that this oral history project was the first step toward preparing a 25th birthday present to this church, titled “Voices and Visions: The ELCA at 25.”

Secretary Swartling spoke of his priorities of transparency in decision-making and of environmental stewardship, both of which were apparent in assembly preparation. For the first time, registration occurred only online, and most communication with voting members and others happened electronically. Videos addressing Churchwide Assembly orientation and parliamentary procedure had been posted online. The entire *2009 Pre-Assembly Report* had been posted on the ELCA Web site, making it available to everyone watching online as well as to voting members. In addition, the binders for voting members were made from recycled and recyclable materials, and the mugs provided to voting members could be recycled.

Secretary Swartling announced that the Office of the Secretary, in collaboration with the Office of the Treasurer and others, had created an electronic newsletter titled *Administration Matters*, which was available online at the ELCA Web site. Mr. Swartling noted that this was an additional way for the office to assist congregations and synods with their administrative responsibilities so that their energies could be directed to mission and ministry.

Secretary Swartling concluded his report by showing a collection of photographs that had been digitized and catalogued as part of the history of this church. The photographs depicted scenes from the 1957 Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Assembly held in Minneapolis, Minn. He asked the assembly to reflect on the photographs by recalling what happened in the mid 1950s: a little known southeast Asian named Ho Chi Minh came to power in a place called Vietnam; Washington articulated a “domino theory;” the USSR exploded a hydrogen bomb; and, in a matter of months after the LWF event, the Sputnik satellite was launched. The secretary expressed his belief that, despite these events and the fears they engendered, Lutherans in 1957 came from throughout the United States and the world to proclaim their faith together, share the Gospel, and address how best to serve their neighbors. He observed that, although the times, technology, and people had changed, today this church had gathered in the same place for the

same purpose. He noted that this church could not accomplish God's work in the 21st century with 1957 Chevrolets or with floats in a parade. Although the Gospel had not changed, the way it delivered its message had. While the fears were different, he said, the hope was the same. Mr. Swartling called upon this church to rise to the challenge because it had work to do. He ended his remarks by quoting the ELCA tagline: "God's work. Our hands." The assembly acknowledged his remarks with a standing ovation.

## **Report: Memorials Committee**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 1-96.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked the assembly to turn its attention to the report of the Memorials Committee, delayed from Tuesday afternoon's plenary. He introduced the Rev. John C. Richter and Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, Church Council members and co-chairs of the committee. Presiding Bishop Hanson stated that Pr. Richter and Ms. Wallace would explain how the committee approached its work, and then the assembly would look at the *en bloc* action on page 1 of Section VI of the 2009 Pre-Assembly Report.

Pr. Richter thanked the synods of this church for sending 144 memorials to the Churchwide Assembly, and he explained the process of creating a memorial. The process began with prayer and dialogue across this church, resulting in resolutions that were discussed in synod assemblies and, if approved, sent to the Churchwide Assembly in the form of memorials.

Ms. Wallace informed the assembly that the Church Council appointed the members of the Memorials Committee. Its work was to review memorials from synod assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for Churchwide Assembly action.

Pr. Richter stated that memorials that addressed the same topic or related concerns were grouped into categories in order to facilitate discussion at the Churchwide Assembly. He noted that, within some categories, memorials reflected the diversity of the body of Christ and the diversity of this church, and so presented a broad range of options, opinions, and recommended actions. Within other categories, there was great similarity, with some memorials using identical wording.

Ms. Wallace expressed appreciation to those churchwide units and resource people who had provided background information and references. She explained that the Memorials Committee's recommended action on each memorial included one or more of the following: to affirm or decline to approve the action proposed by the synod or synods; to recommend referral to the Church Council or a churchwide unit for continued consideration or study; or to convey material provided as background information to the synod.

Pr. Richter commented that, in light of this church's current financial challenges, some of the Memorials Committee's recommendations include the qualifying statement "as financial and staff resources permit." The Memorials Committee did not intend the statement to limit this church's response but rather to allow for flexibility in the midst of the current economic reality.

Presiding Bishop Hanson expressed his appreciation to Pr. Richter and Ms. Wallace. He then turned the assembly's attention to the *en bloc* action found in Section VI of the 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, page 1. He noted that Category B1: Social Statement on Human Disability and Category B8: Worship and Educational Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio had been removed from the action for separate consideration. Category D1: Minimum Age for Ordination was no longer before the assembly, having been withdrawn.

Presiding Bishop Hanson then called for Secretary Swartling to read the action. The secretary moved the adoption of the Memorial Committee's recommendations. The chair called for a vote on the *en bloc* action.

## ASSEMBLY

### ACTION:

YES-836; NO-47

### CA09.03.09

To approve *en bloc*, with the exception of those memorials considered separately, the following responses to 2008 and 2009 synodical memorials printed in the Report of the Memorials Committee:

The chair declared the motion passed. The following responses to memorials were adopted.

## Category A1: Parish Nurses

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, page 9.

### 1. Nebraska Synod (4A) [2008 Memorial]

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted with me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet prove him who is the health of my countenance and my God” (Ps. 42:11).

WHEREAS, parish nurses are qualified to do and to offer a number of services for the congregation, including health education, health care of a personal nature, and counseling, and they refer members to services that are available in the area, coordinate volunteers, and oversee the combination of spiritual and physical health; and

WHEREAS, the parish nurse, as a health educator, may organize classes and health-centered events as well as hold office hours as needed for consultations with parishioners who request and/or need help and may schedule home visits for personal care-giving or follow-ups as needed; and

WHEREAS, the parish nurse has knowledge of local and surrounding county services, such as health care for children, battered wives’ sanctuaries, economic assistance, other appropriate agencies for qualified families, and lifeline services for older parishioners so that they can remain independent longer in their home environment; and

WHEREAS, the parish nurse, as a go-between parishioners and the health care system, is able to encourage parishioners to monitor the standards of services offered by the health care system, a process that could include suggestions and helpful questions people may ask their doctor, health care providers, counselors, and others; and

WHEREAS, the parish nurse can support parishioners as they labor through difficult situations that arise from health-related problems; and

WHEREAS, the parish nurse often will coordinate the efforts of volunteers to help with food delivery to older parishioners who are recovering from illness or surgery; to visit families in crisis or grief; to contact those on the prayer list; or even to provide transportation if needed; and

WHEREAS, the center of parish nursing is the helpful integration of faith and health because wellness involves healing the whole person—mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually—and without the spirit the whole process does not work; and

WHEREAS, the parish nurse supports, listens to, and is sympathetic and empathetic toward people as they go through life’s joys, challenges, and changes, offering them hope in God, who is the light of the world; and

WHEREAS, with the support of the whole church body, parish nurses can accomplish holistic healing in parishioners through emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual support and guidance; and

WHEREAS, whole and healthy people make up a whole and healthy church body that supports and worships God as he deserves; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Nebraska Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to recognize and support the importance of the role of parish nursing in the church body so that with the support of the church body, parish nurses can undertake the holistic approach to the healing of fellow parishioners, emotionally, mentally, physically, and finally spiritually.

## Background

With a vote of 935 to 34 at its eighth biannual Churchwide Assembly on August 15, 2003, the ELCA adopted *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*, a social statement that asserts the significance this church attaches to parish nursing. According to this social statement, parish nurses form part of the healing ministry of the congregation: “Parish nurse ministries provide for wellness programs, including health screening and health education” (*Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*, pp. 9-10).

The document names a number of ways parish nurses help congregations fulfill their role in attending to the health and well-being of the community. These include:

- informing themselves of global health concerns and support global ministries of health;
- providing members with education and opportunities for deliberation and advocacy about health issues;
- ensuring full participation of all people in the life of the congregation by removing physical and other barriers;
- helping people evaluate avenues of care and treatment, whether those of standard Western medicine, various complementary systems, or those based in religious claims of faith communities, and distinguishing between means that are appropriate and beneficial and those that are potentially inappropriate or exploitive; and
- providing physical access and other vital links between people and the health care they need, especially in rural communities and inner cities; (p. 10).

In recent years the churchwide organization through its Vocation and Education unit has been in conversation with the leadership of the ELCA Parish Nurses Association (ELCAPNA) to find ways of making the ELCAPNA more viable. Both the Vocation and Education unit and the ELCAPNA continue to work toward helping parish nurses meet the above objectives.

## ASSEMBLY

### ACTION:

EN BLOC

**CA09.03.09a** To thank the Nebraska Synod for calling on the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to recognize and support the importance of the role of parish nursing throughout this church;

To affirm the valuable gift that parish nursing brings to this church in the pursuit of the holistic well-being of its members; and to commend to this church *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*, the ELCA social statement that asserts the significance this church attaches to parish nursing; and

To acknowledge the continuing efforts of the Vocation and Education unit and the ELCA Parish Nurses Association to strengthen the relationship between the ELCA Parish Nurses Association and the churchwide organization.

## Category A2: Increasing Funding for Inner-City Congregations

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, page 10.

### 1. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Minneapolis Area Synod is committed to addressing the needs of the poor; and

WHEREAS, churches with low-income members often find it difficult to raise the necessary funds through offerings; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans in the Minneapolis area have a strong desire to contribute to communities where poverty is high; and

WHEREAS, the majority of poverty in Minneapolis is concentrated in specific inner-city areas; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to commit an additional \$300,000 in the 2010 budget of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), from funds obtained from congregational mission support through the synods, for congregational development in inner-city neighborhoods as identified by the 2000 census, to be allocated by the ELCA Church Council.

*Background*

Through the implementation of the Evangelizing Congregations Missional Plan, the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) unit and ELCA synods will engage leaders in the formation of evangelizing congregations to make disciples for Jesus Christ who will use their gifts for God’s reign in this church and in the world. Through the plan, EOCM works with the synod through the director for evangelical mission (DEM) to develop and implement synod mission tables and missional plans, including mission in urban and inner-city areas.

In 2009, forty-one percent of the approved new starts were in urban settings. These ministries reflect the engagement of leaders in congregations and synods as well as from ethnic communities. This engagement encourages planning and visioning for ministry in a variety of contexts, including African American, African National, Asian/Pacific Islander, Arab/Middle Eastern, American Indian/Alaska Native and Latino/Hispanic in urban and emerging ministry settings. The 2009 budget includes funding of \$3.1 million for 51 new starts and 39 renewal grants and another \$3.1 million for the support of 46 mission developers, with a total allocation of \$6,224,930, all allocated to support urban and inner-city ministry in the ELCA. It is expected that the 2010 budget allocation, assuming currently budgeted income levels, will include a similar amount.

In addition to the operating budget allocation for 2009, \$350,000 from the In the City for Good Endowment (income account) will be allocated for inner-city mission, including \$200,000 for DEM staffing and \$150,000 for new starts.

Below is a listing of 141 partnership support grants in several categories. These renewal, ethnic strategies, and specialized ministries grants are in urban and inner-city contexts.

<b>Grants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Renewal	39	538,846
Ethnic strategies	75	1,099,252
Specialized ministries	5	50,685
Ministry with the poor	22	303,459
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>1,992,242</b>
<b>New Starts</b>		
New Starts: Grants	51	1,129,310
New Starts: Salaries	46	3,103,378
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>4,232,688</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,224,930</b>

## ASSEMBLY

### ACTION:

EN BLOC

**CA09.03.09b** To receive the memorial from the Minneapolis Area Synod requesting increased funding for inner-city congregations in the 2010 Churchwide budget of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To express gratitude for the Evangelizing Congregations Missional Plan and to anticipate the ongoing development of synod mission tables and missional plans, which will include urban and inner-city congregations; and

To acknowledge the action of this assembly related to the 2010-2011 budget proposal as the response of this assembly to the memorial.

## Category A3: Development of Theological Statements

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 10-11.

### 1. West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Rev. James R. Crumley, bishop of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) at the time of the merger between the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the American Lutheran Church, and the LCA to become the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), highlighted in 1993 three articles of the ELCA constitution that he thought “expressed sound and useful ecclesiology” but that “had not been incorporated effectively.” The provisions are the following:

- 4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- 3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service.
- 5.01. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be one church. This church recognizes that all power and authority in the Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head.

WHEREAS, former Bishop Crumley stated, “the problems that surfaced in the Commission for a New Lutheran Church still plague us”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the ELCA should seek consensus and clarity regarding the theological foundations of the following: 1) the authority of Scripture, 2) ecclesiology, and 3) sanctification; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod memorialize the ELCA to develop theological teaching statements on 1) the authority of Scripture, 2) ecclesiology, and 3) sanctification under the guidance of the Executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations of the ELCA, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and in conversation with the church at large.

### *Background*

The constitution of the ELCA declares this church’s reliance on the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions. Chapter 2 of the constitution contains a Confession of Faith that names those norms and briefly asserts the trinitarian and christological faith. In addition, the governing documents authorize the development of social policy documents (e.g., social statements and messages) that reflect on the faith in the context of specific concerns in society.

Whether the creation of new “theological teaching statements” would be consistent with the ELCA constitution is unclear. There is no provision in the constitution assigning responsibility



for the preparation or adoption of “theological teaching statements.” Neither is there a prohibition, so a Churchwide Assembly could request such an action. To do so, however, would require clarity about an authoritative theological teaching office within this church, a question that has engendered lively debate within this church and its predecessors.

In addition, another issue to discern is what authority such a document would have in the life of this church, its expressions, and its members.

It is important to note, however, that this church continually is engaged in theological conversation about these issues and others. Such discussions provide guidance for this church in many ways.

- The doctrine of sanctification has had renewed conversation in ecumenical dialogues (e.g., United Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox). A deepened understanding of and clarification about sanctification has been an important consideration in the development of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. Each of these conversations has produced resources that are useful throughout this church.
- Ecclesiology is defined by and reflected in this church’s governing documents, especially the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*.
- The Book of Faith initiative was undertaken, in part, as an explicit response to the debates about the authority of Scripture, including a 2005 Churchwide Assembly memorial on this topic. After extensive conversations, it was concluded that one very Lutheran way to address this question was to encourage a deeper and broader engagement with the Bible so that the Word might actually exercise its authority among us. In addition, this approach encourages engagement by all members.

Experience with the Book of Faith initiative already indicates three things. First, though it has proven very useful to produce publications that intentionally describe and draw on traditional Lutheran understandings about Scripture, this work also has led to controversy because Lutherans use varied language to express their convictions and have differing priorities about Scripture related to these convictions. Second, the hunger for deeper engagement with Scripture is driving energetic embrace of the use-of-Scripture approach to address issues related to biblical authority. Third, the initiative is generating a “conversation with the church at large” around all matters relating to Scripture, including authority.

Ongoing theological conversation occurs in many settings, including congregations, ELCA seminaries and ELCA colleges and universities, at synodical ministerium meetings, within the Conference of Bishops, and at the regular gathering of teaching theologians mandated by the bylaws. The latter group is now embodied as the Association of Teaching Theologians ELCA/ELCIC.

#### *Rationale of the Memorials Committee*

The request for this church to issue “theological teaching statements” is a significant departure from the current ELCA structure and understanding. Whether to use “theological teaching statements,” and if so, their nature, scope, authority, and constitutional implications, should be decided before the approach is used for particular topics, such as those suggested in this memorial.

#### **ASSEMBLY**

#### **ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09c To receive with gratitude the resolution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod Assembly related to the development of theological statements;**

**To affirm the ongoing theological conversations that occur in congregations, seminaries, colleges and universities of this church; at synodical ministerium meetings; within the Conference of Bishops; at the regular gathering of teaching theologians mandated by the bylaws; and in other settings; and**

**To decline to develop a new category of theological teaching statements for this church.**

## **Category B2: Race, Gender, and Immigration**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 15–17.*

### **1. Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C) [2008 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, national attention has been drawn to the interconnected issues of race, gender, and immigration by the debates, speeches, and persons involved in the 2008 presidential campaign; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's full-communion partner, the United Church of Christ, has initiated a sacred conversation on race and has invited all communities of faith to join it in this conversation; and

WHEREAS, the 2006 Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod Assembly adopted Resolution #5 "Ministry to the Stranger in the Name of Christ," which resolved that the bishop, pastors, members, and congregations of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod provide care and hospitality for all people in the name of Christ, resist any policy or law that would limit the work of ministry, and support Bishop Floyd M. Schoenhals' publically speaking the concerns of this church and joining other church leaders in speaking the concerns of the Christian church and the freedom to care for the stranger in the name of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Schoenhals has boldly modeled witnessing on the issue of immigration, particularly in relation to Oklahoma HB 1804; and

WHEREAS, congregations in this church include persons of different races, genders, and political opinions but share a common identity in Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod establish a forum for congregations to come together to participate in a sacred conversation on the issues of race, gender, and immigration; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations be urged to engage intentionally the issues of race, gender, and immigration in light of their common identity in Christ; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to develop resources and opportunities for this entire church to participate in a nationwide sacred conversation on race, gender, and immigration.

### *Background*

The ELCA has sought to address the issues of race, gender, and immigration over many years. This church has structured itself with commissions, program units, programs, alliances, and a separately incorporated women's organization to support those impacted by these issues and change this church's understanding and actions, particularly through the former Commission for Multicultural Ministries and Commission for Women, and the current Multicultural Ministries unit and the Justice for Women program of the Church in Society unit.

The ELCA, through the churchwide organization, synods, and congregations, has partnered with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service in the work of resettling immigrants and refugees and in education and advocacy on their behalf. In support of the specific advocacy focus of LIRS on laws and regulations related to immigration, ELCA bishops have formed a leadership group known as a "ready bench" that regularly speaks, writes, and signs letters and statements commenting on the need for immigration reform and the commitment to family reunification. The ELCA advocacy department works through the Lutheran Office for World

Community at the United Nations, the corporate social responsibility office, and the office in Washington, D.C., to address human rights, especially in developing countries (i.e., countries of the “global south”), climate change and adaptation to it, agriculture, and trade policies. In a global marketplace, these efforts are addressing factors directly related to an increase in global migration and are, therefore, having an impact on immigration and related policies in the United States.

In order to influence the vocation of members, its own institutional life, and address these issues, the ELCA produced the social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (1993) and a message on “Immigration” (1998). A new message on immigration is forthcoming (see below).

In shaping its agenda for the coming decade, the ELCA Church Council approved in 2003 a Plan for Mission that made four commitments, including two that speak specifically to the concerns raised by this memorial:

3. Confront the scandalous realities of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, personal, and class barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence; and
4. Pursue ardently the ELCA’s commitment to becoming more diverse, multicultural, and multi-generational in an ever-changing and increasingly pluralistic context, with special focus on full inclusion in this church of youth, young adults, and people of color and people whose primary language is other than English.

In 2005, with the goal of becoming an anti-racist church, the ELCA strengthened its commitment to confronting racism by placing an anti-racism staff position in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to work closely with the director for racial justice ministries in the Multicultural Ministries unit.

In April 2008, the ELCA Church Council invited ELCA members and congregations to a sustained conversation on race. It asked for a resource to help them discuss the ELCA’s social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*. This resource is available on the ELCA Web site (see below).

In September 2008, more than 100 current and new ELCA synodical anti-racism leaders, representing 30 synods and nine regions, gathered for a conference under the theme of “At the Intersection of Race and Poverty.” The meeting was informed by a comprehensive assessment of synodical anti-racism efforts.

Lifting up gender issues to help this church evaluate its thinking and acting is a concern that began with the former Commission for Women (1988-2005) and has continued with the Justice for Women program. The Justice for Women program in the Church in Society unit has conducted Bible studies for the ELCA Church Council (November 2007 and April 2008), study and conversation on sexism with the Cabinet of Executives (March 2009), and continues work through an interunit staff alliance to influence the culture of the churchwide organization. In January 2009, this program sponsored the first ELCA theological conference dealing with gender issues, “Transformative Lutheran Theologies: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives.”

These are recent examples of the way the ELCA has attempted to address race, gender, and immigration concerns.

## **RESOURCES**

### *Race*

The ELCA’s social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (1993) ([www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-Culture.aspx](http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-Culture.aspx))

“Using the ELCA’s Social Statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, a Guide for Leading Conversations on Race, Ethnicity, and Culture in Your Congregation” available at [www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues.aspx](http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues.aspx)

A 2008 comprehensive assessment of ELCA synodical anti-racism efforts: [www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Presiding-Bishop/Anti-Racism/Resources/Documents.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Presiding-Bishop/Anti-Racism/Resources/Documents.aspx)

### *Immigration*

A new message on immigration, which takes into account the post-9/11 U.S. context, treats issues that have drawn significant attention in the past few years and further develops a theological and ethical basis for deliberation and action on immigration, will be considered by the ELCA Church Council in November 2009. When approved, this will be an additional message to the one approved in 1998 ([www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Messages/Immigration.aspx](http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Messages/Immigration.aspx))

*They Are Us: Lutherans and Immigration*, written by Stephen Bouman and Ralston Deffenbaugh, published in 2009, is available from Augsburg Fortress (ISBN 978-0-8066-5763-9).

Many resources are available on the LIRS Web site: [www.lirs.org/InfoRes/pub.htm](http://www.lirs.org/InfoRes/pub.htm). One that is noteworthy is “Be Not Afraid,” a project that equips congregations to respond to immigration issues impacting their members and communities: [www.lirs.org/What/programs/BNA.htm](http://www.lirs.org/What/programs/BNA.htm).

### *Gender*

Three initial sessions of a nine-part Bible study series for men and women on sexism ([www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Justice-for-Women/Resources.aspx#a](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Justice-for-Women/Resources.aspx#a))

Video and accompanying study guide on “Transformative Lutheran Theology: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives” ([www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Justice-for-Women.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Justice-for-Women.aspx))

“An Affinity for Difference: A Theology of Power,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* (forthcoming 2009)

Gender issues will be given attention in fall 2009 Global Mission formation events.

### *Difficult issues in general*

“Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues” (ISBN 6-0001-1197-5) and “Talking Together as Christians Cross-Culturally” (ISBN 6-0002-0162-1) are online at: [archive.elca.org/ethics/available](http://archive.elca.org/ethics/available). They may also be obtained through Augsburg Fortress (800-328-4648).

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09d** To thank the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod for recognizing the importance of conversation within church and society on three critically important issues—race, gender, and immigration—and for offering opportunities to talk about these issues;

To observe that, although there may be certain connections among the topics of race, immigration, and gender, the complexity

**of each issue calls for distinct conversations within which the other topics may be discussed;**

**To acknowledge the many resources identified above and urge their use throughout this church in its ongoing commitment to:**

- 1. Confront the scandalous realities of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, personal, and class barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence; and**
- 2. Pursue ardently the ELCA's commitment to becoming more diverse, multicultural, and multi-generational in an ever-changing and increasingly pluralistic context, with special focus on full inclusion in this church of youth, young adults, and people of color and people whose primary language is other than English; and**

**To anticipate a message on immigration in November 2009 and to decline to develop additional resources or opportunities at this time.<sup>3</sup>**

## **Category B5: Proposed Social Statement on Justice for Women**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 24–27.*

### **1. Southwest California Synod (2B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, sexism continues to exist in many forms in society and brings harm to all; and

WHEREAS, according to the International Labor Organization, in two-thirds of industrial countries the jobless rates for women are 50 percent to 100 percent higher than for men; women work longer hours and are paid an average of 25 percent less than their male counterparts; and the wage gap is not decreasing; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Justice states that women are ten times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner; one in six women have been victims of an attempted or completed rape; 1.2 million women are forcibly raped by their current or former male partner; and every day four women die in this country as a result of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, sexism continues to exist in many forms even within this church, harming all people. For example, according to the ELCA, there are nearly equal numbers of men and women enrolled in seminary programs; however, there are fewer women serving as “senior pastors”; there are fewer women than men

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<sup>3</sup> Messages are normally brief communications that draw attention to a social issue and encourage action on it. They provide this church flexibility to respond on selected occasions with timely and perceptive counsel on new situations and pressing concerns.

Messages are communications that the Church Council adopts and are thus distinct from social statements, which are adopted only by the Churchwide Assembly. Messages are not the result of widespread deliberation in this church (as are social statements) but are intended primarily to encourage further discussion and action on specific current social issues among ELCA members. They are not new policy positions of the ELCA but build upon previously adopted social statements and social policy resolutions (“Policy and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns”).

Messages address the contemporary situation in light of the prophetic and compassionate traditions of Scripture. They point to human suffering, grave injustice, pending danger, social perplexity, or hopeful developments and urge that evil be resisted, justice done, and commitment renewed.

Messages express the conviction of the leaders of this church who communicate them and who believe that their message should be heard in this church and beyond. They signal certain priority concerns that arise from this church's mission in the world. Messages are based upon and are consistent with this church's social statements and social policy resolutions.

serving as bishops; clergywomen wait longer than clergymen for calls; and nearly 11 percent of clergywomen are on leave from call, compared to less than 5 percent of clergymen. Additionally, the 3 million laywomen of this church also experience sexism in a variety of forms, as evidenced by the fact that only 14 percent of congregational presidents are women, and only 24 percent of full professors on the faculties of the colleges of the ELCA are women; and

WHEREAS, we are all, male and female, created in the image of God and through baptism united as one in Christ; and

WHEREAS, through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and through Christ's radical call, the members of this church are welcomed to live out and lift up a realized vision of the reign of God as a public church, addressing and confronting significant social issues that affect the common good and seeking to bring God's justice not only to the world but to this church as well; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in its strategic plan, "Faithful Yet Changing: the Plan for Mission in the ELCA," states this church's commitment to confront the "scandalous realities" by challenging and eradicating exclusionary forces like sexism in this church and in society; and

WHEREAS, by engaging in the creation of a social statement on justice for women, this church could further conversations with its ecumenical partners by helping to engage the wider church in theological dialogues that lift up a vision of the reign of God revealed through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the ELCA already has approved a resolution from the Church in Society program unit of the churchwide organization to undertake a new study leading to the development of a social statement on justice for women; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod of the ELCA, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to undertake a new study leading to the development of a social statement on justice for women.

## **2. Rocky Mountain Synod (2E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, we are all, male and female, created in the image of God and through our baptisms united as one in Christ; and

WHEREAS, the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in its Plan for Mission stated its commitment to challenging and eradicating sexism in this church and in society; and

WHEREAS, sexism continues to exist in many forms in society and brings harm to all (according to the International Labor Organization, in two-thirds of industrial countries the jobless rate for women is between 50 percent and 100 percent higher than for men; women in rich and poor countries work longer hours and are paid an average of 25 percent less than men; the wage gap is not decreasing. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, women are ten times more likely than men to be victimized by intimate partners, one in six women have been victims of an attempted or completed rape, 1.2 million women are forcibly raped by their current or former male partner, and every day four women die in this country as a result of domestic violence.); and

WHEREAS, sexism continues to exist and is evidenced in this church by statistics that show while there are nearly equal numbers of men and women enrolled in seminary programs, there are fewer women senior pastors, fewer female bishops, fewer female presidents (14 percent are women) and full professors at church-related colleges (24.0 percent are women), and women still wait longer for calls (10.5 percent of women as compared to 4.7 percent of men are on leave from call). Laywomen (there are nearly 3 million in the ELCA) also experience sexism in a variety of forms within the church; and

WHEREAS, as a public church, the ELCA is not called to address significant social issues that affect the common good and seek to bring God's justice not only in the world but also in this church; and

WHEREAS, by engaging in a social statement on justice for women this church will have conversations with its ecumenical partners as it works to engage the whole Church in theological dialogues that lift up a vision of the reign of God revealed through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ and his radical call to welcome all, challenging Christians to live out the reality of this reign of God in the world; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council has already approved a resolution from the Church in Society unit to undertake a study on a social statement on justice for women; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to undertake a study for a social statement on justice for women.

### **3. Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, we are all, male and female, created in the image of God and through our baptisms united as one in Christ; and

WHEREAS, the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in its Plan for Mission stated its commitment to challenging and eradicating sexism in this church and in society; and

WHEREAS, sexism continues to exist in many forms in society and brings harm to all (according to the International Labor Organization, in two-thirds of industrial countries the jobless rate for women is between 50 percent and 100 percent higher than for men; women in rich and poor countries work longer hours and are paid an average of 25 percent less than men; the wage gap is not decreasing. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Justice states that women are ten times more likely than men to be victimized by intimate partners, one in six women have been victims of an attempted or completed rape, 1.2 million women are forcibly raped by their current or former male partner, and every day four women die in this country as a result of domestic violence.); and

WHEREAS, sexism continues to exist in many forms in this church and brings harm to all. Statistics show that there are nearly equal numbers of men and women enrolled in seminary programs; however, there are fewer women senior pastors, fewer female bishops, fewer female presidents (14 percent are women) and full professors at church-related colleges (24.0 percent are women), and women still wait longer for calls (10.5 percent of women as compared to 4.7 percent of men are on leave from call). Laywomen (there are nearly 3 million in the ELCA) also experience sexism in a variety of forms within this church; and

WHEREAS, as a public church, the ELCA is called to address significant social issues that affect the common good and seek to bring God's justice not only in the world but also in this church. The life, death, and resurrection of Christ and his radical call that welcomes all to live out and lift up a realized vision of the Reign of God calls the ELCA to this work; and

WHEREAS, by calling for and engaging this whole church in the social statement process, the ELCA partakes in meaningful theological dialogue involving all members of this body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to undertake a study for a social statement on justice for women.

### **4. Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to initiate a study for a social statement on justice for women.

#### *Background*

The Plan for Mission supports the five strategic directions with the commitment to “confront the scandalous realities of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, personal, and class barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence.” Since the establishment of the ELCA in 1988, this church has demonstrated its commitment to justice for women both programmatically through the Commission for Women and throughout the whole organization. In 2005, in order to strengthen the engagement of all parts of the ELCA, the Churchwide Assembly approved a change in structure by which the Church in Society program unit would include a program for justice for women.

As an expression of the high commitment of this church to this work, all units include work for justice for women and are held accountable to the Office of the Presiding Bishop. In addition, because of the churchwide nature of this program, the director for justice for women reports annually to the Church Council and biennially to the Churchwide Assembly. The

relevant continuing resolution [16.12.D06.d.] states that the Church in Society program unit shall:

. . . work to enable this church to realize the full participation of women; to create equal opportunity for women of all cultures; to foster partnership between men and women; to assist this church to address sexism; and to advocate for women in this church and society.

In so doing, this program unit shall:

- 1) present a program plan annually to the Church Council and biennially to the Churchwide Assembly on these efforts; and
- 2) convene a consulting committee related to this task.

The Justice for Women consulting committee is composed of women and men from around the country representing a wide variety of ages, ethnicities, and vocational experiences. This group currently includes:

- April Almaas, at-large member, Harvard Divinity School graduate currently finishing a pastoral internship in the Sierra Pacific Synod;
- Susan Candea, at-large member, pastor of an ELCA congregation in Colorado;
- Antonia Clemente, at-large member, co-founder and executive director of a domestic violence center in New York City;
- Kris Kvam (chair), at-large member, professor at a Methodist seminary in Kansas City;
- Agnes McClain, at-large member, assistant to the bishop of the Southwest California Synod;
- Mikka McCracken, at-large member, student at Gustavus Adolphus College;
- A. J. Mell, advisory member, high school student in Pennsylvania;
- Joyce Schoulte, advisory member, representative of the Church in Society program committee from the Northeastern Iowa Synod;
- David Truland, advisory member, liaison from the Church Council;
- [vacant], advisory member, representative of the Conference of Bishops;
- Advisory members include Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration; Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of Women of the ELCA; and Doug Haugen, director of Lutheran Men in Mission;
- Staff members from the Church in Society program unit include Rebecca Larson, executive director; Mary Streufert, director for justice for women; and Juli Bey, administrative assistant.

One of the main responsibilities of the consulting committee is to advise the director on priorities for implementing the Plan for Mission commitment to justice for women. In its work the consulting committee has identified as a priority the need for extensive engagement theologically throughout this church in order to understand and address effectively a variety of matters of critical concern to this church. These include but are not limited to the following:

- the reality of sexism as a sin in this world;
- the importance of claiming the work of justice for women (and girls) as the work of this entire church;
- the profound social and justice needs of women and girls in both church and society;
- the statistics on violence, poverty, HIV and AIDS, exclusion from and derision for ecclesial and secular leadership, and trafficking in humans overwhelmingly indicate the egregious harm women experience, both within church and within society;
- the unmet social and justice needs of women indicate that they are not valued as made in the image of God;
- the problems, which are systemic, relate to women and men and systems of power and privilege and must be addressed theologically; and



- this church is called to speak boldly and publically through advocacy and in other ways in support of justice for women (and girls) in church and society and requires a policy base to do this effectively and well.

The consulting committee concluded that the personal, social, and religious reality of injustice for women and girls demands a deeply convicted theological response that would engage this church in study and reflection, particularly on the theological connection between justification and justice in the realm of what it means to be female and male within God’s creation. The consulting committee concluded that it is not until this important piece of work is engaged that this church can most effectively respond to issues of justice related to women and girls both within church and society.

Therefore, at its meeting in the fall of 2007 the consulting committee for justice for women recommended to the Church in Society program unit that a request be made to the Church Council to call for a social statement on justice for women. At its meeting in the spring of 2008, the program committee for Church in Society discussed this matter and supported the recommendation of the consulting committee.

*Social Statements*

The “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” describe social statements in this way: “Social statements are major documents addressing significant social issues. Typically, they provide an analysis and interpretation of an issue, set forth basic theological and ethical perspectives related to it, and offer guidance for the corporate ELCA and its individual members. . . . In all cases social statements are the product of extensive and inclusive deliberation within this church, a process that is an integral part of their educational purpose. Because of the considerable resources and care that this church invests in them, and because of the participatory process used in their development, social statements are the most authoritative form of social policy and are adopted only by the Churchwide Assembly.”

Six perspectives guide this church’s understanding, development, consideration, and use of social statements:

1. Social statements are theological documents.
2. Social statements are teaching documents.
3. Social statements involve this church in the ongoing task of theological ethics.
4. Social statements result from an extensive, inclusive and accepted process of deliberation throughout this church.
5. Social statements guide the institutional life of this church.
6. Social statements, intended to be used widely in the life and mission of this church, reflect awareness of the various audiences and ministries which they are to serve.

At its November 2008 meeting, the Church Council approved the following action for consideration by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly [CC08.11.38]: “To request that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America develop a social statement on the topic of justice for women in church and society to be received by the Churchwide Assembly for approval in 2015.”

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09e To receive the memorials of the Southwest California, Rocky Mountain, Northeastern Iowa, and Metropolitan New York synods**

**related to the proposed social statement on Justice for Women;  
and**

**To acknowledge the action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly  
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as the response of  
the Churchwide Assembly to the memorials of these synods.**

## **Category B6: Environmental Stewardship**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 27–29.

### **1. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, we in the industrialized world are consuming energy and the earth's resources in a way that is both unsustainable in the future and unfair to those in the developing world; and

WHEREAS, we hear disturbing scientific reports of environmental pollution, global climate change, a record rate of species extinction, and a depletion of nonrenewable resources that should give us pause; and

WHEREAS, human activity, especially over-consumption of energy and resources in the pursuit of material wealth, appears to be a critical driver in this change in climate and environmental distress; and

WHEREAS, Genesis 2:15 directs us to be stewards of creation, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), recognizing the gravity of these threats, has committed to addressing them in a constructive way, as evidenced by the 1993 social statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice*; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly call on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the Genesis Covenant (*see below for more information*) to reduce by a minimum of 50 percent the emission of greenhouse gases from all facilities, houses of worship, camps, offices, and conference centers of this church within 10 years; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the bishop and Synod Council appoint a Creation Care Task Force to develop a roadmap to sustainability, which gives congregations and other institutions an actionable plan on user-friendly terms for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by maximizing energy efficiency, reducing unnecessary consumption of energy and resources, and witnessing to creation as God's gift for which we are responsible as disciples of Christ; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly calls on its congregations and the ELCA to work together with all religious institutions regionally, nationally, and globally and with leaders of science, government, and business to adopt the same goals of the Genesis Covenant.

### **The Genesis Covenant**

#### **The Challenge**

The Genesis Covenant is an invitation to every community of faith to take action to reverse global warming.

The Genesis Covenant is a pledge to be made publicly by the national religious bodies that endorse it as their witness to the holiness of creation and their commitment to protect the Earth as a sacred trust.

The Genesis Covenant is an expression of the unity of the world's religious communities in the face of a shared crisis.

The Genesis Covenant is a challenge to all other sectors of society to join people of faith in a global effort to change history by changing behavior.

#### **The Covenant**

We will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from every facility that we maintain by 50 percent in 10 years.

### The Commitment

The Genesis Covenant must be endorsed by the appropriate representative governing body of the community. Once that body has adopted the covenant, every facility that it maintains will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from their levels at the time of ratification by 50% within ten years. This includes places of worship, offices, schools, camps, retreat centers, and other facilities.

### The Community

The Genesis Covenant will maintain an interactive online presence to support and network local communities who are part of the Covenant. This resource will empower every faith community to meet its goals in fulfilling the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It will welcome people of all faiths into a working partnership with their neighbors to achieve an historic change for the sake of our children.

### *Background*

In the opening chapters of the Bible, God creates the heavens and earth and proclaims them good. The Christian call to care for this good creation is manifest from that beginning: we are called to serve and keep God's garden (Genesis 2:15), even as God covenants with humanity, all of creation, and "all future generations" that never again will God destroy the earth (Genesis 8:12).

Both the Old and New Testaments emphasize the strong link between the love of God and care for God's creation. "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it" (Psalm 104:30). Jesus Christ is the embodiment of God's love and care for the world and "all things have been created through him and for him" (Colossians 1:15-16). Thus, in caring for creation we honor Christ.

In 1993, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted a social statement on care for the earth, *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice*. It states:

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are deeply concerned about the environment, locally and globally, as members of this church and as members of society. Even as we join the political, economic, and scientific discussion, we know care for the earth to be a profoundly spiritual matter (p. 1).

*Caring for Creation* recognized the potential threat of global warming at a time when scientists were just beginning to see that the earth's climate is changing and that humans are 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" (p. 4). The social statement recognizes the relationship between a degraded environment and the spread of hunger, disease, and conflict around the globe.

*Caring for Creation* focuses on the need for concrete action in the face of this environmental crisis: "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" (p. 8). The social statement also says:

As congregations and other expressions of this church, we will seek to incorporate the principles of sufficiency and sustainability in our life. We will

advocate the environmental tithe, and we will take other measures that work to limit consumption and reduce wastes. We will, in our budgeting and investment of church funds, demonstrate our care for creation. We will undertake environmental audits and follow through with checkups to ensure our continued commitment (p. 10).

Thus, the social statement commits the resources of this church to education, action, and advocacy in order to address the threats to God's creation.

The ELCA's economic life social statement, *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999), recognizes that a sustainable global economy rests on wise management of the earth and its resources: "Economic life should help sustain humans and the rest of creation—now and in the future. The vantage point of the kingdom of God motivates us to focus on more than short-term gains. Humans, called to be stewards of God's creation, are to respect the integrity and limits of the earth and its resources (p. 14)."

This social statement calls for individuals and the church as a whole to "use less, re-use, recycle, and restore natural resources; plan for careful land use of church property, and receive and manage gifts of land and real estate in sustainable ways" (p. 15). It also calls for "policies and regulations that help reverse environmental destruction" and "the development and use of more energy-efficient technologies" (p. 15).

The Genesis Covenant is a project begun in 2007 by the Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Episcopal bishop of the Diocese of California. This is a relatively simple pledge that, if taken by a denomination, pledges a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in every facility that it maintains by 50 percent within 10 years. The Episcopal Church's General Convention will consider adopting the Genesis Covenant this summer.

Scientists believe that "greenhouse gases" are causing the earth's climate to change. The primary greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide, which naturally occurs in the earth's atmosphere, but is present at ever-increasing levels due to human use of fossil fuels as a source of energy. Another important and even more potent source of climate change is methane, which is primarily emitted as a byproduct of industrialized agriculture, including the raising of cattle and other ruminants and the growing of rice. These gases collect in the atmosphere and prevent more of the sun's radiation from escaping back into space. The trapped radiation causes the average global temperature to rise, and scientists believe that if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced dramatically, the earth's temperature will continue to increase, with catastrophic and perhaps permanent impacts on global weather patterns.

These changes in weather already are measurable and range from more severe droughts to extreme storms and flooding to rising sea levels. Many of this church's global partner Lutheran churches and other Lutheran organizations, such as Lutheran World Relief and The Lutheran World Federation, report that climate change already is affecting their work and that the impacts of climate change affect those who are least able to withstand and adapt to changes, those living in poverty around the world.

In 2007, five synods memorialized the ELCA to take steps to lessen this church's impact on the environment. In response, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly acted [CA07.06.33g]:

To urge all expressions of the ELCA, as well as the agencies and institutions of this church, to study *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* and to make concerted efforts to conduct energy audits, reduce energy consumption through personal lifestyle and institutional changes, follow "green" building practices, select investments in corporations that take positive steps toward a sustainable environment, and take political initiatives to address global climate change.

Many congregations, synods, ELCA-related agencies and institutions, and the churchwide organization currently are working to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by utilizing some or all of the suggestions in the 2007 assembly action. Actions by individual congregations, synods, or institutions would be strengthened and broadened if there were a common and concentrated effort. There also have been several efforts, most recently in January 2008, to bring together representatives from the churchwide organization, synods, seminaries, and other ELCA entities to fashion a common way forward.

One of the principles of organization of the ELCA is that the “congregations, synods, and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent partners sharing responsibility in God’s mission.” Each congregation, synod, and the churchwide organization is a “separate legal entity and is responsible for exercising its powers and authorities” (ELCA Constitution 5.01.c.). ELCA-related agencies and institutions, such as outdoor ministries, colleges, and social ministry organizations, are independent entities that set their own policies.

The Genesis Covenant presents this church with a concrete response to this growing crisis, consistent with ELCA social policy, within which all expressions and related agencies and institutions could work within a common framework, even if the ELCA’s way of achieving these ends differs from what the covenant proposes. The goals inherent in the Genesis Covenant offer the ELCA the opportunity to take another step forward in confronting a moral challenge with immense spiritual, social, and economic repercussions on a global scale.

*Cost estimate*

1. The cost of developing a strategy would be approximately \$50,000. Given current financial challenges, it would require a delay in or cessation of other work. This cost would cover two meetings of a consultation task force composed of representatives from the three expressions of the ELCA and agencies and institutions as well as the work of a contracted project director.
2. The strategy would require approval by the Church Council, including a detailed budget and funding plan as well as full engagement by all expressions of this church (congregations, synods, agencies and institutions, and the churchwide organization).

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09f To thank the Sierra Pacific Synod for connecting Christian faith to public issues;**

**To acknowledge that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its social statement, *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice*, its resources, and its action has sought to bring the importance of climate change to the attention of congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and related agencies and institutions, as well as to public and private sectors of society;**

**To thank the congregations, synods, and related agencies and institutions of the ELCA that are practicing environmental stewardship and seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and**

**To request that, as financial and staff resources permit, the Church in Society program unit bring a proposal that includes a timeline, detailed budget, proposed funding sources, and identified**

**partners to the ELCA Church Council for the development of a strategy for this church to address climate change.**

**Category B7: Human Rights in Colombia**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 29–31.

**1. Southwest California Synod (2B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the United Nations, Lutheran World Relief, local Lutheran congregations, and many other aid organizations are working in very dangerous conditions to help house, feed, and protect the many civilian men, women, and children internally displaced by the armed conflict among the military, guerillas, paramilitaries, and drug cartels in Colombia: and

WHEREAS, the Gospel of Jesus Christ compels the people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to advocate for peace and justice and for the respect of human rights for all; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the people of the Southwest California Synod of the ELCA give greater visibility to the crisis of Colombia and continue to uplift in individual and public prayer the suffering and hope of the churches and peoples of Colombia; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod publicly commend the courageous “frontline” work of Lutheran World Relief in Colombia (as elsewhere) and strongly encourage the use of their comprehensive congregational resources to address the armed and social conflicts in Colombia and the faithful responses of local Lutheran congregations by

- providing regular updates in synod publications;
- providing a list of Web sites and speakers to interested individuals and congregations; and
- encouraging and assisting all ELCA entities, especially youth and women’s organizations, to actively support Lutheran ministries in Colombia; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly direct the synodical Justice Mission Team to publicly advocate for a new Colombia policy that includes the following provisions:

- increase and improve humanitarian assistance and expand protection to displaced persons and refugees;
- insist upon the complete dismantlement of paramilitary forces and structures, within an effective legal framework for justice, truth, and reparations;
- encourage negotiations with the guerillas for a just and lasting peace;
- expand alternative development within a comprehensive rural development strategy and immediately end aerial spraying;
- reduce U.S. demand for drugs through evidence-based prevention strategies and improved access to high-quality treatment;
- use U.S. leverage far more vigorously in support of human rights and the rule of law;
- support the recommendations of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for Colombia;
- support a strong judiciary and an independent human rights sector;
- encourage the strengthening of civilian governance in rural areas; and
- make trade policy consistent with sustainable drug policy and human rights; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the synodical Justice Mission Team provide resources to congregations as requested so that the members of this synod are encouraged to write to their congressional representatives requesting that the U.S. foreign aid to Colombia include financial resources to

re-establish a peace process within Colombia and provide more funding for social and economic assistance and less funding for military and police assistance; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to address the foci of the above resolutions by the adoption of a churchwide statement requesting that the U.S. foreign aid to Colombia include more funding for social and economic assistance and less funding for military and police assistance.

### *Background*

Internal conflict has plagued Colombia for more than fifty years, resulting in more than 3.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)<sup>4</sup>, marginalization of indigenous communities, ongoing human rights violations, and a booming cocaine production industry.

In 2000, Colombia became a central priority for U.S. foreign policy in South America with the implementation of Plan Colombia, a \$1.3 billion aid package<sup>5</sup> aimed at fighting the war on drugs in Colombia and promoting the rule of law. Soon thereafter, U.S. funding was partially unrestricted to help the Colombian military fight illegally armed groups operating in the country. After eight years and more than \$5.0 billion, many have concluded that there is no military solution to the conflict in Colombia.

In 2007, after years of pressure from Americans concerned about U.S. policy toward Colombia, the U.S. Congress voted to increase social and humanitarian assistance to Colombia while reducing military aid. Today, about 65 percent of aid to Colombia is military-focused and 35 percent is development-focused. In 2008 and 2009, the ELCA communicated its support for the following policy changes and appropriations:

- decreased military aid and an increased focus on alternative development in order to provide the opportunity for a sustainable livelihood for rural Colombians who otherwise might be engaged in illicit crop production;
- leveraging of U.S. aid for progress on human rights, specifically focused on a reduction in the number of extrajudicial killings;
- at least \$6.05 million in fiscal year 2010 appropriations for United Nations High Commission for Refugees' work with internally displaced persons in Colombia, \$4.7 million for Colombian refugees, and \$5.0 million to support nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) providing emergency assistance to Colombian refugees;<sup>6</sup>
- the end to aerial fumigations of coca plants, which causes further displacement of innocent civilians, and support of voluntary coca eradication in cooperation with affected communities; and
- the addressing of root causes related to the supply of and demand for cocaine, including increased domestic drug treatment and education programs in the U.S.

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<sup>4</sup> Estimates of the current number of internally displaced persons in Colombia range from three to four million. As of January 2009, the United Nations estimates that there are three million IDPs. However, in 2007 the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement in Colombia reported that there were more than four million IDPs in Colombia, and hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced between 2007 and 2009. The language "more than 3.8 million" is what was agreed upon by the ELCA's ecumenical partners in communicating with the Obama administration regarding U.S. policy toward Colombia. Lutheran World Federation–Colombia and the Lutheran Church in Colombia cite the IDP number as more than four million.

<sup>5</sup> In 2000, Congress approved legislation (P.L. 106–246), which provided \$1.3 billion for Plan Colombia. From 2000–2008, more than \$6 billion was allocated for Plan Colombia (including military and development aid) [Source: "A Compass for Colombia Policy," October 2008].

<sup>6</sup> These figures represent appropriations requests agreed to by the coalitions with which the ELCA works in Colombia.

The ELCA has a bilateral relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO) and supports the work of both The Lutheran World Federation's Colombia program and Lutheran World Relief. Each of these entities responds to the 50-year conflict in Colombia in a variety of ways, doing frontline work to help, house, feed, and protect the many civilian men, women, and children internally displaced by the armed conflict. Colombia has the largest population of displaced people in the Americas, second in the world only to Sudan.

Not only are the above-mentioned Lutheran companions working with displaced people, but each is involved in national and international advocacy toward a peaceful solution of the conflict. One important part of the international advocacy work is directed toward changes in U.S. Colombia policy.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO), a member of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), was founded in 1958. It has 2,000 members in 26 congregations and mission points and has a structure with a strong accent on congregational responsibility. The IELCO has a small administrative structure with departments in communications, mission and development (diaconal work), and a human rights office called "Justice and Life." The Justice and Life office concentrates on human rights education with churches and communities, with a significant focus on landmine prevention and support for victims of landmines and other human rights violations. The mission and development office carries out significant work with the displaced.

To respond to the dramatic situation of displaced people in some of the main cities in the country, the IELCO in 2002 joined a small Action of Churches Together (ACT) network. Four ACT projects were executed in 10 different communities in five departments (states) of the country. The projects included housing assistance, potable water, small productive projects, risk management and advocacy training, psycho-social services, health, nutritional recovery, and food security.

With support provided by the ELCA as well as the Church of Sweden and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission in 2006, a new Lutheran World Federation Colombia office was opened. This office concentrates its work in two of the most impoverished and conflicted departments of Colombia—Choco and Arauca—and works with the most vulnerable populations of indigenous, Afro-Colombians, and displaced women and children, supporting their organizations in empowerment, development, economic assistance, human rights, and peace-making. One very critical component of the LWF's work is in the area of national advocacy in Colombia, not only through its participation in advocacy networks with other faith-based organizations, but also through program support of national organizations. The LWF provides significant visibility for the conflict in Colombia, as important news about this conflict generally goes unreported in the media.

The ELCA supports the work of Lutheran World Relief (LWR) with the displaced and with community organizations in development and human rights in the northern region of the country. In 2008, LWR was able to bring together community leaders with officials from USAID to discuss community development, resulting in a comprehensive briefing paper titled, "Toward True Alternatives to Coca: Ways Forward for USAID in Colombia." The ELCA coordinates its U.S. Colombia policy advocacy with LWR. Together with other organizations in Washington, D.C., the ELCA and LWR were successful in influencing congressional action to increase humanitarian aid and reduce military aid to Colombia.

Two ELCA synods relate to Colombia through the ELCA Companion Synods program: the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, which has been in this relationship for a number of years, and the South Carolina Synod, which began a new companion synod relationship in 2008. Both synods make it a priority to advocate for peace in Colombia and change in U.S. Colombia policy. In 2008, representatives of both synods participated in a visit to Colombia, along with the Global



Mission unit and the Washington office staff, to hear from Colombia companions about the destructive effects of the conflict on their lives. In March 2009, representatives from both synods and churchwide staff, together with Colombian companions, went to Washington, D.C., for Ecumenical Advocacy Days to advocate for peace in Colombia and changes in U.S. Colombia policy.

According to the ELCA's social statement, *For Peace in God's World* (1995):

- “The Church serves when it holds power accountable, advocates justice, stands with those who are poor and vulnerable, provides sanctuary, and meets human needs. The Church serves when it supports efforts by governments and others to secure a just peace and when it encourages public debate about what is right and good in international and domestic affairs. It serves by calling for compassion in meeting human needs” (p. 5).
- “This church holds that peace, economic justice, and respect for human rights belong together. Massive hunger and poverty, alongside abundance and wealth, violate the bonds of our common humanity. Such economic disparities are a cause of conflict and war and spur our efforts to build just economic relationships necessary for peace” (p. 15).
- The ELCA affirms that the United States has responsibility to contribute a portion of its wealth to poorer nations through economic assistance, as it has over many years. Economic aid needs to be properly directed: “We support continued and increased assistance by the United States, and call for its gradual realignment toward more development assistance and a proportional reduction in subsidies to purchase weapons” (p. 16).
- As this church seeks to change the U.S. government's approach to Colombia, it values the important role that non-governmental organizations, including churches and inter-church organizations, play in achieving a just peace (cf. *For Peace in God's World*, p. 19).

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

*EN BLOC*

**CA09.03.09g To thank the Southwest California Synod for this memorial and for its efforts to join with others, including the Southeastern Minnesota and South Carolina synods, who are in companion synod relationships with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia, to raise awareness and engage in advocacy for a just peace in Colombia;**

**To request that the ELCA Washington Office, in consultation with the Global Mission unit of the churchwide organization, Lutheran World Relief, and The Lutheran World Federation, send a letter annually to Congress and the administration setting forth the ELCA's policy and appropriation priorities related to Colombia;**

**To encourage all members of the ELCA to visit [www.elca.org/advocacy](http://www.elca.org/advocacy) and join the ELCA's e-Advocacy network for updates and opportunities to advocate for peace and sustainable development in Colombia; and**

**To encourage all members of the ELCA to learn about the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia and to utilize resources and information pertaining to Colombia available from partner organizations, including Lutheran World Relief and The Lutheran World Federation.**

## **Category C1: Vote Margins in the “Rules of Organization and Procedure”**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 42–50.

### **1. Pacifica Synod (2C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

WHEREAS, a super-majority vote, such as a two-thirds majority, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to add the following provision to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

### **2. South Dakota Synod (3C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality that ask the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete a provision requiring a two-thirds majority “to adopt recommendations or resolutions originating from or relating to the subject of a social statement task force report or amendments or substitute motions related to such recommendations or resolutions” and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would

require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, 15 Synod Councils—including the South Dakota Synod Council—asked the ELCA Church Council to change its simple majority proposal to a two-thirds majority vote (3 Synod Councils supported the simple majority recommendation); and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority of ELCA bishops recommended that a two-thirds majority vote be required on the ministry policies resolutions (March Conference of Bishops vote); and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws, so that such decisions will be accepted by the entire church as legitimate; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be divisive in many ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

### **3. Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that “any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote usually is required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a super-majority vote, such as a two-thirds majority, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption for any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses or for the blessing of same-sex unions shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

### **4. Southwestern Texas Synod (4E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make

recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

WHEREAS, a super-majority vote, such as a two-thirds vote, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds vote for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the 2009 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to add the following provision to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: “Any action to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

## **5. Northern Illinois Synod (5B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that “any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote usually is required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be divisive in many ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

WHEREAS, a super-majority vote, such as a two-thirds majority, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption for any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

## **6. Central/Southern Illinois Synod (5C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality will bring its Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, this report and recommendations have the potential to seriously divide and create tumult among the members of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has declined multiple proposals for a two-thirds vote to adopt recommendations on resolutions related to the task force report; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote on all matters of human sexuality would show the clear will of the assembly; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Central/Southern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to have a two-thirds vote on all matters pertaining to human sexuality.

## **7. Western Iowa Synod (5E) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the Western Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

## **8. Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) created the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality and directed it, in part, to develop a social statement on human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly directed this task force to “make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the roster of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council, in its November 2008 meeting, recommended rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that affirm ELCA bylaw 12.12.01, which requires a two-thirds vote to approve a social statement, and affirm the precedent that implementing resolutions for a social statement also require a two-thirds vote; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council, in its November 2008 meeting, declined to recommend a two-thirds vote on any resolutions, recommendations, or memorials related to this social statement, including any rostering proposals; and

WHEREAS, this would create the situation in which the social statement could be rejected while recommendations related to the social statement could be approved; and

WHEREAS, the issues surrounding human sexuality have been vigorously debated in this church; and

WHEREAS, it has been the intention of the ELCA to “journey together faithfully” in the debate and decisions made in this process of discernment; and

WHEREAS, a threshold of two-thirds approval for any resolutions, recommendations, or memorials related to human sexuality would be a clear indication of the “mind of the church” on these matters; and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council at its meeting on January 31, 2009, memorialized the ELCA Church Council to reconsider the decision made at its November 2008 meeting regarding rostering proposals, as did 14 other synod councils; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council, at its March 2009 meeting, declined to amend its November 2008 decision; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Synod Assembly of the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to adopt as one of the rules of procedure that “any recommendations, resolutions, or memorials related to the report of the Task Force of the ELCA Studies on Sexuality require a two-thirds vote for adoption”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this action be communicated to ELCA Secretary David Swartling.

## **9. Northern Great Lakes Synod (5G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

WHEREAS, a super-majority vote, such as a two-thirds majority, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to add the following provision to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

## **10. Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the historic unity of the Christian Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) are treasured gifts of the Holy Spirit; and

WHEREAS, such unity could be endangered by the decision to allow a simple majority vote at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly concerning same-sex marriage and rostered leaders sexual conduct; and

WHEREAS, it would be preferable that whatever major course the ELCA takes should be by an overwhelming majority decision in order to preserve that unity; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to require that any votes at that assembly concerning same-sex marriage and rostered leaders' sexual conduct require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to pass.

### **11. East-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5I) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted "to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

WHEREAS, a super-majority vote, such as a two-thirds majority, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to add the following provision to the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" for the assembly: "Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption."

### **12. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) recommended in November 2008 that any motion to come before the 2009 Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19-10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws so that such decisions will be accepted by this entire church as legitimate; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod Assembly endorse the following provision as an addition to the rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod assembly urge that the voting members from the Indiana-Kentucky Synod present the above addition to the rules of procedure at the time the 2009 Churchwide Assembly considers the rules of procedure for the assembly.

### **13. Slovak Zion Synod (7G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality that affirm the possibility of committed same-sex relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended in November 2008 that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority of the ELCA bishops recommended that a two-thirds majority vote be required on the ministry policies resolutions (March Conference of Bishops vote); and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws, so that such decisions will be accepted by the entire church as legitimate; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in many ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Slovak Zion Synod Assembly endorse the following provision as an addition to the rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

### **14. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality that ask the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of committed same-sex relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended at the November 2008 meeting that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and



WHEREAS, 17 Synod Councils asked the ELCA Church Council to change its simple majority proposal to a two-thirds majority vote (three Synod Councils supported the simple majority recommendation); and

WHEREAS, a super-majority (two-thirds) of the ELCA Conference of Bishops asked for a simple majority vote to reflect the gravity of these four resolutions; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws so that such decisions will be accepted by this entire church as legitimate; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, a super majority vote, such as a two-thirds majority, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to require a two-thirds vote on the four parts of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly endorse the following provision as an addition to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption”; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this synod assembly urge that the voting members from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod present the above addition to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” at the time the 2009 Churchwide Assembly considers the rules of procedure for the assembly.

## **15. Allegheny Synod (8C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations ask the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is required for major decisions, including the adoption of ELCA social statements and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote at the Churchwide Assembly will reflect the significance for a change in church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, 15 Synod Councils—including the Synod Council of the Allegheny Synod—requested that the Church Council amend the proposed rules of procedure to include a required two-thirds vote on rostering issues;

WHEREAS, the Conference of Bishops by a two-to-one vote requested that the Church Council amend the proposed rules of procedure to include a required two-thirds vote on rostering issues; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Synod Assembly endorse the following provision as an addition to the rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Synod Assembly urge that the voting members from the Allegheny Synod present the above addition to the rules of procedure at the time when the 2009 Churchwide Assembly considers the rules of procedure before the assembly.

## **16. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality that affirm the possibility of publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws, so that such decisions will be accepted by the entire church as legitimate; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be divisive in many ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly: "Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption."

## **17. Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its meeting in March 2009 overwhelmingly voted to support requiring a two-thirds majority vote at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt changes to current standards for rostered leaders of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, 15 Synod Councils of the ELCA to date have requested the Church Council of the ELCA to require a two-thirds majority vote at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt changes to current standards for rostered leaders; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council has chosen to not endorse the requests of the Conference of Bishops and the 15 Synod Councils; and

WHEREAS, this action by the ELCA Church Council effectively sets the lowest possible standards required to adopt changes to the standards for rostered leaders of this church, reinterpret this church's moral traditions, and impact its biblical interpretation; and

WHEREAS, there is no consensus among the members of the ELCA concerning such changes to current standards for rostered leaders; and

WHEREAS, such changes to current standards for rostered leaders have the potential to foment division within the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the impact of such changes to current standards for rostered leaders are far-reaching and should not be adopted by the action of a simple majority as endorsed by the ELCA Church Council; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly:

“Any and all motions to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require passage by a two-thirds vote of the assembly voting members for adoption.”

### **18. Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the four “Recommended Resolutions” on Ministry Policies proposed by the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality (cf. lines 557–654 of “The Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies,” February 19, 2009) call for decisions by the ELCA regarding some very important theological, ethical, and ecclesial matters; and

WHEREAS, adopting these four “Recommended Resolutions” as proposed could certainly have considerable impact both upon the ELCA and also upon the formal and informal relationships that the ELCA has with other Christian denominations; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of Christian denominations worldwide have not adopted similar resolutions or made similar provisions within those denominations; and

WHEREAS, part of the discernment process of the ELCA as it addresses important theological, ethical, and ecclesial matters should certainly include due consideration of how these matters are addressed by the vast majority of Christians throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA constitution states in its “Confession of Faith” (2.03.): “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life”; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, requiring a majority vote on the four “Recommended Resolutions” avoids the critical threshold issue of whether these “Recommended Resolutions” effectively amend the ELCA constitution, especially its “Confession of Faith,” a question still under debate; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly; namely, to require a two-thirds vote on the four “Recommended Resolutions” and/or on any similar resolutions that the Churchwide Assembly might address regarding ministry policies related to sexuality and the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses.

### **19. Virginia Synod (9A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality that ask the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the

possibility of publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, 15 Synod Councils asked the ELCA Church Council to change its simple majority proposal to a two-thirds majority vote (and only 3 Synod Councils supported the simple majority recommendation); and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority of ELCA bishops recommended that a two-thirds majority vote be required on the ministry policies resolutions (March Conference of Bishops vote); and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws, so that such decisions will be accepted by the entire church as legitimate; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be divisive in many ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Virginia Synod Assembly endorse the following provision as an addition to the rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: "Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption"; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Synod Assembly urge that the voting members from the Virginia Synod present the above addition to the rules of procedure at the time the 2009 Churchwide Assembly considers the rules of procedure for the assembly.

## **20. Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted "to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19–10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds vote is usually required for major decisions, including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

WHEREAS, a super majority vote, such as a two-thirds majority, would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to add the following provision to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption.”

### *Background*

Bylaw 12.31.09. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* specifies that “[t]he Churchwide Assembly shall use parliamentary procedures in accordance with *Robert’s Rules of Order*, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.” This bylaw both prescribes that *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (10th edition)*, will be the parliamentary authority and authorizes the Churchwide Assembly to adopt rules supplemental to or inconsistent with *Robert’s Rules* at the first plenary.

In each biennium, the Church Council submits a recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly on proposed “Rules of Organization and Procedure.” The Churchwide Assembly has the authority to accept, reject, or amend the proposed rules.

Most of the proposed “Rules of Organization and Procedure” have been developed and refined as a result of the experiences of the ten previous Churchwide Assemblies, as well as the experience of predecessor church bodies. Most of the suggested revisions in 2009 submitted to the Church Council in November 2008 by the Office of the Secretary through the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee were made to update or reorganize the document or to clarify an issue. Some substantive amendments were proposed, including in Part Ten: “Votes on and Amendments to Social Statements and Related Actions.”

At its November 2008 meeting, the Church Council considered draft “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Several proposed rules in Part Ten addressed vote margins for actions on the not-yet-released social statement and related matters. First, one rule in Part Ten references bylaw 12.12.01. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*, which specifies that a proposed social statement requires for adoption a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting at an assembly. This provision, because it is a bylaw, cannot be amended except through the procedures outlined in constitutional provision 22.21. Similarly, a second rule references Chapter 22 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* and provides that constitutional and bylaw amendments require a two-thirds vote for passage. In addition, a draft rule was included in Part Ten to require a two-thirds vote “to adopt recommendations or resolutions originating from or relating to the subject of a social statement task force report or amendments or substitute motions related to such recommendations or resolutions.” The Church Council voted to delete this provision, and also voted against another proposed amendment made from the floor to require a two-thirds vote on proposals that would change ELCA policies.

As a result of these actions taken in November 2008, the proposed “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly recommended by the Church Council do not contain provisions that address implementing resolutions for the social statement on human sexuality or the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. Therefore, under the parliamentary

principles in *Robert's Rules of Order*, a majority vote of those members present and voting would be necessary for a Churchwide Assembly to adopt such actions because there is neither a specific rule providing another vote margin nor a constitutional or bylaw amendment (neither of which is proposed with respect to implementing resolutions or the Recommendation on Ministry Policies).

The social statement would require a two-thirds vote under bylaw 12.12.01.

In mid-February, the text of the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies (consisting of four proposed resolutions) were issued by the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality. The social statement itself was prepared and issued in response to an action of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly; its development and adoption are guided by "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns," adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly and revised by the Church Council in 2006. The Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies was prepared and transmitted to the Churchwide Assembly pursuant to an action taken at the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.

Between the meetings of the Church Council in November 2008 and March 2009, nineteen synods addressed resolutions to the Office of the Secretary regarding the vote required for adoption of implementing resolutions for a social statement or the Recommendation on Ministry Policies and its resolutions. Although the synodical resolutions varied somewhat, most sought a two-thirds vote on some or all of the issues addressed in the social statement implementing resolutions or the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

Upon receipt of the first five such resolutions, the Executive Committee of the Church Council assigned initial responsibility for responding to the synodical resolutions to its Legal and Constitutional Review Committee. At its meeting on March 27, 2009, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee extensively discussed ways to respond to the synodical resolutions that the Executive Committee had referred to it and those subsequently received, and to present language for a proposed amendment to Part Ten of the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" for discussion by the Church Council.

The Legal and Constitutional Review Committee presented without recommendation the following motion to amend something previously adopted (in accordance with Section 35 of *Robert's Rules of Order*) to the Church Council:

To amend the action previously taken by the Church Council with respect to Part Ten of the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly [CC08.11.37] by addition of the following paragraph:

*Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations, Resolutions, Memorials, or Other Motions Originating From or Relating to a Social Statement Task Force Report*

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations, resolutions, memorials, or any other motions (including motions to amend or substitute motions) originating from, or relating to the subject of, a social statement task force report presented to this assembly.

Under this proposal, any motion (including secondary motions) addressing the implementing resolutions of the social statement or the Recommendation on Ministry Policies would require a two-thirds vote for passage.

After considerable discussion, the Church Council voted on March 28, 2009, against amending the proposed rules to add an additional two-thirds provision. The vote was 10–21 with two abstentions, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and Secretary David D. Swartling.

There were no further motions adopted or proposed to amend Part Ten of the recommended “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly by the Church Council at its March meeting, although other amendments relating to editorial revisions and schedule changes were adopted as part of an *en bloc* action.

The actions of the Church Council at its November 2008 and March 2009 meetings mean that the proposed “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, which will be presented for consideration at the opening plenary of the assembly, will contain only two rules regarding vote margins in Part Ten: “Votes on and Amendments to Social Statements and Related Actions.” One rule references bylaw 12.12.01., which requires a two-thirds vote to adopt a social statement. The other rule synthesizes provisions in Chapter 22 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* that require a two-thirds vote to amend constitutional provisions and bylaws. Because neither of these provisions addresses the social statement implementing resolutions or the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, passage of these motions will require a majority vote of those members present and voting under the general parliamentary principles prescribed in *Robert’s Rules of Order*, unless the Churchwide Assembly adopts an additional rule requiring a two-thirds vote for them. Of course, the final form of the rules regarding vote margins in Part Ten, as well as other rules, will not be known until the Churchwide Assembly acts.

The proposed recommended “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly are available at the assembly Web site ([www.elca.org/assembly](http://www.elca.org/assembly)).

Many Synod Assemblies have adopted memorials or resolutions asking that the Churchwide Assembly adopt a rule requiring a two-thirds vote in some circumstances.<sup>7</sup> A standard provision adopted by some synods is as follows:

Any motion to come before the Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.

It is important to point out several matters with respect to this language. First, it is less expansive than language considered by the Church Council because it does not address the implementing resolutions for the social statement. (The language considered by the Church Council in March would be appropriate for a proposed rule amendment to address all motions coming from or relating to the social statement and Recommendation on Ministry Policies.) Second, it is ambiguous to the extent that it does not address secondary motions (such as motions to amend and motions to refer) and because the prescription for a two-thirds vote does not specify of those “present and voting,” which is the standard language in governing documents and in other rules. Finally, it is not consistent in form with other rules in Part Ten.

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<sup>7</sup> Some confusion has arisen regarding the difference between memorials and resolutions with respect to the request for the Churchwide Assembly to add a rule requiring a two-thirds vote in certain circumstances. In general, memorials address broad policy issues and are passed by Synod Assemblies for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly. (See ELCA bylaw 12.21.c.)

Once received by the churchwide organization, they are referred to the Memorials Committee, which is appointed by the Church Council to review and make recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly, in accordance with bylaw 12.51.21. Resolutions are requests from synods to the Church Council or units of the churchwide organization. Either Synod Assemblies or Synod Councils may originate resolutions. As a practical matter, resolutions have a more narrow focus than memorials. Whether characterized as memorials or resolutions, all actions by Synod Councils or Synod Assemblies requesting that the Churchwide Assembly adopt an additional rule requiring a two-thirds vote on issues related to the social statement or the Recommendation on Ministry Policies have been referred to the Memorials Committee.

Minor editorial changes to the language proposed in many resolutions or memorials could address issues of ambiguity and provide consistency with the form of other rules. For example, the following language would be consistent with other rules in Part Ten and minimize procedural ambiguity:

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations, resolutions, memorials, or any other motions (including motions to amend or substitute motions) originating from or relating to the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

Because the Churchwide Assembly will adopt the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” in the first plenary, this history and background is provided for the Memorials Committee and voting members of the Churchwide Assembly.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

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**CA09.03.09h** To receive the memorials of the Pacifica, South Dakota, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Southwestern Texas, Northern Illinois, Central/Southern Illinois, Western Iowa, Northeastern Iowa, Northern Great Lakes, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Indiana-Kentucky, Slovak Zion, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Allegheny, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, Virginia, and Florida-Bahamas synods calling for a two-thirds vote on recommendations related to the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

To acknowledge the action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America related to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” as the response of the Churchwide Assembly to the memorials of these synods.

## **Category E1: Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 52–53.*

### **1. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Lutheran church has a tradition of opposing discrimination codified in law, even during times of social dislocation; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has written social statements to guide efforts to advocate for the protection of legal rights and has developed an advocacy arm to carry out the pragmatic efforts at legislative change; and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality notes that “laws have a direct impact on patterns of social trust within households and networks of kinship” and that “victims of sexual violation must be able to rely on public institutions for intervention”; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement on human sexuality notes that “certain laws and economic realities . . . may create extreme economic hardship for some, including older adults, who desire to be legally married” and asks that the ELCA advocate for “altering laws and the factors that create a significant impediment for such people to be married”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to call on bishops, ministries, and members of this church to advocate



for laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and for laws that define violence on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity as a hate crime; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to direct appropriate churchwide units and to encourage synods, congregations, and members of this church to advocate for laws and regulations that permit widows and widowers to marry without losing retirement benefits.

### *Background*

The ELCA works in the tradition of predecessor church bodies to oppose discrimination in all forms and does so through various offices. This includes advocating for the equal protection of civil rights under the law. The ELCA also advocates for changes in laws in order to end discriminatory practices that have been codified into law. These efforts are based upon the social statements and social policy actions of this church and rely both on a broad movement of members of this church and organized advocacy efforts in New York at the United Nations, in Washington, D.C., and in state capitals.

This church's social statements and messages express deep concern for legal protection and human rights grounded in the dignity of all people.<sup>8</sup> Over many years, the ELCA has gone on record in opposition to civil and human rights violations due to sexuality and sexual orientation. The 1989 Churchwide Assembly said that the ELCA would not tolerate any forms of sexual abuse or harassment [CA89.04.18]. The 1991 Churchwide Assembly reaffirmed the 1989 Churchwide Assembly action [CA91.07.52]. In 1993, the ELCA Church Council reaffirmed [CC93.03.37] the historical position of the ELCA:

1. Strong opposition to all forms of verbal or physical harassment or assault of persons because of their sexual orientation; and
2. Support for legislation, referendums, and policies to protect the civil rights of all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation, and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public service and accommodations. . . .

The 1993 Churchwide Assembly commended this action by the Church Council [CA93.03.4]. On the basis of these precedents, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly acted to support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirm advocacy by synods and the Church in Society unit "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation" [CA97.6.29].

This church is also on record in support of equal protection under the law for all people, including areas related to property and inheritance rights, home ownership, and health and retirement benefits. Through its advocacy ministry, this church has supported adding sexual orientation as a class actionable under "hate crimes" sentencing. More recently, the ELCA supported adding sexual orientation as a protected class in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). Both actions seek to uphold the thematic concern of this church's language addressing civil rights and legal protections, including opposition to discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Human dignity is common to all by virtue of creation by God in the image of God. Christians are called to support and defend basic human rights for others. While equal protection under the law in the United States extends to several specific classes of protection, the current

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<sup>8</sup> For example, see the social statements *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* (1991); *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (1993); and *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999); and the message "Commercial Sexual Exploitation" (2001).

social policy language of this church does not address specifically the situation of older adults and the legal effect of a decision to marry on their existing retirement and related benefits.

The resolution from the Minneapolis Area Synod makes reference to language in the draft of the social statement on human sexuality coming before the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. We note that, as such, this language is pending and cannot be construed as a basis for action by the ELCA or its various offices. However, regardless of pending social statement language, the focus in this area of work remains compelling, as described above and as derived from existing social policy language.

The fourth “Whereas” clause and the second “Resolved” clause seem to address the situation of older heterosexual couples, typically widows and widowers, who desire to be married but are inhibited in this decision by laws that might, in effect, negate one or the other’s retirement benefits.

The connection being drawn between the two issues stated in the two “Resolved” clauses is the importance of altering laws when the force and effect of those laws perpetuate discrimination related to certain benefits and rights, especially those in danger of being forfeited by virtue of becoming a couple or entering into marriage.

The advocacy ministries of the ELCA will continue both to support civil and legal rights and to oppose laws that deny these rights and protections.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

*EN BLOC*

**CA09.03.09i      To thank the Minneapolis Area Synod for connecting faith to issues in public life;**

**To acknowledge the importance of the issues raised and to note background information provided related to the current and recent work done on hate-crime sentencing and employment non-discrimination;**

**To affirm the historical concern of ELCA social policy for advocacy related to human and civil rights and equal protection under the law and to encourage the members of this church to advocate in keeping with this tradition;**

**To request that, as financial and staff resources permit, the Church in Society unit study the issue of the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry; and**

**To acknowledge that the Church in Society unit advocates on these issues based on this church’s social policy statements related to human and civil rights.**

**Category E2: Increased Support for Seminaries**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 53–54.*

**1. West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the churchwide expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has requested synods to increase aggregate basic synodical support for constituent seminaries by three percent for FY2010; and

WHEREAS, the projections (at the time of this synod assembly) for the FY2010 budget of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America include a decrease in the churchwide expression's support for seminaries; and

WHEREAS, proportional share of mission support at current levels in this synod means that for every additional dollar in mission support raised to meet the recommendation of the churchwide expression, a further \$1.06 must be raised as well and remitted to the churchwide expression; and

WHEREAS, the churchwide expression plans to use those additional mission-support revenues generated in the name of seminary support for something other than seminaries; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to take corrective action such that the churchwide expression increase its financial support of seminaries by the same degree it has asked of the synods, namely three percent for FY2010.

### *Background*

Since the formation of the ELCA in 1988, the ELCA's governing documents have recognized the special place of seminaries in the institutional life of this church and have called for shared financial support for them from synods and the churchwide expression. The bylaws originally included the target that synods and the churchwide expression would provide 50 percent of seminary budgets. That goal was never reached, and the bylaw was removed a decade ago, but the expectation of strong partnership support still is embodied in the bylaws as well as in policies and procedures. Currently, the two sources provide, on average, a little less than 20 percent of a seminary's budget. The balance comes from fundraising by seminaries, endowments, and tuition.

Few would argue against the desirability of increasing churchwide and synodical support for seminaries. Churchwide staff, synod and seminary leaders, and many others have been persistent and hard-working advocates for sustaining present support levels and increasing those commitments. By agreement among the seminaries and the churchwide staff, part of that advocacy is a letter each year to each synod, asking that consideration be given to meeting a fair share of seminary support. By that agreement, where a synod already is giving the determined fair share or more than that, there still is a request to consider an increase. It has been concluded that ongoing appeals challenge members, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to participate fully in opportunities for generosity.

As is true for all expressions of this church, the churchwide organization is expected to maintain a balanced budget. In the 21 years of the ELCA, the lack of increase in actual dollars in mission support and the steady decline in those dollars when adjusted for inflation has resulted in either flat grants to seminaries or slight reductions. When adjusted for inflation, however, the effective level of financial support has decreased dramatically over these years. That decrease has been evident in both the churchwide budget and synodical budgets over these two decades. It is important to note, however, that:

- Grants to seminaries have been treated separately in every churchwide budget reduction in recent years. In some reductions, the grant level for seminaries was left unchanged.
- In no budget cut did the rate of reduction for seminaries approach the rate of the total reduction.

Seminaries have not borne the full weight either of reduced mission support or of inflation; nevertheless, the impact has been significant.

Seminaries and churchwide staff have worked collaboratively to seek both efficiencies and effectiveness in theological education. Much has been accomplished. Two new efforts are currently underway that bear on the concerns named in the resolution:

1. The ELCA Church Council, at its March 2009 meeting, took action to create a task force to study the “ecology” of the ELCA [CC.09.03.04]:

To acknowledge that the principles of organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call us to be one church consisting of “interdependent partners sharing responsibly in God’s mission” in which this church is called to be in relationship with institutions and agencies, including seminaries, colleges, and universities, as well as other partners, so that together we can build capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world;

To recognize that more than 20 years have passed since the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came into existence, that the relationships among this church and partner institutions and agencies have evolved substantially, and that assumptions that undergirded the original organization, governance, and interrelationships of this church may no longer apply or apply in a different way in the 21st century;

To recognize further that significant societal and economic changes have taken place that raise profound issues regarding the organization and governance of this church, its interrelationships with partner institutions and agencies, and the ways in which ministry can be accomplished most effectively;

To acknowledge the desire by this Church Council to address these difficult and complex issues by beginning a process to evaluate the organization and governance of this church and the interrelationships among its expressions and partner agencies and institutions for the purpose of bringing a comprehensive report and recommendations to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly;

To authorize the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with the Executive Committee of the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops, to appoint a study group for the purpose of formulating a plan to undertake such an evaluation; and

To request that the study group bring a report and possible recommendations through the Executive Committee in consultation with the Planning and Evaluation Committee for the April 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council and such report include the membership of a task force to conduct the evaluation, an outline of potential topics to address, a timetable, budget implications, and such other issues as the study group believes will facilitate the evaluation.

2. In addition, a review process is underway to assess anew both what this church needs from its theological education network and whether changes in that network’s structure and patterns of support are necessary to meet those needs most effectively. This review was requested by the ELCA seminary presidents at their 2009 annual spring meeting with Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and staff from the Vocation and Education program unit. It will seek to rearticulate for our time the vision of the 1995 report of the Task Force for the Study of Theological Education, “Faithful Leaders for a Changing World: Theological Education for Mission in the ELCA.” Currently the Vocation and Education unit is assembling materials to describe this church’s theological education needs for the present and future. This fall, the seminaries will begin a year-long process of exploring what initiatives, collaborations, and structures best will serve those needs.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09j**

To receive with gratitude the memorial of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod related to funding for the seminaries of this church;

To acknowledge the background information provided, particularly the relevant processes underway, including the study of the ecology of this church and the study of the theological education network of this church and its needs;

To refer the memorial and the background information provided to the Office of the Presiding Bishop as a resource for the pending study of the ecology of this church and to the Vocation and Education program unit as a resource for the pending review of this church's theological education needs and network; and

To acknowledge the action of this assembly related to the 2010–2011 budget proposal as the response of this assembly to the memorial.

**Category E4: Proposed Amendments to the ELCA Constitution**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 60–61.

**1. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, we Lutherans base all of our lives and livelihoods on the Gospel of Jesus Christ as presented in Holy Scriptures; and

WHEREAS, we believe that all of our life should be based on Jesus' model provided in these Scriptures; and

WHEREAS, the holy Word expressly outlines many procedures to foster better relations among people in our daily lives; and

WHEREAS, Matthew 18:15–17 clearly delineates steps to be taken when discipline is necessary; and

WHEREAS, the *Model Constitution for Congregations* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) already has a very strong reference (Section 15.01.) to these procedures in the case of "denial of the Christian faith, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making"; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA churchwide constitution outlines procedures and due process, only implicitly referring to the Holy Scriptures in Chapter 20, "Consultation, Discipline, Appeals, and Adjudication"; and

WHEREAS, the churchwide expression of the ELCA sets the tone and standards for all congregations, institutions, and agencies within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to:

1. Amend the ELCA churchwide constitution to include strong Biblical reference; and
2. Add the specific wording, "based on Holy Scripture, including but not limited to, Matthew 18:15–17," to Chapter 20, section 20.11. so that the first sentence of the section reads: "There shall be set forth in the bylaws a process of discipline based on Holy Scripture, including but not limited to, Matthew 18:15–17, governing officers, ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, congregations, and members of congregation"; and
3. Add the following sentence to the end of the same Chapter 20, section 20.11.: "When a conflict arises, every attempt must be made to resolve the conflict according to Holy

Scripture and the procedures prescribed in this constitution before resorting to secular law.”

### *Background*

The memorial from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod proposing changes to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* requests that the constitution and the disciplinary process described in Chapter 20 include “strong biblical reference.” The Confession of Faith contained in Chapter 2 of the constitution addresses the concern that is expressed in the memorial’s first request:

- 2.03. This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.

Thus, the Scriptures are the explicit foundation of every aspect of this church, including its disciplinary process.

Matters of discipline are detailed in Chapter 20 “Consultation, Discipline, Appeals, and Adjudication” of the constitution. The chapter opens by establishing elements common to discipline in general, such as definitions of due process and fundamental procedural fairness, and then sets out the grounds for discipline, the potential disciplinary actions, and the discipline process for ordained ministers, lay rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations. The chapter also contains the rules for appeals to a Synod Council or the churchwide Committee on Appeals; the causes and process for the recall or dismissal of churchwide officers and synodical officers; and the adjudication process for disputes among churchwide units, between a churchwide unit and one of its beneficiaries, between or among synods, and between synods and the churchwide organization. In short, Chapter 20 covers an extremely wide variety of situations, circumstances, institutions, and people.

In addition, Chapter 20 already contains both a strong scriptural grounding and much of what the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod is requesting in its memorial. For example, concerning the use of resolution processes internal to this church before resorting to civil law, as requested in the third “resolved” clause of the memorial, the constitution states the following:

- 20.15. The procedures for consultation and discipline set forth in the bylaws shall be the exclusive means of resolving all matters pertaining to the discipline of congregations of this church. Neither this church nor a synod of this church shall institute legal proceedings in which conduct described in provision 20.31.01. is the basis of a request for relief consisting of suspension of that congregation from this church or removal of that congregation from the roll of congregations of this church. A congregation of this church shall not institute legal proceedings against this church or a synod of this church seeking injunctive or other relief against the imposition or enforcement of any disciplinary action against that congregation.
- 20.16. It is the intent of this church that all matters of discipline should be resolved internally to the greatest extent possible. It is the policy of this church not to resort to the civil courts of this land until all internal procedures and appeals have been exhausted, except for emergency situations involving a significant imminent risk of physical injury or severe loss or damage to property.

Concerning the process of admonition outlined in Matthew 18:15–17, the constitution states:

- 20.18. The authority to administer private censure and admonition upon an individual or public censure and admonition upon a congregation is inherent in the office of bishop. Proceedings under this chapter or any other provision of the constitutions and bylaws of this church or of its synods are not required for the exercise of such authority.

Matthew 18:15–17 also is mentioned specifically in Chapter 20 with respect to discipline of a member of a congregation:

20.41.02. Discipline shall be administered by the Congregation Council on behalf of the congregation. The procedure which Christ instructed his disciples to follow (Matthew 18:15-17) shall be adhered to in every case, proceeding through these successive steps:

- a. private admonition by the pastor;
- b. admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses; and
- c. written citation to appear before the Congregation Council, serving as a discipline hearing committee, having been received by the member at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

If for any reason the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.

In light of provision 2.03. and the provisions cited above from Chapter 20, the Office of the Secretary has concluded that the strong biblical reference and the process described in Matthew 18:15–17 are incorporated appropriately in the ELCA’s governing documents. Adding the specific wording “There shall be set forth in the bylaws a process of discipline based on Holy Scripture, including but not limited to, Matthew 18:15–17, governing officers, ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, congregations, and members of congregations,” as the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod memorial has requested, is therefore unnecessary. Furthermore, the vague wording contained in the second “resolved” clause opens the possibility that any process of discipline described anywhere in the Bible would need to be the foundation of the disciplinary process outlined in Chapter 20.

In addition, because of the seriousness of some of the actions that can lead to discipline (criminal or sexual misconduct, for example), the steps outlined in Matthew 18:15–17 may be neither sufficient nor appropriate. In fact, in some circumstances they can be seriously harmful to a person who already has been victimized.

In short, the goals contained in the memorial from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod are laudable. Scripture ought to be the foundation of everything this church does, and it is. Problems ought to be resolved internally before they are taken to civil law courts, and they are. The process described in Matthew 18:15–17 should play a significant role in this church’s disciplinary process, and it does. As demonstrated above, these goals are being met by the current provisions of the constitution, and the specific amendments to the constitution proposed in the memorial could have both unintended and harmful consequences.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09k** To receive with gratitude the memorial of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod requesting amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To acknowledge that the goals described in the synod's memorial are met by the current constitutional language; and

To decline to recommend the amendments requested by the synod because they are either unnecessary or may have unintended and harmful consequences, particularly in situations involving criminal or sexual misconduct.

**Category E5: Decreased Financial Support for Vital Ministries**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 61–62.

**1. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the *Constitution for Synods* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) states regarding the “Nature of the Church” that all power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head, and all actions of this synod are to be carried out under his rule and authority; and

WHEREAS, congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day; and

WHEREAS, the Synod Constitution also states that the Church is called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world; and

WHEREAS, the Synod Constitution also understands its purpose is to: proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations; carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all; serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 ELCA budget has decreased its support of vital churchwide ministries affecting this synod, including Lutheran Campus Ministry, Lutheran seminaries, and other Lutheran agencies that have an impact on this synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly communicate its displeasure to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly with the choice to decrease churchwide financial support for vital Lutheran ministries affecting the synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod continue to commit themselves to one another in love and to be faithful in its understanding that the Church's character and purpose is based on bearing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ through effective funding of ministry that responds to human needs.



## *Background*

The memorial of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod describes the difficult decision in March 2009 to reduce the 2009 churchwide organization budget by \$7.5 million dollars, which resulted in the elimination of 23.5 staff positions and 12 vacant staff positions, reduction in programs and grants, and decreased funding for Lutheran Campus Ministry, Lutheran seminaries, and other Lutheran agencies. In approving the 2010 budget for consideration by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council noted that it is based on the revised 2009 budget and anticipates an additional decrease of \$116,900 in current fund income.

The current economic challenges are impacting each expression of this church, for synods also are facing difficult budget decisions. As of late June 2009, a review by the Office of the Treasurer of the 38 synodical budgets for which both 2009 and 2010 budgets were available noted that 10 synod budgets indicate reductions in campus ministry grants and 11 indicate reductions in seminary grants.

In an e-mail to churchwide staff on March 26, 2009, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson wrote, "I ask for your continued prayers for all of our colleagues and mission partners most directly impacted by these decisions. . . . With people throughout the world, we are experiencing the consequences of the current economic crisis." He concluded the e-mail with expressing ". . . confidence that God is faithful to God's promise to be merciful."

In an effort to engage in mutual conversations and shared decision-making with synods about these necessary reductions, the Synodical Relations section of the churchwide organization and the liaison bishops of the Conference of Bishops to the Church Council have established a working group for intentional consultation regarding future budget decisions that involve reductions or other changes to the churchwide budget.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

*EN BLOC*

**CA09.03.091 To thank the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod for its commitment to act in love and be faithful in its understanding that the Church's character and purpose is based on bearing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ through effective funding of ministry that responds to human needs; and**

**To express gratitude for the commitment to mutual conversations and shared decision-making with synods by the churchwide organization through the Synodical Relations section and the Conference of Bishops' liaison bishops to the Church Council.**

## **Category F1: Responses to Proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 63–67, 80–84.*

### **1. Montana Synod (1F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **2. Pacifica Synod (2C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its 2001 Churchwide Assembly voted to "initiate a process to develop a social statement on human sexuality"; and

WHEREAS, congregations, synods, and churchwide units and staff and the task force have spent considerable time in prayer, study, and deliberation around these matters and;

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has paid careful attention to all responses to the draft social statement on human sexuality, reviewing 2,077 response forms (58 percent online and 42 percent on paper), two reports from each of 111 synod hearings, and approximately 800 pieces of direct correspondence or statements of varying lengths; and

WHEREAS, faithful Christians are currently found in disagreement on matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, faithful Christians can cherish Scripture and arrive at profoundly different conclusions regarding a host of matters, including matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul recognizes the challenge of the community's struggle to understand fully and writes: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood" (1 Corinthians 13:12); and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul prays for the Christian community that the "same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5) and urges it to "do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves" and to "look not only to one's own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2: 3, 4); and

WHEREAS, the recommendation of the proposed social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* before the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis on August 17-23, 2009, takes into account the wide diversity of opinion within the ELCA on matters of human sexuality and recognizes that, at the present time, this church is not in agreement on these matters; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod at its 2009 Assembly request Bishop Finck write a letter to the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality, commending it for its hard work, sensitivity to divergent opinions, and desire to maintain the unity of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod seek to continue clear and probing discussion around the challenging issues of human sexuality and what it means in this day to be an evangelical missional church, praying for God's illumination in discussion, civility and humility in disagreements, and unity of Christ's church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod urge churchwide leadership, synods, congregations, and individuals of the ELCA to lead by grace, praying that, one day, we will be of one mind in Jesus Christ and fully understand the gift of human sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the recorded vote tally shall be included with the passed memorial and transmitted to the secretary of the ELCA:

Adopted 5/22/2009

Yes-210; No-137

### **3. Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Eastern North Dakota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

### **4. South Dakota Synod (3C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a possible social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, "Social statements and other resources on social concerns build on the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As a confessional church with an historical sense, this church continues to look to the social statements of The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America for guidance, while it develops its own social statements and further deliberates on social concerns" ("Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns"); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions state: "We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone" (Book of Concord, Formula of Concord, Epitome, Rule & Norm); and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA Constitution, provision 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, in addition to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the current teaching of the ELCA on human sexuality is guided by the ELCA Messages "Sexuality: Some Common Convictions" (1996) and "Commercial Sexual Exploitation" (2001) and by the social statements of the ELCA's predecessor churches: *Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980); and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982); and

WHEREAS, the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a social statement of the ELCA would replace the ELCA Message "Sexuality: Some Common Convictions" and the predecessor church statements with a document that is less helpful than its predecessor documents and distances the ELCA from Scripture and from the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the ELCA; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” as a proposed social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to affirm the teaching of the ELCA Messages “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” (1996) and “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (2001); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to express the ELCA’s intention to continue to rely on the social statements of its predecessor churches—*Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980), and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982)—as historical documents expressing faithful Christian teaching on human sexuality.

## **5. Central States Synod (4B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the people of the Central States Synod give thanks to God for our oneness in Christ Jesus and for the gift of the Holy Spirit working in this synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) during this time of study and discernment of God’s will for this church; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has provided a proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council has taken action to forward this proposed social statement to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will act on adoption of this social statement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to adopt as a social statement of this church *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*.

Yes-259; No-129

## **6. Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with these matters for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, at its March 2009 meeting, voted to transmit to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas- Northern Louisiana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as transmitted by the ELCA Church Council.

## 7. Northern Illinois Synod (5B) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) urged every part of this church to “concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion that we share as members of the body of Christ”; and

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly encouraged the synods, bishops, and presiding bishop of this church to “refrain from or demonstrate restraint in disciplining’ people and congregations who call qualified leaders on the rosters of the ELCA ‘who are in a mutual, chaste, and faithful, committed, same-gender relationship’”; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Illinois Synod resolved at its 2007 assembly that “the Vocation and Education unit [of the churchwide organization of the ELCA], in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, develop an amendment to the document known as ‘Visions and Expectations’ that removes provisions requiring persons who are ‘homosexual in their self-understanding’ to ‘abstain from homosexual relationships’” [NIS Resolution R-6-2007 Assembly]; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has completed its work, providing the 2009 Churchwide Assembly with a proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has provided a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to offer thanks and appreciation for the faithful work of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to receive and accept *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as an official social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly call on all in the ELCA to pray for a Christ-centered, Spirit-guided, God-pleasing outcome of these deliberations.

## 8. Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a possible social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, “Social statements and other resources on social concerns build on the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As a confessional church with an historical sense, this church continues to look to the social statements of The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America for guidance, while it develops its own social statements and further deliberates on social concerns” (“Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns”); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions state: “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone” (Book of Concord, Formula of Concord, Epitome, Rule & Norm); and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, provision 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, in addition to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the current teaching of the ELCA on human sexuality is guided by the ELCA Messages “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” (1996) and “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (2001) and by the social statements of the ELCA’s predecessor churches: *Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980); and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982); and

WHEREAS, the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a social statement of the ELCA would replace the ELCA Message “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” and the predecessor church statements with a document that is less helpful than its predecessor documents and distances the ELCA from Scripture and from the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the ELCA; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a proposed social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to affirm the teaching of the ELCA Messages “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” (1996) and “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (2001); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to express the ELCA’s intention to continue to rely on the social statements of its predecessor churches—*Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980), and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982)—as historical documents expressing faithful Christian teaching on human sexuality.

## **9. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **10. South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

## 11. Southern Ohio Synod (6F) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a possible social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, “Social statements and other resources on social concerns build on the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As a confessional church with an historical sense, this church continues to look to the social statements of The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America for guidance, while it develops its own social statements and further deliberates on social concerns” (“Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns”); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions state: “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone” (Book of Concord, Formula of Concord, Epitome, Rule & Norm); and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, provision 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, in addition to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the current teaching of the ELCA on human sexuality is guided by the ELCA Messages “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” (1996) and “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (2001) and by the social statements of the ELCA’s predecessor churches: *Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980); and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982); and

WHEREAS, the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a social statement of the ELCA would replace the ELCA Message “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” and the predecessor church statements with a document that is less helpful than its predecessor documents and distances the ELCA from Scripture and from the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the ELCA; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a proposed social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to affirm the teaching of the ELCA Messages “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” (1996) and “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (2001); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Southern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to express the ELCA’s intention to continue to rely on the social statements of its predecessor churches—*Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980), and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982)—as historical documents expressing faithful Christian teaching on human sexuality.

## 12. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a possible social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, “Social statements and other resources on social concerns build on the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As a confessional church with an historical sense, this church continues to look to the social statements of The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America for guidance, while it develops its own social statements and further deliberates on social concerns” (“Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns”); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions state: “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone” (Book of Concord, Formula of Concord, Epitome, Rule & Norm); and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, provision 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, in addition to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the current teaching of the ELCA on human sexuality is guided by the ELCA Messages “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” (1996) and “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (2001) and by the social statements of the ELCA’s predecessor churches: *Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980); and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982); and

WHEREAS, the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a social statement of the ELCA would replace the ELCA Message “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” and the predecessor church statements with a document that is less helpful than its predecessor documents and distances the ELCA from Scripture and from the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the ELCA; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a proposed social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to affirm the teaching of the ELCA Messages “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” (1996) and “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (2001); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to affirm and uphold the existing policy of “Vision and Expectations,” Article III, “Sexual Conduct,” for all rostered leaders as person and example, and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to express the ELCA’s intention to continue to rely on the social statements of its predecessor churches—*Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980), and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982)—as historical documents expressing faithful Christian teaching on human sexuality.

### **13. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and



WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

#### **14. North Carolina Synod (9B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will consider the adoption of the proposed social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Assembly of the North Carolina Synod, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to adopt the proposed social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*.

#### **15. Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

**NOTE: Other responses to the proposed social statement on human sexuality are located in Categories F3, F4, F6, and F7.**

*The background, responses, and action for this category are located below with Category F3.*

### **Category F2: Responses to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 67–75, 80–84.

#### **1. Montana Synod (1F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **2. Pacifica Synod (2C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its 2007 Churchwide Assembly directed the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality "specifically to address and make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, congregations, synods, and churchwide units and staff and the task force members have spent considerable time in prayer, study, and deliberation around these matters and;

WHEREAS, faithful Christians are currently found in disagreement on matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, faithful Christians can cherish Scripture and arrive at profoundly different conclusions regarding a host of matters, including matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul recognizes the challenge of the community's struggle to understand fully and writes: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood" (1 Corinthians 13: 12); and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul prays for the Christian community that the "same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5) and urges it to "do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves" and to "look not only to one's own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2: 3, 4); and

WHEREAS, the recommendation of the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies before the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis on August 17-23, 2009, takes into account the wide diversity of opinion within the ELCA on matters of human sexuality and recognizes that, at the present time, this church is not in agreement on these matters; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod at its 2009 Assembly request Bishop Finck write a letter to the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality, commending it for its hard work, sensitivity to divergent opinions, and desire to maintain the unity of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the Report and the Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod seek to continue clear and probing discussion around the challenging issues of human sexuality and what it means in this day to be an evangelical missional church, praying for God's illumination in discussion, civility and humility in disagreements, and unity of Christ's church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod urge churchwide leadership, synods, congregations, and individuals of the ELCA to lead by grace, praying that, one day, we will be of one mind in Jesus Christ and fully understand the gift of human sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the recorded vote tally shall be included with the passed memorial and transmitted to the secretary of the ELCA:

Adopted 5/22/2009

Yes-188; No-151

### **3. Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B) [2009 Memorial]**

**The 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, page 68, included this memorial among those adopted by synod assemblies.**

**The Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly rejected the memorial by a vote of 167 Yes, 187 No.**

### **4. South Dakota Synod (3C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions state: “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone” (Book of Concord, Formula of Concord, Epitome, Rule & Norm); and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, provision 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, the Scriptures teach of God’s design for marriage as reflected in the words of Jesus, “Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Matthew 19:4 6); and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality that ask the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide organization, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one Office of Ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” which have served the ELCA well for most of its history (see attached sheet of excerpts from these documents for examples of current standards related to this topic); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 South Dakota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reaffirm the ELCA's current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline."

## **5. Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, as Lutherans "We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone"; and

WHEREAS, many passages in Scripture both speak and consistently throughout history have been heard to speak in a plain and unambiguous voice concerning marriage and the exercise of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Scriptures teach very positively of God's design for marriage, as reflected in the words of our Lord Jesus: "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh" (Matt. 19:4-6a RSV); and

WHEREAS, a change in teaching and policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) regarding the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA has the potential to damage the ELCA's relationship and cooperative work with Lutherans and other Christians both in the United States and worldwide; and

WHEREAS, a similar proposal to change the ELCA's teaching and policy on this issue was brought up and defeated at the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will consider the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality, which asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship among the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called "Vision and Expectations"<sup>10</sup> and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline," which are in harmony with the plain sense of Scripture and its overwhelming understanding throughout history; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reaffirm the ELCA's current standards for pastors and other

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<sup>9</sup> Formula of Concord, The Epitome, 1. in *The Book of Concord*, ed. by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> Especially pertinent are the lines: "Single ordained ministers are expected to live a chaste life. Married ordained ministers are expected to live in fidelity to their spouses, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a marriage relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful. Ordained ministers who are homosexual in their self-understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relationships."

rostered leaders as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.”

#### **6. Northeastern Minnesota Synod (3E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, this church’s constitution authorizes the Churchwide Assembly to “establish churchwide policy” (ELCA constitutional provision 12.21.d.); and

WHEREAS, members of this church faithfully hold significant, lasting disagreements concerning same-gender relationships and the rostered ministry of persons in them; and

WHEREAS, this Churchwide Assembly desires to find a way for those who hold such differences of faithful conviction regarding ministry by persons in a same-gender relationship to remain in mission with one another in this church; and

WHEREAS, in this church’s polity of interdependence among its three expressions (congregations, synods, and churchwide organization), the “entity most directly affected by a decision shall be the principal party responsible for decision and implementation, with the other entities facilitating and assisting” (ELCA constitutional provision 5.01.c.); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, to memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following:

RESOLVED, gratefully to receive the 2009 Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality as a resource to guide this church as it serves Christ.

#### **7. Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, currently the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality.

#### **8. Central States Synod (4B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the people of the Central States Synod give thanks to God for our oneness in Christ Jesus and for the gift of the Holy Spirit working in this synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) during this time of study and discernment of God’s will for this church; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has provided a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council has taken action to forward this Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will act on adoption of four resolutions that comprise the ministry policies recommendation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to adopt Resolution 1, which reads:

RESOLVED, that the ELCA 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.

Yes-240; No-145

## **9. Central States Synod (4B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the people of the Central States Synod give thanks to God for our oneness in Christ Jesus and for the gift of the Holy Spirit working in this synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) during this time of study and discernment of God's will for this church; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has provided a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council has taken action to forward this Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will act on adoption of four resolutions that comprise the ministry policies recommendation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to adopt Resolution 2, which reads:

RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.

Yes-216; No-178

## **10. Central States Synod (4B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the people of the Central States Synod give thanks to God for our oneness in Christ Jesus and for the gift of the Holy Spirit working in this synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) during this time of study and discernment of God's will for this church; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has provided a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council has taken action to forward this Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will act on adoption of four resolutions that comprise the ministry policies recommendation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to adopt Resolution 3, which reads:

RESOLVED, that in the implementation of these resolutions, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all.

Yes-274; No-118

## 11. Central States Synod (4B) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the people of the Central States Synod give thanks to God for our oneness in Christ Jesus and for the gift of the Holy Spirit working in this synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) during this time of study and discernment of God's will for this church; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has provided a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council has taken action to forward this Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will act on adoption of four resolutions that comprise the ministry policies recommendation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to adopt Resolution 4, which reads:

WHEREAS, guided by the Holy Spirit, this church raises up, calls, supports, and maintains rosters of ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for public ministry in service of the mission of Christ and seeks faithfully to discern in each situation what will best serve that mission; and

WHEREAS, this church maintains these four rosters according to policies and procedures that are developed and applied according to the specifications of chapters 7 and 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*; and

WHEREAS, this church has a polity, processes, and procedures that trust designated individuals and bodies to use churchwide standards to make decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a specific ELCA ministry; and

WHEREAS, some members, congregations, candidacy committees, and synods of the ELCA have discerned gifts and skills for rostered ministry in some people who are or contemplate being in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and have indicated their conviction that rostering and calling such people would serve the mission and ministry of this church; and

WHEREAS, other members, congregations, candidacy committees, and synods of the ELCA acknowledge those gifts and skills for ministry, but believe that this church must maintain an expectation of celibacy for any gay or lesbian person, whether or not that person is in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, and thus believe that this church cannot call or roster people in such relationships; and

WHEREAS, the Church of Christ sometimes has been surprised by the actions of the Spirit, as is reported in the book of Acts when the inclusion of Gentiles was affirmed; and

WHEREAS, public accountability of rostered leaders in the ELCA is essential to nurturing the trust that is necessary for effective ministry; and

WHEREAS, although there is no generally recognized civil or ecclesial status that corresponds to heterosexual marriage for publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this assembly has committed itself to find ways to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, present ELCA policies prohibit the rostered service of any and all people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, but this assembly has committed itself to find a way for people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members to commit themselves to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree regarding decisions on the call and rostering of individuals in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, in this church and with churches ecumenically and globally; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making

regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to eliminate the prohibition of rostered service by members who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization could hold people publicly accountable in their relationships who are in or contemplate being in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and who seek to be on the rosters of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee on Appeals be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to “Definition and Guidelines for Discipline” and the Vocation and Education program unit be directed to draft, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to the “Vision and Expectations” documents and the Candidacy Manual to accomplish the intent of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that additional policies be developed, as necessary, so that those whom this church holds responsible for making decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a particular specific ELCA ministry may discern, and have guidance in discerning, the fitness for ministry of a member living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this church continue to trust its established processes and those to whom it has given the responsibility to discern who should and should not be rostered or called to public ministry in this church.

Yes-230; No-169

## **12. Southwestern Texas Synod (4E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this



change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly thanks the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm the ELCA’s current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.”

### **13. Northern Illinois Synod (5B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) urged every part of this church to “concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion that we share as members of the body of Christ”; and

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly encouraged the synods, bishops, and presiding bishop of this church to “‘refrain from or demonstrate restraint in disciplining’ people and congregations who call qualified leaders on the rosters of the ELCA ‘who are in a mutual, chaste, and faithful, committed, same-gender relationship’”; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Illinois Synod resolved at its 2007 assembly that “the Vocation and Education unit [of the churchwide organization of the ELCA], in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, develop an amendment to the document known as ‘Visions and Expectations’ that removes provisions requiring persons who are ‘homosexual in their self-understanding’ to ‘abstain from homosexual relationships’” [NIS Resolution R-6-2007 Assembly]; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has completed its work, providing the 2009 Churchwide Assembly with a proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has provided a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to offer thanks and appreciation for the faithful work of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to enact the four resolutions outlined in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies [released February 19, 2009]; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly call on all in the ELCA to pray for a Christ-centered, Spirit-guided, God-pleasing outcome of these deliberations.

#### **Results of Ministry Policies Straw Vote**

During a quasi committee of the whole, the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly debated the four parts of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. The assembly then took a straw poll on each of the four parts. The results are as follows:

Resolution #1: Yes-282; No-160; Abstain-4

Resolution #2: Yes-269; No-174; Abstain-3  
Resolution #3: Yes-296; No-139; Abstain-7  
Resolution #4: Yes-250; No-180; Abstain-13

#### **14. Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern Iowa Synod in assembly has voted: to “view any change in this church’s doctrine of marriage as a grave error” (S.A.04.6.9, June 2004); to “affirm and uphold current policy and practices consistent with past understandings of ‘Vision and Expectations’ and ‘Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline’” (S.A.05.6.38, June 2005); and “to memorialize the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to make no changes to “Vision and Expectations””; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm the ELCA’s current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.”

#### **15. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **16. South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, to adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

## **17. Southern Ohio Synod (6F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted "to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline," which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm the ELCA's current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline."

### **18. Slovak Zion Synod (7G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted "to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline," which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Slovak Zion Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Slovak Zion Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm the ELCA's current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline."

### **19. Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted "to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm the ELCA’s current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.”

## **20. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm the ELCA’s current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.”

## **21. Virginia Synod (9A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.); and

WHEREAS, many ELCA members and most Christian churches, including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation, believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of this church, forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

WHEREAS, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA require one office of ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Virginia Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Virginia Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reject the proposals in the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Virginia Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reaffirm the ELCA’s current standards for pastors and other rostered

leaders as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.”

## **22. South Carolina Synod (9C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has not yet reached a consensus on whether or not persons in same-gender relationships should be approved for the rosters of this church; and

WHEREAS, without such consensus the approval of Resolution Number 1 (lines 579 581) of the “Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies” could lead to serious division within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirm its current ministry policies as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and faithfully abide by them; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod Assembly direct the South Carolina Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

## **23. Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, this church seeks to engage all members of this church, including both those who support and those who do not support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships, in theological and moral deliberation and mutually accountable conversation on these and related matters, and further seeks to continue living together faithfully in the midst of such conversations; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly not only the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions but also a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of those with differing positions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to separately consider and to approve each of the four proposed parts of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

**NOTE: Other responses to the Report and Recommendations are located in Categories F5, F6, and F7.**

*The background, responses, and action for this category are located below with Category F3.*

## **Category F3: Responses to Proposed Social Statement and Ministry Policies Recommendation**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 75–84.

### **1. Southwestern Washington Synod (1C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement honestly recognizes that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows for structured flexibility in the process for the candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, many in this church believe that the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **2. Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington/Idaho Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **3. Oregon Synod (1E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, dating back seventeen years to 1992, the Oregon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has repeatedly spoken against discrimination of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people and in favor of full inclusion in ELCA congregations; and

WHEREAS, in 2005 the Oregon Synod voted to become a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) synod that intentionally welcomes gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people in the life of the synod; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and



WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council, at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, many people believe that the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Oregon Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

#### **4. Southwest California Synod (2B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, a Reconciling in Christ synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies by a vote of simple majority, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

#### **5. Rocky Mountain Synod (2E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters concerning human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **6. Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with these matters for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed recommendation on ministry policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **7. Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with these matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed recommendation on ministry policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

### **8. Northern Great Lakes Synod (5G) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that following a one-hour discussion in quasi committee of the whole, the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly will take five votes by secret paper ballot. The first vote will ask whether the assembly recommends approval of the proposed social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* with implementing resolutions. The second through fifth votes will ask if this assembly recommends approval of each of the four resolutions that comprise the "Recommendations on Ministry Policies." The order in which they were proposed by the ELCA Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly will be the order of voting; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the secretary of this synod be instructed to report the vote totals on all five votes on behalf of this Synod Assembly to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA):

#### **SOCIAL STATEMENT**

Shall the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly recommend approval of the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, and its implementing resolutions?

133 YES 104 NO

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS ON MINISTRY POLICIES: RESOLUTION 1**

Shall the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly recommend approval of the Recommendations on Ministry Policies: Resolution 1?

127 YES 110 NO

Resolution One proposes that the ELCA commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS ON MINISTRY POLICIES: RESOLUTION 2**

Shall the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly recommend approval of the Recommendations on Ministry Policies: Resolution 2?

107 YES 120 NO

Resolution Two proposes that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS ON MINISTRY POLICIES: RESOLUTION 3**

Shall the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly recommend approval of the Recommendations on Ministry Policies: Resolution 3?

137 YES 99 NO

Resolution Three proposes that, in the implementation of these resolutions, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS ON MINISTRY POLICIES: RESOLUTION 4

Shall the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly recommend approval of the Recommendations on Ministry Policies: Resolution 4?

105 YES    112 NO

Resolution Four proposes the following:

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members to commit themselves to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree regarding decisions on the call and rostering of individuals in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, in this church and with churches ecumenically and globally; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to eliminate the prohibition of rostered service by members who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization could hold people publicly accountable in their relationships who are in or contemplate being in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and who seek to be on the rosters of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee on Appeals be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to "Definition and Guidelines for Discipline" and the Vocation and Education program unit be directed to draft, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to the "Vision and Expectations" documents and the Candidacy Manual to accomplish the intent of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that additional policies be developed, as necessary, so that those whom this church holds responsible for making decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a particular specific ELCA ministry may discern, and have guidance in discerning, the fitness for ministry of a member living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this church continue to trust its established processes and those to whom it has given the responsibility to discern who should and should not be rostered or called to public ministry in this church.

## 9. La Crosse Area Synod (5L) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement seeks to powerfully proclaim a Lutheran understanding of trust, love and service to God and to the neighbor as the proper foundation of understanding sexuality; and

WHEREAS, even after many years of thoughtful, respectful, and faithful Bible study and conversation, there remains much variation in the ELCA as to how to regard same-gender committed relationships and the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a means of maintaining a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council, at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to transmit to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies;<sup>11</sup> and

WHEREAS, the 1993 Conference of Bishops stated, “We express trust in and will continue dialogue with those pastors and congregations who are in ministry with gay and lesbian persons, and affirm their desire to explore the best ways to provide pastoral care for all to whom they minister”; and

WHEREAS, in 1999 the Churchwide Assembly (this church’s highest legislative authority) voted to reaffirm 1991 and 1995 actions of the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that “gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate *fully* [italics added] in the life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”;<sup>12</sup> therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the La Crosse Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

- To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality and transmitted by the ELCA Church Council;
- To adopt the four resolutions (stated as “steps” in the attached addendum) of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality and transmitted by the ELCA Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the La Crosse Area Synod thank the task force for its work and to continue to hold the members of the Churchwide Assembly in prayer as they engage in moral deliberation.

## 10. Southeast Michigan Synod (6A) [2009 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Southeast Michigan Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## 11. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

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<sup>11</sup> Addendum: “Description of Task Force Recommendations.”

<sup>12</sup> Excerpt from CA99.06.27.

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a recommendation on ministry policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **12. New England Synod (7B) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed recommendation on ministry policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

## **13. Allegheny Synod (8C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will consider the adoption of two documents, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a social statement and a series of resolutions from the "Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies"; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of both proposals, taken together, would mark a major change in this church's doctrine and practice regarding marriage, sexuality, and homosexuality, would constitute a significant departure from the teachings of predecessor church bodies on such matters, and would seriously damage ecumenical relationships with the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, the Evangelical churches, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and Lutheran brothers and sisters in Africa; and

WHEREAS, the teaching and practice suggested in both documents would lead to "local option" regarding the ordination and calling of pastors, to the point where the unity of the office of the ministry would be fractured; and

WHEREAS, the documents' appeal to a "bound conscience" fails to recognize that a Christian's behavior is based on the Word of God and not private opinion; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Synod Assembly of the Allegheny Synod memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a social statement for the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to reject the proposals in the "Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies."

## 14. South Carolina Synod (9C) [2009 Memorial]

The South Carolina Synod Assembly was held on May 28-30, 2009. On behalf of the voting members of the assembly, the sense motions taken in the quasi committee of the whole are reported to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:

### 1. A Sense Motion on the Social Statement:

At the conclusion of the quasi committee of the whole discussion on May 28, 2009, a non-binding vote (or sense of the assembly vote) was taken. The question before the assembly was: "Should the South Carolina Synod Assembly recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly adoption of the social statement on human sexuality?" The vote was Yes-125; No-275; Abstain-89.

### 2. A Sense Motion on Resolution #1 of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies:

At the conclusion of the quasi committee of the whole discussion on May 29, 2009, a non-binding vote (or sense of the assembly vote) was taken. The question before the assembly was: "Should the South Carolina Synod recommend approval of the first resolution concerning the Recommendation on Ministry Policies?" The vote was: Yes-162; No-272; Abstain-55.

***NOTE: Other memorials concerning the Recommendation on Ministry Policies are located in Categories F5, F6, and F7.***

### *Background for Categories F1–F3*

The wide range of issues surrounding human sexuality have been discussed and debated in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) since its formation in 1988. Already in 1989 a process was begun for developing a social statement on human sexuality. The appointed task force first produced a study and then in October 1993 published a first draft of a social statement called *The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective*. Widely voiced concerns about this draft altered plans for bringing a proposed social statement to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly and led instead to the crafting of "A Message on Sexuality: Some Common Convictions," which was adopted by the ELCA Church Council in 1996. This message focused on areas of faith and practice around which there were shared convictions. It did not address the controversial matter of homosexuality.

### *Churchwide Assembly and Church Council Actions 1999–2001*

The 1999 Churchwide Assembly considered a resolution that requested that "... a full study be undertaken under the guidance of the Division for Ministry, the Department for Synodical Relations, and the Conference of Bishops to propose strategies that might allow for the ordination of non-celibate lesbian and gay people." The Churchwide Assembly voted [CA99.06.29] to receive the resolution as information. After subsequent consideration, the Church Council voted [CC00.04.17]: "To continue thoughtful, deliberate, and prayerful conversations throughout the ELCA about human sexuality, including homosexuality, and the inclusion of gay and lesbian persons in our common life and mission . . . ; To decline to initiate a study on the ordination of non-celibate gay and lesbian persons"; and to request annual reports from churchwide units "on the nature and extent of their activities and conversations regarding these issues."

At its November 2000 meeting, the Church Council declined a request from the Saint Paul Area Synod to permit exceptions to the standards articulated by "Vision and Expectations" and reaffirmed its call for broad conversations in the ELCA [CC00.11.67]. It requested annual reports to the Church Council and biennial reports to the 2001 and 2003 Churchwide

Assemblies. The Interunit Working Group on Homosexuality prepared a report to the 2001 Churchwide Assembly.

At the 2001 Churchwide Assembly, memorials from synods initiated assembly actions that led directly to the establishment of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality. In response to memorials from a number of synods calling for both the definition and blessing of committed same-sex relationships, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA01.06.28]:

To respond to the memorials of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, the Southeast Michigan Synod, the Upstate New York Synod, the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, and the Virginia Synod by directing the Division for Ministry and the Division for Church in Society, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, ELCA seminaries, colleges and universities, and other churchwide units, to implement jointly a churchwide study on homosexuality;

To provide that the process include creation of a study document on homosexuality for use in congregations, synods, and in sponsored hearings and focus groups across this church. This document shall include study of the Lutheran understanding of the Word of God and biblical, theological, scientific, and practical material on homosexuality. The document shall address issues related to blessing committed same-gender relationships, and rostering of approved candidates who are in committed same-gender relationships. This study shall provide for the sharing of information from and among members of this church;

To authorize the Church Council to approve the parameters and expense budget of this process and identify the revenue source(s) to provide for this study;

To direct that reports on the study process shall be presented to each of the regular meetings of the Church Council, and to synod assemblies beginning in 2002 with response requested. A first edition report shall be brought to the 2003 Churchwide Assembly along with initial or interim recommendations. A final report, complete with action steps for full implementation, shall be presented to the 2005 Churchwide Assembly;

To respect charitably one another as we examine our understandings and practices, speaking the truth in love, practicing the “mutual conversation and consolation of the brothers and sisters” (Luther, Smalcald Articles, III.4); and

To request that the Division for Ministry, in consultation with the Division for Congregational Ministries and the Conference of Bishops, identify and make available materials to assist and support pastors as they provide pastoral care and counseling for persons concerned with these issues.

In response to memorials from the Saint Paul Area Synod and the Metropolitan Chicago Synod calling for suspension of existing standards and guidelines for discipline to permit ordained ministry and rostered leadership by gay or lesbian persons who are in an active sexual relationship, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA01.06.36]:

To respond to the memorials of the Saint Paul Area and Metropolitan Chicago synods by requesting that the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and the Division for Ministry create a specific plan and timeline leading to a decision concerning the rostering of homosexual persons who give expression to sexual intimacy only in a relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful, including but not limited to:

1. changes in “Vision and Expectations”;
2. changes in “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline”;
3. amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and
4. changes in all other related governing documents.



In the event any of the above mentioned changes require approval of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, such actions shall be placed before the 2005 Churchwide Assembly for adoption or ratification.

In response to a memorial from the South Dakota Synod, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA01.06.45]: “To initiate a process within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to develop a social statement on human sexuality.”

### *Establishment of the Task Force and Timeline*

When the former Division for Church in Society and the former Division for Ministry requested the Church Council to authorize funding for the study in November 2001, the divisions indicated, “As much as possible, the actions called for in the three decisions of the Churchwide Assembly will be integrated in the work of the study. The resolution leading to a decision concerning the rostering of homosexual people will be included as part of the study on homosexuality. Work on the development of a social statement on human sexuality also will be integrated into the study on homosexuality” (Church Council, November 9-11, 2001, Exhibit M, Part 1, p. 3). The council voted [CC01.11.103]:

To receive the report on the proposed process for response by this church to the actions of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly related to the development of a social statement on human sexuality (CA01.06.45) and a study on homosexuality (CA01.06.28), including the issues of the blessing of same-gender relationships and the possible rostering of homosexual persons in committed same-gender relationships (CA01.06.36);

To affirm that this church is in a time of discernment regarding matters of human sexuality and that we pray for God’s guidance during this time;

To affirm that there are no preconceived conclusions on the content of the recommendations that will be submitted to the 2005 and subsequent Churchwide Assemblies;

To continue thoughtful, deliberate, and prayerful conversation throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America about human sexuality, including homosexuality and the inclusion of persons who are gay and lesbian in our common life and mission, and to anticipate the participation of all members, congregations, synods, seminaries, and churchwide units in this process of deeper biblical study and conversation;

To encourage the Division for Ministry and the Division for Church in Society to continue refining the proposed options for this church’s response by:

- a) beginning the process with an exploration of the Lutheran understanding of the Word of God to serve as a foundation for the entire process; and
- b) developing a congregational study guide to the ELCA “Message on Sexuality: Some Common Convictions”;

To affirm the plan to hire a staff director for this project;

To recommend that the Church Council, at its April 2002 meeting, receive a refined proposal combining options 2<sup>13</sup> and 3,<sup>14</sup> with a request that the final proposal include:

- a) a communication plan that provides for frequent updates available to members and congregations;
- b) a process for feedback that utilizes existing meetings (synod assemblies, gatherings of lay and rostered people, and other events) as well as hearings and focus groups; and
- c) a recommendation related to funding the process; and

To ask that the executive directors of the Division for Ministry and the Division for Church in Society consult with the Executive Committee of the Church Council throughout the coming months related to the anticipated parameters of the study and other factors that will contribute to the decisions that the Church Council will need to consider at the April 2002 meeting.

At its April 2002 meeting, the Church Council established [CC02.04.10] a budget and “a six-year timeline for the studies on sexuality, with focus on two time periods: 2002–2005, with greater attention to the issues surrounding homosexuality, while discussion of sexuality proceeds in tandem; and 2006–2007, with attention to the development of a draft of a social statement on sexuality for presentation to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.”

#### *Churchwide Assembly and Church Council Actions 2003–2004*

The 2003 Churchwide Assembly received a report from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality. It also considered a number of memorials on the timeline for the studies, which it declined to alter [CA03.06.27]. Other memorials on aspects of the studies were referred to the task force [CA03.06.52]. Similarly, the Church Council consistently has referred synodical resolutions on topics related to the studies to the task force throughout the study process (e.g., CC04.11.68c).

During the course of its work the task force responded to directives by issuing two studies in the series called “Journey Together Faithfully.” The first was a study guide for the ELCA “Message on Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” and the second a study on the church and homosexuality. The task force received over 28,000 responses to the latter, all of which were read and summarized for the task force. The study was discussed widely in various synod and ministry settings, and a final report on responses was provided as part of the report for the 2005 Churchwide Assembly.

#### *Churchwide Assembly and Church Council Actions 2005*

The April 2005 meeting of the Church Council voted [CC05.04.20] to grant the task force’s request that the timeline for the social statement on human sexuality be extended, with a report and recommendations to be brought to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The Church Council also sent three recommendations to the 2005 Churchwide Assembly based on the report of the task force.

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<sup>13</sup> This option, according to the exhibit provided to the Church Council, “is to proceed with the study in the fullest possible manner, with a full-time study director, an appointed task force of 12–15 persons, and a broad churchwide discussion of materials . . . [with] hearings, focus groups, and other venues of consultation . . . .”

<sup>14</sup> This option “is a modified version of option two, including a full-time study director and an appointed task force of six to ten persons. Instead of designated hearings and focus groups there would be a greater reliance on already existing meetings, e.g. synod assemblies, to involve discussion and feedback.”

In its “Report and Recommendations,” dated January 13, 2005, the task force proposed three recommendations to this church:<sup>15</sup>

- 1) Because the God-given mission and communion we share is at least as important as the issues about which faithful conscience-bound Lutherans find themselves so decisively at odds, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality recommends that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of our disagreements.
- 2) The Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality recommends that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continue to respect the pastoral guidance of the 1993 statement of the Conference of Bishops.<sup>16</sup>
- 3) The Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality recommends that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continue under the standards regarding sexual conduct for rostered leaders as set forth in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” but that, as a pastoral response to the deep divisions among us, this church may choose to refrain from disciplining those who in good conscience, and for the sake of outreach, ministry, and the commitment to continuing dialogue, call or approve partnered gay or lesbian candidates whom they believe to be otherwise in compliance with “Vision and Expectations” and to refrain from disciplining those rostered people so approved and called.

The first two were received by the Church Council as written while the third was amended to present a clearly defined special process for ordination or approval for particular service by “a candidate who provides evidence of intent to live in a life-long, committed, and faithful same-sex relationship, and has been approved through the synodical candidacy process.”

### *2005 Churchwide Assembly Actions*

The 2005 Churchwide Assembly acted upon the three recommendations from the Church Council based on the report of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality. On Recommendation One the assembly voted [CA05.05.17]:

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—its members, congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions—be urged to concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion that we share as members of the body of Christ.

Concerning Recommendation Two, after debate that included consideration of several amendments, the assembly voted [CA05.05.18]:

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<sup>15</sup> “Report and Recommendations from the Task Force for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Studies on Sexuality,” January 13, 2005, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> That statement, (CB93.10.25) reads: “We, as the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recognize that there is basis neither in Scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship. We, therefore, do not approve such a ceremony as an official action of this church’s ministry. Nevertheless, we express trust in and will continue dialogue with those pastors and congregations who are in ministry with gay and lesbian persons, and affirm their desire to explore the best ways to provide pastoral care for all to whom they minister.”

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continue to respect the guidance of the 1993 statement of the Conference of Bishops; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this church welcome gay and lesbian persons into its life (as stated in Churchwide Assembly resolutions from 1991, 1995, and 1999), and trust pastors and congregations to discern ways to provide faithful pastoral care for all to whom they minister.

The assembly voted not to approve Recommendation Three as proposed by the Church Council.

#### *Actions of the 2007 Churchwide Assembly*

In 2007, as a response to further memorials and discussion on the question of rostering people in same-gender committed relationships, the Churchwide Assembly asked the task force “specifically to address and make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church.” [CA07.06.27].

It also voted [CA07.06.28]:

RESOLVED, that in an effort to continue as a church in moral deliberation without further strife and pain to its members, the Churchwide Assembly prays, urges, and encourages synods, synodical bishops, and the presiding bishop to refrain from or demonstrate restraint in disciplining those congregations and persons who call into the rostered ministry otherwise-qualified candidates who are in a mutual, chaste, and faithful committed same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly prays, urges, and encourages synods, synodical bishops, and the presiding bishop to refrain from or demonstrate restraint in disciplining those rostered leaders in a mutual, chaste, and faithful committed same-gender relationship who have been called and rostered in this church.

#### *Completion of the Mandated Work of the Task Force*

After the Church Council’s 2005 action to extend the timeline for study and drafting a social statement until 2009, the task force proceeded with this work following standard processes as guided by “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns (revised 2006).” The task force produced and published its third study, which examined a full range of issues related to human sexuality, in December 2006. Subsequently, the task force also produced a companion video guide for the study and a version for high school youth. The task force received over 1,200 response forms and other comments on the social statement study. It published a draft of a social statement in March 2008, and received comment from more than 100 synodical hearings, 2,000 individual response forms, and 800 written and e-mail communications. Each response and correspondence was read by members of the task force, and summary reports were issued. It concluded its work, as mandated in 2001, when it issued a proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, in February 2009. This document was reviewed and, as amended, recommended by the Church Council in March 2009 for adoption by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly [CC09.03.16].

As mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, the task force also released in February 2009 a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies regarding the matter of approving for the rosters of this church people in, publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. This document was received by the Church Council at its March 2009 meeting and placed on the agenda of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly for action.

### *Relevant Social Statement Policy Documents*

“Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns,” which was adopted by the first Churchwide Assembly in 1989 and most recently revised by the Church Council in 2006, specifies that this church addresses social issues through social statements, which provide both analysis and interpretation of an issue and basic theological and ethical perspectives related to it. Social statement development involves a careful process of moral deliberation and wide participation, considerable resources, and adoption by the Churchwide Assembly (pp. 9–10). Following approval, social statements provide frameworks for social teaching and policy and serve to guide the corporate life of the ELCA and its individual members.

The “Policies and Procedures” document makes clear that “social statements guide the institutional life of this church” (p. 12). Since there is as yet no ELCA social statement on human sexuality, the social statements of the predecessor church bodies, where they are in agreement, continue to offer guidance.<sup>17</sup> Once a Churchwide Assembly adopts a social statement on a given topic, that statement is authoritative and replaces those of predecessor church bodies. Key predecessor documents in relation to human sexuality are *Sex, Marriage, and Family* (LCA 1975), *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior* (ALC 1980), and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage* (ALC 1982). In the absence of an ELCA social statement on human sexuality, these documents provided the guidance for the development of the ELCA message, “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions,” which was adopted by the Church Council in 1996.

### *Relevant Ministry Policy Documents*

Early in its life (1989, 1993), the Church Council adopted and then revised a document, “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” which lays out broad guidelines in several areas for the conduct of rostered leaders to assist in the processes of consultation, discipline, and appeals. Policies related to family life, marriage, and sexuality are in sections b.3 and b.4. The document is available in Section V of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*. The Church Council adopted a document, “Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” in 1990. A parallel document for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers was adopted in 1993. Expectations related to responsibility to family; separation, divorce and remarriage; and sexual conduct are found in section III of the document for pastors and in section IV of the other document. The documents are available in Section V of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09m To receive the memorials of the Southwestern Washington, Eastern Washington-Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Southwest California, Pacifica, Rocky Mountain, Eastern North Dakota,**

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<sup>17</sup> The constituting convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America resolved to “receive the social statements of the existing churches as historical documents.” The board of the Commission for Church in Society voted “that the term ‘historical documents’ in the resolution of the constituting convention to the Commission for Church in Society regarding AELC, ALC, and LCA social statements be interpreted to mean that common elements of the former statements be utilized as the interim contextual basis and guiding principles for present advocacy work until such time as the ELCA develops and adopts new social statements” (minutes of board meeting, September 17–19, 1987).

**South Dakota, Northwestern Minnesota, Northeastern Minnesota, Southwestern Minnesota, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Central States, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Southwestern Texas, Northern Illinois, Northeastern Iowa, Northern Great Lakes, Greater Milwaukee, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, La Crosse Area, Southeast Michigan, Indiana-Kentucky, Southern Ohio, New England, Slovak Zion, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Allegheny, Lower Susquehanna, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida-Bahamas synods in response to both the recommended proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, and the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies as detailed in memorials categories F1–F3; and**

**To acknowledge the action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as the response of the Churchwide Assembly to the memorials of these synods.**

## **Category F4: Requests for Amendments to the Proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 84–85, 91–92.

### **1. Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity.”

### **2. Grand Canyon Synod (2D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Grand Canyon Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

- to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
- to adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity.”

### **3. Northeastern Minnesota Synod (3E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, this church does not currently have resources for those ministers and congregations that choose to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable for promises of lifelong love and fidelity made before their faith-community; and

WHEREAS, some of this church’s ministers and congregations have faithfully discerned that providing such public accountability is the appropriate pastoral response to same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, at the same time, no minister or congregation should be required to provide such public accountability if it violates their faithfully discerned convictions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, to memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following as an implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality:

To direct the appropriate churchwide units and offices to develop resources, for ministers and congregations that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable for promises of lifelong love and fidelity made before their faith-community.

### **4. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality; and

WHEREAS, education “refers in a broad sense to learning, teaching, and knowing as a dimension of human life. It is a life-long activity that permeates all we do,” and “People create institutions and situations whose purposes are to encourage, transmit, and advance human learning to shape and equip future generations”<sup>18</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has made it a commitment that “children, youth and family ministries will welcome and educate all children and youth in ways that recognize their wonderful complexity and dignity”<sup>19</sup>; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following as an implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality:

“To direct relevant churchwide units, in cooperation with congregations and recognized Lutheran organizations whose mission includes ministry by and on behalf of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, to develop

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<sup>18</sup> *Our Calling in Education*, adopted as amended by the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> *Our Calling in Education*, adopted as amended by the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, p. 21.

congregational resources for age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education that upholds the values of this social statement.”

## **5. Southern Ohio Synod (6F) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following as implementing resolutions of the social statement on human sexuality:

1. To encourage relevant churchwide units and encourage synods, congregations, and members of this church to advocate for laws and regulations that permit widows and widowers to marry without losing their pensions or Social Security benefits; and
2. To encourage relevant churchwide units to develop congregational resources for age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education that upholds the values of this social statement; and
3. To encourage relevant churchwide units to develop resources that assist congregations and ministers in providing pastoral care for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, without the expectation that they change their sexual orientation or gender identity; and
4. To encourage the appropriate churchwide units and offices to develop resources for ministers and congregations who choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable for promises of lifelong love and fidelity made before their faith-community.

*The background, responses, and action for this category are located below with Category F6.*

## **Category F5: Requests for Amendments to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 85–86, 91–92.

### **1. Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) as follows:

1. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
2. To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church-body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

### **2. Grand Canyon Synod (2D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and the Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and



WHEREAS, the Grand Canyon Synod passed memorials with similar intent in 2005, 2006, and 2007; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Grand Canyon Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

- to adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and
- to adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

*The background, responses, and action for this category are located below with Category F6.*

## **Category F6: Requests for Amendments to the Proposed Social Statement and Recommendation on Ministry Policies**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 86–92.*

### **1. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as follows:

To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;

To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;

To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;

To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the

expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **2. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;
4. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **3. Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to act as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;
4. To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

#### **4. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as follows:

To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;

To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;

To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations

or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;

To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **5. Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt all four resolutions of the proposed Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding persons in these relationships publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;
4. To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering or candidacy was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **6. New Jersey Synod (7A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: "To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity";
4. To adopt the following: "Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships."

## **7. New England Synod (7B) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: "To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for holding persons in same-gender relationships publically accountable in exchanges of promises of lifelong love and fidelity. These resources are to be designed for use by congregations, faith-communities, and rostered leaders"; and
2. To adopt the following: "RESOLVED, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships."

## **8. Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and

To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and be it further RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”; and

To adopt the following: “RESOLVED, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **9. Upstate New York Synod (7D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;

4. To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

**DISSENTING OPINION:** The Upstate New York Synod Assembly authorized attaching the following resolution to the memorial concerning human sexuality as a dissenting opinion and to include the vote on it. This resolution was defeated: Yes-49; No-275; Abstain-4.

### **The Lordship of God and the Authority of the Bible Being a Christian Church in Our Society**

WHEREAS, our first priority is to love God, including honoring God’s Lordship; and

WHEREAS, we as Christians hold to the authority of the Bible, and we teach, preach, and follow the whole Word of God, for God is Lord; and

WHEREAS, refuting the Bible and declaring that the specific issue of homosexual sexual activity as permitted for Christians is repeatedly being brought up by various people in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the Bible repeatedly and only holds up as examples of appropriate sexual activity as between male and female in the marriage relationship; and

WHEREAS, the Bible is clear in a variety of places that homosexual sexual activity is sin;\* and

WHEREAS, Judaism and the Christian Church have for 3,000+ years held that homosexual sexual action is sin; and

WHEREAS, biblical clarity is not just concerning homosexual sexual activity but also includes that adultery, pre-marital sex, gossip, lying, murder, and more is repeatedly held up as sin; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we as Christians must hold to the Lordship of God and the authority of scripture no matter what the issue is or the consequences are to us (Matthew 10); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we as a church continue to hate the sin and love the sinner, including being respectful and caring of our homosexual members and all homosexuals, just as we do with all of our members who are saints and sinners today; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA is to continue to follow scripture and God’s Lordship as is presented in our current ELCA written policy concerning homosexuality sexual activity—it is sin; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we will continue to consider homosexual sexual activity as sin in church issues and in societal issues, including all the appropriate pastoral restrictions, teaching, public policy, lobbying, and other ways we can influence society as a Christian church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod recommend that the Churchwide Assembly reject the proposed sexuality statement’s recommendation concerning homosexuality.

\*Stated: Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:24–27, First Corinthians 6:9–10, First Timothy 1:10.  
Clearly Implied: Genesis 19:4–11, Jude 7.

Included in “fornication” 21+ times, such as Acts 15:20, Ephesians 5:3, Revelation 2:14, etc.

### **10. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostersing was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **11. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;



2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”; and
4. To adopt the following: “Resolved that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **12. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to act as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”; and
4. To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

## **13. Southeastern Synod (9D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with matters of human sexuality for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

WHEREAS, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed social statement on human sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
3. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the social statement on human sexuality: "To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity";
4. To adopt the following: "Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships."

#### *Background for Categories F4–F6*

The proposed "Rules of Organization and Procedure" for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly include a provision that the presiding bishop may appoint an *ad hoc* committee to process amendments to social statements or other documents. The proposed rule reads: "If in the opinion of the chair of the assembly, the amendments to a social statement, or to recommendations or resolutions concerning a social statement, are either too voluminous or too complex for the assembly to consider expeditiously, all amendments may be referred by the chair to either the Reference and Counsel Committee or to an *ad hoc* committee appointed by the chair with the consent of the assembly for its recommendations for the consideration of the statement or recommendations or resolutions and the proposed amendments by the assembly."

The *ad hoc* committee seeks to enhance the work of the assembly by 1) receiving and grouping proposed amendments related to the proposed social statement; 2) receiving and grouping proposed amendments to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies; 3) assisting voting members who have brought amendments for consideration by the assembly with language or wording; 4) assisting, as much as possible, authors of amendments to form consensus with others with similar content or common interests; and 5) reporting to the assembly the results of its work. The *ad hoc* committee will bring a separate report and recommendations to the assembly regarding implementation of the amendments to the social statement and Recommendation on Ministry Policies. This document will guide the assembly's consideration of proposed amendments.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09n**

To receive the memorials of the Northwest Washington, Sierra Pacific, Grand Canyon, Northeastern Minnesota, Minneapolis Area, Saint Paul Area, Metropolitan Chicago, Southeastern Iowa, Southern Ohio, New Jersey, New England, Metropolitan New York, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, southeastern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Southeastern synods requesting amendments to either the recommended proposed social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies, or both documents; and

To acknowledge that the amendments requested by synod assemblies have been grouped in Categories F4–F6 of the Report of the Memorials Committee and will be considered by the *ad hoc* committee in accordance with assembly rules; and

To acknowledge that the action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in response to these amendments as the response to the memorials of these synods.

## **Category F7: Other Responses to the Proposed Social Statement and Recommendation on Ministry Policies**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 92–93.

### **1. Northern Great Lakes Synod (5G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has repeatedly recognized that persons can be faithful to God and to the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions, yet come to different conclusions on significant issues of conscience; and

WHEREAS, the task force has proposed a resolution that this church honor the deep faith of all of its members by finding ways to proceed so that all members “bear one another’s burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree”; and

WHEREAS, that proposal may not reach a vote if the preceding proposals are not approved; and

WHEREAS, even when the current sexuality issues are disposed of, other important issues will doubtless arise in the future that cause similar divisions among people of good faith within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and

WHEREAS, the Church is in manifest need of greater ability to honor and support one another as members of the body of Christ and persons for whom Christ died, even then there are disagreements on important issues; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that regardless of the outcome of the sexuality proposals, the Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to establish within the ELCA methods, procedures, and teaching that will help its people to apply Christian principles to disagreements among themselves, and especially to bear one another’s burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree.

## **2. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, Lutheran tradition is rooted in the desire of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther for reform in the one, holy, catholic, apostolic and Christian Church; and

WHEREAS, Luther's belief in "sola scriptura," or "the Bible alone," informed his effort to reform a troubled and corrupt church of the sixteenth century; and

WHEREAS, it drew believers who loved the triune God as well as their catholic and Christian faith but not the errors that were being promulgated by its hierarchy; and

WHEREAS, those believers sought to be set apart from both the errors of the Roman Catholic faith of the time and of other Reformers who disagreed on such matters as free will, good works, and priestly celibacy; and

WHEREAS, those believers also sought harmony with 1,500 years of teachings by the fathers, elders, and leaders who dealt with previous divisions in the church; and

WHEREAS, rulers of the several states populated by these believers insisted that "our churches do not dissent from any article of the faith held by the Church catholic"; and

WHEREAS, those rulers boldly presented their defense on June 25, 1530, to an assembly in the German city of Augsburg called by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V; and

WHEREAS, these rulers were "prepared to discuss, in a friendly manner, all possible ways and means by which we may come together," particularly to provide a united front against unholy enemies, such as those from the Turkish empire then challenging the Christian lands of eastern Europe; and

WHEREAS, those rulers came with a statement of commissioned theologians, particularly Philip Melancthon, that in turn was based on the works of Luther and informed Charles V, "We ought to confess the one Christ and do everything according to God's truth"; and

WHEREAS, that document now called the Augsburg Confession urged that "no one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments, without a rightly ordered call" (Augsburg Confession - Article 14); and

WHEREAS, that document quoted Genesis 1:28 and said "God created human beings for procreation" and "it is not within a person's power, without God giving a unique gift, to change this creation" (Augsburg Confession - Article 23); and

WHEREAS, that statement offered, "if the outcome . . . in this religious matter should not be settled with friendliness and charity," a defense by those rulers in "a general, free Christian council"; and

WHEREAS, this document took on a wide range of issues and concluded with the assurance that "we have been very careful to make sure no new ungodly doctrine creeps into our churches"; and

WHEREAS, as reported in the ELCA's *The Lutheran* magazine in October 2008, this confession is remembered today in some countries, such as Poland and Slovakia, where the denomination we would call "Lutheran" is called instead "the Church of the Augsburg Confession"; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continue to be considered a "church of the Augsburg Confession"; and be it further

RESOLVED, to reiterate the importance of the Augsburg Confession as a guide for the body of believers known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America renew its commitment to the direction set by Melancthon and these brave believers in 1530; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the brothers and sisters of the ELCA shape this church's teaching, especially on such matters as human sexuality and the good order of the church, according to the example set at Augsburg.

## **3. Allegheny Synod (8C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, "all Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) believes that the entire canon of Scripture points to Christ and must be interpreted through the lens of Christ (ELCA Constitution 2.02.c.; Galatians 3:23-28); and

WHEREAS, Lutherans are taught that “the entire Bible is both law and gospel,” and “that both need to be held together for God’s Word to be fulfilled” (Mark Allan Powell, “Law & gospel bring God’s word,” *The Lutheran*, Feb. 2009: 8); and

WHEREAS, as evident in Scripture (Acts 11:1-18, Galatians 2:1-14), the struggle to interpret the law in the light of Christ has resulted in passionate deliberation about the Church’s practice; and

WHEREAS, throughout history, God, through the Church’s faithful reading of Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has solidified and strengthened certain practices of the Church; for example, in the matters of the public reading of Scripture, the office of preaching, and administration of the sacraments; and

WHEREAS, throughout history, God, through the Church’s faithful reading of Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has reshaped certain practices of the Church; for example, in the matters of celibacy, slavery, divorce, and the role of women in leadership, and

WHEREAS, the revelation of Christ through Scripture calls the many members of the body into unity in the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12-13); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that all leaders and members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America together engage the entire canon of Scripture and continually seek the guidance of the Spirit in all deliberations and decisions concerning this church’s practice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the members of the Allegheny Synod of the ELCA, especially those gathered in assembly June 4-6, 2009, hold one another in prayer and in love during passionate deliberation, according to Jesus’ command to the disciples (John 13:34-35), and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Allegheny Synod of the ELCA, gathered in assembly in 2009, memorialize the members of the ELCA, when gathered in the August 2009 Churchwide Assembly, to hold one another in prayer and in love during passionate deliberation, according to Jesus’ command to the disciples (John 13:34-35).

### *Background*

The memorial from the Northern Great Lakes Synod requests that this church establish methods, procedures, and teaching to guide members to apply Christian principles to disagreements among themselves. This memorial gives voice to concerns guided by the eighth commandment and other biblical injunctions regarding how members of the body of Christ relate to and “build up” the community in the midst of disagreement.

Similarly, the memorials from the Allegheny and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods point respectively to the use of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in deliberation with encouragement to “together engage the entire canon of Scripture and continually seek the guidance of the Spirit in all deliberations and decisions” even as we “hold one another in prayer and in love during passionate deliberation” in accordance with John 13:34-35 and “reiterate the importance of the Augsburg Confession as a guide for the body of believers known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

This church’s commitment to these concerns already has led to the development of resources in the various expressions of this church. Pastors and lay leaders provide studies on these matters, drawing both on Scripture and on the rich theological resources of this church, including the Augsburg Confession. The ELCA has committed itself to being a “community of moral deliberation” (*The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective*, 1991), and resources for moral deliberation have been developed as part of the work of the department for studies of the program unit for Church in Society. These resources include such materials as “Talking Together about Tough Social Issues,” “Talking Together as Christians Cross-Culturally,” and “Living the Faith: A Lutheran Perspective on Ethics.” Other curricula that teach methods and procedures for conflict management or discernment are available from book publishers and from church-based organizations dedicated to peace-making or congregational growth.

In April 2008 the Church Council responded to a resolution on communal discernment from the Southwestern Minnesota Synod by appointing a task force to explore whether there may be better ways for this church in all its expressions to engage emotional and divisive issues under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order to “. . . increase mutual trust, build respect for each other as the body of Christ, and deepen spiritual discernment” [CC08.04.09]. The work of that task force is now underway and can be reviewed at *elcadiascernment.ning.com*. The ELCA will continue to receive updates from the task force and anticipates a final report and recommendations prior to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

**EN BLOC**

**CA09.03.09o To thank the Northern Great Lakes, Southwestern Pennsylvania, and Allegheny synods for urging the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to draw upon the strengths of its theological and biblical foundations, recognize one another’s faithfulness and live out its identity as a community of moral deliberation and mutual “building up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11) in the midst of controversy;**

**To urge congregations, other ministry settings, and synods to make greater use of available resources that will help individuals apply Christian principles to disagreements and to communal discernment;**

**To decline to authorize the development of additional resources for this purpose at this time but to encourage continued sharing about resources that are available; and**

**To urge ELCA members to pray for the work of the task force on communal discernment and to actively review and receive its work when completed.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited Pr. Richter to present the next memorial category, which was Category B9: Fullness of Leadership: Project Connect.

## **Category B9: Fullness of Leadership: Project Connect**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 34–41.

### **1. New Jersey Synod (7A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries<sup>20</sup> of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

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<sup>20</sup> This resolution is endorsed by the following: the Rev. Marcus J. Miller, president of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary; the Rev. Philip D. W. Krey, president of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; the Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, president of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg; and Mr. Donald G. Johnson, AIM, director of Project Connect of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran seminaries.

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, “Is There a Place?”<sup>21</sup> particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God’s promises because we know that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall that is the hostility between us.”<sup>22</sup> We are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is 97 percent people of European descent even as a commitment was made to be a church comprised of at least 10 percent people of color by 1998; this has not yet happened. Project Connect is convinced that one of the overwhelming factors in this reality is racism, a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* acknowledges racism as sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that in its institutional form, racism creates a system that allows those of European descent to stand at the center and pushes all others to the margins. Due to racism, people of European descent not only maintain their privilege and status unconsciously, but all people are pressured into remaining silent about the realities of race relations, even in the church<sup>23</sup> therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod take the further steps to abolish racism<sup>24</sup> and review the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in all of its expressions—congregations, synods, and churchwide organization—to take the necessary steps to abolish racism and throughout this whole church and review the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA formulate a model of reconciliation<sup>25</sup> that would be used in congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression for the purpose of abolishing racism by:

- Confessing and repenting from the sin of racism and its harmful effects on the body of Christ;

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<sup>21</sup> Clergy of color are more likely to be paid below synod guidelines; clergy of color receive lower retirement benefits; clergy of color wait for a first call for a significantly greater period than those of European descent; the culture of the ELCA believes that only certain congregations have a mission for ministry in ethnic communities. Taken from, “Is There a Place?” and documented in a presentation to the Multicultural Seminar, August 1, 2008, by the Rev. Dr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA, “New Day Begun, Engaging Our Wholeness.”

<sup>22</sup> *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*, ELCA Social Statement, 1993.

<sup>23</sup> “A Place at the Table: An African American Lutheran Preaching from Margins to Mainstream,” thesis submitted to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for the D.Min. in preaching, 2007.

<sup>24</sup> We recommend that this review include, as a first step, the study of the ELCA social statement *Freed in Christ* by the congregations and the boards and committees of the synod. A guide for leading conversations on this social statement was revised in 2008 and can be downloaded from the ELCA Web site.

<sup>25</sup> Using the spirit and character of difficult and intentional conversation found in the Truth and Reconciliation Committee formed in South Africa following the abolition of apartheid. This committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1995. The act created a framework for the “establishment of as complete a picture possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date contemplated in the Constitution” (pg 1. of the ACT available online [www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm)). It allowed victims and victimizers to speak with the promise of reparation and amnesty where necessary or appropriate for the purpose of reconciliation.

- Forging ourselves for our own culpability and forgiving those who have participated knowingly and unknowingly in the sin of racism;
- Fostering dialogue between the diverse members of this church and acknowledging the gifts that can be exchanged;
- Reformulating views on who can serve, at what levels they can serve, and in what context they can serve;
- Providing a forum for leaders of color to communicate to this whole church their “real-life” experiences as it pertains to the candidacy and call process in the ELCA for the purpose of uncovering the extent to which people of color are being excluded from full participation;
- Accepting the varied cultural expressions in the ELCA practiced throughout the diverse communities of this church as equally valid expressions of the Lutheran faith.

## 2. Upstate New York Synod (7D) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, “Is There a Place?”<sup>26</sup> particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God’s promises because we know that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall that is the hostility between us.”<sup>27</sup> We are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is 98 percent people of European descent even as a commitment was made to be a church comprised of at least 10 percent people of color by 1998. We are convinced that because of racism—a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice—this has not yet happened; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* acknowledges racism as sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that in its institutional form, racism creates a system that allows those of European descent to stand at the center and pushes all others to the margins. Due to racism, people of European descent not only maintain their privilege and status unconsciously, but all people are pressured into remaining silent about the realities of race relations, even in the church<sup>28</sup> therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod take the necessary steps to confront racism and review the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this synod; and be it further

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<sup>26</sup> Clergy of color are more likely to be paid below synod guidelines; clergy of color receive lower retirement benefits; clergy of color wait for a first call for a significantly greater period than those of European descent; the culture of the ELCA believes that only certain congregations have a mission for ministry in ethnic communities. Taken from, “Is There a Place?” and documented in a presentation to the Multicultural Seminar, August 1, 2008, by the Rev. Dr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA, “New Day Begun, Engaging Our Wholeness.”

<sup>27</sup> *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*, ELCA social statement, 1993.

<sup>28</sup> “A Place at the Table: An African American Lutheran Preaching from Margins to Mainstream,” thesis submitted to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for the D.Min. in preaching, 2007.



RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in all of its expressions—congregations, synods, and churchwide organization—to take the necessary steps to confront racism throughout this whole church and review the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this church at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA formulate a model of reconciliation<sup>29</sup> that would be used in congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression for the purpose of confronting racism by:

1. Confessing and repenting from the sin of racism and its harmful effects on the body of Christ;
2. Fostering dialogue between the diverse members of this church and acknowledging the gifts that can be exchanged;
3. Reformulating views on who can serve, at what levels they can serve, and in what context they can serve;
4. Providing a forum for leaders of color to communicate to this whole church their “real-life” experiences as it pertains to the candidacy and call process in the ELCA for the purpose of uncovering the extent to which people of color are excluded from full participation;
5. Accepting the varied expressions of the ELCA practiced throughout the diverse communities of this church as equally valid expressions of the Lutheran faith.

### **3. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, “Is There a Place?”<sup>30</sup> particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God’s promises because we know that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall that is the hostility between us.”<sup>31</sup> We are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is 97 percent people of European descent even as a commitment was made to be a church comprised of at least 10 percent people of color

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<sup>29</sup> Patterned after the Truth and Reconciliation Committee formed in South Africa following the abolition of apartheid. This committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1995. The act created a framework for the “establishment of as complete a picture possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date contemplated in the Constitution” (pg 1. of the ACT available online [www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm)). It allowed victims and victimizers to speak with the promise of reparation and amnesty where necessary or appropriate for the purpose of reconciliation.

<sup>30</sup> Clergy of color are more likely to be paid below synod guidelines; clergy of color receive lower retirement benefits; clergy of color wait for a first call for a significantly greater period than those of European descent; the culture of the ELCA believes that only certain congregations have a mission for ministry in ethnic communities. Taken from, “Is There a Place?” and documented in a presentation to the Multicultural Seminar, August 1, 2008, by the Rev. Dr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA, “New Day Begun, Engaging Our Wholeness.”

<sup>31</sup> *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*, ELCA social statement, 1993.

by 1998; this has not yet happened. We are convinced that one of the overwhelming factors in this reality is racism—a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* acknowledges racism as sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that in its institutional form, racism creates a system that allows those of European descent to stand at the center and pushes all others to the margins. Due to racism, people of European descent not only maintain their privilege and status unconsciously, but all people are pressured into remaining silent about the realities of race relations, even in the church<sup>32</sup> therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod meeting in assembly call upon its members, congregations, and institutions to continue to be led by faith, Scripture, and ELCA resources (such as the social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, 1993) in order to address the racial barriers that have made the vision of a more multicultural church so difficult to achieve, while also recommitting to seek out, raise up, and support young people from all races, ethnic groups, and cultures for public leadership in this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod meeting in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to urge the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in all of its expressions to join the synod in this commitment and task; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod meeting in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the appropriate churchwide structures to work with Project Connect to explore and address these concerns and work toward the end of racism.

#### **4. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, “Is There a Place?” particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God’s promises because we know that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall, that is the hostility between us.” We are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is 97% people of European descent even as a commitment was made to be a church comprised of at least 10% people of color by 1998, this has not yet happened. We are convinced that one of the overwhelming factors in this reality is racism—a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* acknowledges racism as a sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that in its institutional form, racism creates a system that allows those of European descent to stand at the center and pushes all others to the margins. Due to racism people of European descent not only maintain their privilege and status unconsciously, but all people are pressured into remaining silent about the realities of race relations even in the church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod appoint an intentionally multicultural task force on racism, that the task force in concert with the Candidacy

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<sup>32</sup> “A Place at the Table: An African American Lutheran Preaching from Margins to Mainstream,” thesis submitted to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for the D.Min. in preaching, 2007.

Committee of the synod conduct a review of the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this synod, and that the task force present a report and recommendations to the 2010 Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the conference deans of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod encourage congregations to participate in a study of the ELCA social statement, *Freed in Christ*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in assembly to direct the Vocation and Education unit in consultation with the Multicultural Ministries unit to conduct a review of recent studies of the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this church, develop action steps and recommendations to address these factors, and report these to the Conference of Bishops and the ELCA Church Council by the end of 2010; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in assembly to direct the director for anti-racism education and training in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to formulate a model of reconciliation that would be distributed to congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression for the purpose of abolishing racism by:

- Confessing and repenting from the sin of racism and its harmful effects on the Body of Christ;
- Forgiving ourselves for our own culpability and forgiving those who have participated knowingly and unknowingly in the sin of racism;
- Fostering dialogue between the diverse members of the church and acknowledging the gifts that can be exchanged;
- Reformulating views on who can serve, at what levels they can serve, and in what context they can serve;
- Providing a forum for leaders of color to communicate to this whole church their “real-life” experiences as it pertains to the candidacy and call process in the ELCA for the purpose of uncovering the extent to which people of color are excluded from full participation;
- Accepting the varied expressions of the ELCA practiced throughout the diverse communities of the church as equally valid expressions of the Lutheran faith.

## **5. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, “Is There a Place?” particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God’s promises because we know that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall that is the hostility between us.” We are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is 97 percent people of European descent even as a commitment was made to be a church composed of at least 10 percent people of color by 1998; this has not yet happened. We are convinced that one of the overwhelming factors in this reality is racism, a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* acknowledges racism as sin, a violation of God's intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that in its institutional form, racism creates a system that allows those of European descent to stand at the center and pushes all others to the margins. Due to racism, people of European descent not only maintain their privilege and status unconsciously, but all people are pressured into remaining silent about the realities of race relations, even in the church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 2009 Churchwide Assembly to continue to work toward abolishing racism throughout this whole church and review the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA formulate a model of reconciliation<sup>33</sup> that would be used in congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression for the purpose of continuing to work towards abolishing racism by:

- Confessing and repenting from the sin of racism and its harmful effects on the body of Christ;
- Accepting God's forgiveness for our own culpability and forgiving those who have participated knowingly and unknowingly in the sin of racism;
- Fostering dialogue between the diverse members of this church and acknowledging the gifts that can be exchanged;
- Reformulating views on who can serve, at what levels they can serve, and in what context they can serve;
- Providing a forum for leaders of color to communicate to this whole church their "real-life" experiences as they pertain to the candidacy and call process in the ELCA for the purpose of uncovering the extent to which people of color are excluded from full participation.

## **6. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), consisting of Gettysburg, Philadelphia, and Southern Seminaries, serving Regions 7, 8, and 9, has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, "Is There a Place?" particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership: clergy of color are more likely to be paid below synod guidelines; clergy of color receive lower retirement benefits; clergy of color wait for a first call for a significantly greater period than those of European descent; the culture of the ELCA believes that only certain congregations have a mission for ministry in ethnic communities; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God's promises because we know that Christ "has broken down the dividing wall that is the hostility between us." We are "no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God's people and members of God's household, built on the

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<sup>33</sup> Patterned after the Truth and Reconciliation Committee formed in South Africa following the abolition of apartheid. This committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1995. The act created a framework for the "establishment of as complete a picture possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date contemplated in the Constitution" (pg 1. of the ACT available online [www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm)). It allowed victims and victimizers to speak with the promise of reparation and amnesty where necessary or appropriate for the purpose of reconciliation.

foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:14, 19-20); and

WHEREAS, even though the ELCA made a commitment to be a church composed of at least 10 percent people of color by 1998, this church currently is composed of 98 percent people of European descent; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* calls members of this church to treat each other as equals, regardless of ethnic heritage. To do anything else is sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that any system that allows those of one ethnic heritage to stand at the center and pushes all others to the margins is a form of racism. Those in the position of power not only maintain their privilege and status unconsciously, but all people are pressured into remaining silent about the realities of race relations, even in the church (“A Place at the Table: An African American Lutheran Preaching from Margins to Mainstream,” thesis submitted to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for the D.Min. in preaching, 2007); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in assembly to direct the Vocation and Education unit in consultation with the Multicultural Ministries unit 1) to conduct a review of recent studies of the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this church; 2) to develop action steps and recommendations to address these factors; and 3) to report these to the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council by the end of 2010; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in assembly to direct the director for anti-racism education and training in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to formulate a model of reconciliation<sup>34</sup> that would be used in congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression for the purpose of confronting racism by:

- Confessing and repenting from the sin of racism and its harmful effects on the body of Christ;
- Forgiving ourselves for our own culpability and forgiving those who have participated knowingly and unknowingly in the sin of racism;
- Fostering dialogue between the diverse members of this church and acknowledging the gifts that can be exchanged;
- Reformulating views on who can serve, at what levels they can serve, and in what context they can serve;
- Providing a forum for leaders of color to communicate to this whole church their “real-life” experience as it pertains to the candidacy and call process in the ELCA for the purpose of uncovering the extent to which people of color are excluded from full participation;
- Accepting the varied expressions of the ELCA practiced throughout the diverse communities of this church as equally valid expressions of the Lutheran faith.

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<sup>34</sup> Patterned after the Truth and Reconciliation Committee formed in South Africa following the abolition of apartheid. This committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1995. The act created a framework for the “establishment of as complete a picture possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date contemplated in the Constitution” (pg 1. of the ACT available online [www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm)). It allowed victims and victimizers to speak with the promise of reparation and amnesty where necessary or appropriate for the purpose of reconciliation.

## 7. Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, “Is There a Place?”<sup>35</sup> particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God’s promises because we know that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall that is the hostility between us.”<sup>36</sup> We are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is 97 percent people of European descent even as a commitment was made to be a church comprised of at least 10 percent people of color by 1998; this has not yet happened. Project Connect is convinced that one of the overwhelming factors in this reality is racism, a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* acknowledges racism as sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to take the necessary steps in all of its expressions—congregations, synods, and churchwide organization—to confront racism and review the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA in all its expressions formulate a model of reconciliation<sup>37</sup> that would be used in congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression for the purpose of confronting racism by:

1. Confessing and repenting from the sin of racism and its harmful effects on the body of Christ;
2. Asking God to forgive our culpability and forgiving those who have participated knowingly and unknowingly in the sin of racism;
3. Fostering dialogue between the diverse members of this church and acknowledging the gifts that can be exchanged;
4. Reformulating views on who can serve, at what levels they can serve, and in what context they can serve;

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<sup>35</sup> Clergy of color are more likely to be paid below synod guidelines; clergy of color receive lower retirement benefits; clergy of color wait for a first call for a significantly greater period than those of European descent; the culture of the ELCA believes that only certain congregations have a mission for ministry in ethnic communities. Taken from, “Is There a Place?” and documented in a presentation to the Multicultural Seminar, August 1, 2008, by the Rev. Dr. M. Wyyetta Bullock, executive for administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA, “New Day Begun, Engaging Our Wholeness.”

<sup>36</sup> *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*, ELCA Social Statement, 1993.

<sup>37</sup> Patterned after the Truth and Reconciliation Committee formed in South Africa following the abolition of apartheid. This committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1995. The act created a framework for the “establishment of as complete a picture possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date contemplated in the Constitution” (pg 1. of the ACT available online [www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm)). It allowed victims and victimizers to speak with the promise of reparation and amnesty where necessary or appropriate for the purpose of reconciliation.

5. Providing a forum for leaders of color to communicate to the whole church their “real-life” experiences as it pertains to the candidacy and call process in the ELCA for the purpose of uncovering the extent to which people of color are excluded from full participation;
6. Accepting the varied expressions of the ELCA practiced throughout the diverse communities of this church as equally valid expressions of the Lutheran faith.

## 8. Virginia Synod (9A) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, Project Connect, an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of seminaries<sup>38</sup> of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been endeavoring to strengthen the efforts of the ELCA to encourage young adults (specifically those under the age of 30) to consider that God might be calling them to public ministry in this church; and

WHEREAS, the multicultural planning group of Project Connect has identified several factors that inhibit this initiative from effectively strengthening the ecology of call in the ELCA as identified in the document, “Is There a Place?”<sup>39</sup> particularly as it pertains to increasing the number of young adults of color in rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS, Scripture reminds us that we are all inheritors of God’s promises because we know that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall that is the hostility between us.”<sup>40</sup> We are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with all of God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is 97 percent people of European descent even as a commitment was made to be a church composed of at least 10 percent people of color by 1998; this has not yet happened. We are convinced that one of the overwhelming factors in this reality is racism, a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* acknowledges racism as sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity that fractures and fragments both church and society; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that in its institutional form, racism creates a system that allows those of European descent to stand at the center and pushes all others to the margins. Due to racism, people of European descent not only maintain their privilege and status unconsciously, but all people are pressured into remaining silent about the realities of race relations, even in the church<sup>41</sup>; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in all of its expressions—congregations, synods, and churchwide organization—to take the necessary steps to abolish racism and throughout this whole church and review the factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership in this church; and be it further

<sup>38</sup> This resolution is endorsed by the following: the Rev. Marcus J. Miller, president of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary; the Rev. Philip D. W. Krey, president of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; the Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, president of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg; and Mr. Donald G. Johnson, AIM, director of Project Connect of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran seminaries.

<sup>39</sup> Clergy of color are more likely to be paid below synod guidelines; clergy of color receive lower retirement benefits; clergy of color wait for a first call for a significantly greater period than those of European descent; the culture of the ELCA believes that only certain congregations have a mission for ministry in ethnic communities. Taken from, “Is There a Place?” and documented in a presentation to the Multicultural Seminar, August 1, 2008, by the Rev. Dr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA, “New Day Begun, Engaging Our Wholeness.”

<sup>40</sup> *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*, ELCA Social Statement, 1993.

<sup>41</sup> “A Place at the Table: An African American Lutheran Preaching from Margins to Mainstream,” thesis submitted to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for the D.Min. in preaching, 2007.

RESOLVED, that the ELCA formulate a model of reconciliation<sup>42</sup> that would be used in congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression for the purpose of abolishing racism by:

- Confessing and repenting from the sin of racism and its harmful effects on the body of Christ;
- Forgiving ourselves for our own culpability and forgiving those who have participated knowingly and unknowingly in the sin of racism;
- Fostering dialogue between the diverse members of this church and acknowledging the gifts that can be exchanged;
- Reformulating views on who can serve, at what levels they can serve, and in what context they can serve;
- Providing a forum for leaders of color to communicate to this whole church their “real-life” experiences as it pertains to the candidacy and call process in the ELCA for the purpose of uncovering the extent to which people of color are being excluded from full participation;
- Accepting the varied expressions in the ELCA practiced throughout the diverse communities of this church as equally valid expressions of the Lutheran faith.

### *Background*

The memorials of these synods identify an opportunity both to analyze factors inhibiting people of color from experiencing the fullness of leadership and to formulate a model of reconciliation with the goal of abolishing racism.

The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by the year 2042, people of European descent no longer will be the majority racial/ethnic population in the United States. As a white majority church with an institutional commitment to become anti-racist and multicultural, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America acknowledges that these current demographic shifts offer many opportunities for now and in the future.

Project Connect is an effort sponsored by the Eastern Cluster of ELCA seminaries—Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina—in collaboration with ELCA colleges, outdoor ministries, campus ministries, congregations, and other ministries. The project is funded by a Lilly Endowment grant and seeks to help young adults explore their vocations, particularly the possibility that they are called to public ministry in the ELCA. From its beginning, the project has sought actively to invite and include youth of color and those whose primary language is other than English.

Since the beginning of the ELCA, staff and programs have focused on monitoring and enhancing the leadership of people of color and of primary languages other than English in this church. This work is currently lodged in the Vocation and Education, Multicultural Ministries, and Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission units of the churchwide organization and is actively pursued by many synods, by the seminaries of the ELCA, and by some of the ELCA’s colleges and universities. Research and Evaluation has helped track relevant statistics.

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<sup>42</sup> Using the spirit and character of difficult and intentional conversation found in the Truth and Reconciliation Committee formed in South Africa following the abolition of apartheid. This committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1995. The act created a framework for the “establishment of as complete a picture possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date contemplated in the Constitution” (pg 1. of the ACT available online [www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.htm)). It allowed victims and victimizers to speak with the promise of reparation and amnesty where necessary or appropriate for the purpose of reconciliation.



In April 2007, the churchwide units involved, led by the multicultural leadership development and candidacy staff in Vocation and Education, convened “An Invitation to Persons of Color/Candidacy” consultation. Participants took the opportunity to consider the candidacy process and its significance; explore the educational opportunities available and ways to utilize them; and develop ways of making the candidacy process friendlier for under-represented communities. This three-day consultation was sponsored by Vocation and Education and Multicultural Ministries units.

In July 2007, ELCA leaders of color (including ELCA churchwide staff, synod staff, synod council members, and program committee members) participated in the Leaders of Color Gathering. These leaders took the opportunity to understand their baptismal vocation as leaders in the ELCA; develop additional leadership skills; understand the current churchwide organizational structure related to multicultural ministry; discuss the current and future role of leaders of color; anticipate the next generation of leaders of color; build relationships; and affirm time, gifts, and talents given by leaders of color within the ELCA.

In May 2009, an event for women of color titled “At the Sound of Our Name” gathered 135 participants who took the opportunity to learn about each other’s cultures and issues related to ministry and leadership; develop tangible strategies for supporting each other in their work and mission; be inspired and strengthened in their witness, call, and leadership for a missional church; and be more visible and vocal in their areas of influence.

Through these and other efforts, leaders of color share their experience of less-than-fullness-of-leadership and ask that this church examine how cultural norms and racism unintentionally block full participation.

The “Assessment Report of the Synod Anti-Racism Teams in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” (provided through a grant from the Conference of Bishops’ Ministry Among People in Poverty Committee) shares the experience of synodical teams taking the opportunity to engage white people and people of color in examining how cultural norms and racism unintentionally block fullness of leadership in the ELCA. This assessment report represents the greatest breadth and depth of research on the ELCA’s anti-racism commitment to date. The full report is available at [www.elca.org/racialjustice](http://www.elca.org/racialjustice).

While the research population for this report is the synodical anti-racism network, report findings and recommendations are instructive for anti-racism efforts across this church. For example, assessment findings indicate there is not one particular model or theory of change used by all synodical teams, such as “anti-racism,” “multicultural,” “healing,” or “reconciliation.” According to the report, the reason a theory of change is important, especially for groups working on racial equity, is that “it offers a way for the group to discuss different people’s or racial/ethnic identity groups’ assumptions about what constitutes success of their work and to set reasonable expectations for the timing and depth of results” (page 9). Instead, history and current realities inform which model or theory is most effective for each context.

While models may vary by context, fullness of leadership and participation will be uniformly accomplished, in part, by establishing a concrete ELCA-wide vision, theory of change, strategy, benchmarks, and evaluation and reporting standards. Yet to be determined is which vision, strategy, and standards will best serve this church.

What are the measurable outcomes? Since 1988, many memorials have sought to increase the fullness of ELCA leadership and support the ELCA commitment to become anti-racist. (See “History of ELCA Racial Justice Legislation,” [www.elca.org/racialjustice](http://www.elca.org/racialjustice).) What tangible outcomes in policy and leadership participation have occurred since 1988? The growing differential between ELCA membership and U.S. demographics suggests a widening gap between the intent of the ELCA commitment and the actual impact.

What is the opportunity? In an effort to narrow the gap between intent and impact, the directors for anti-racism commitment and racial justice ministries are committed to holding a consultation to create an ELCA-wide leadership table with the institutional authority to oversee an ELCA-wide anti-racism, racial equity assessment toward developing an ELCA-wide strategy.

## RESOURCES

### *Race*

The ELCA's social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (1993) ([www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-Culture.aspx](http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-Culture.aspx))

“Using the ELCA's Social Statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, a Guide for Leading Conversations on Race, Ethnicity, and Culture in Your Congregation,” available at [www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues.aspx](http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues.aspx)

A 2008 comprehensive assessment of ELCA synodical anti-racism efforts: [www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Presiding-Bishop/Anti-Racism/Resources/Documents.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Presiding-Bishop/Anti-Racism/Resources/Documents.aspx)

### *Churchwide Assembly Action*

On behalf of the Memorials Committee, Pr. Richter moved the following:

### **MOVED:**

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the New Jersey, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, and Virginia synods related to Project Connect and the vision of fullness of leadership for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To recognize the immense contribution of communities of color within and beyond this church;

To refer the memorial and the background information provided to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Multicultural Ministries unit, to strengthen the impact of the ELCA's intent to become anti-racist;

To encourage those involved in Project Connect to share their learnings and discoveries throughout this church in accordance with the ELCA commitment to “encourage, welcome, and depend upon the lively and creative exchange of resources and ideas throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and

To renew the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's commitment to confront racism and review the factors that inhibit people of color from the fullness of leadership in this church by reviewing and using the ELCA social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, and its leaders guide.

The chair recognized the Rev. Mark W. Olsen [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod], who spoke in favor of Project Connect, citing his experience as director for admissions at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

The Rev. H. Gerard Knoche, bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, related a story from a ministry at Morgan State University, an African-American university in his city, which had benefitted from Project Connect.

Seeing no other speakers, the chair called upon the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, member of the Church Council from Wilmington, N.C., to lead the assembly in prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson then called for the vote.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-913; NO-19**

**CA09.03.10**

**To receive with gratitude the memorials of the New Jersey, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, and Virginia synods related to Project Connect and the vision of fullness of leadership for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;**

**To recognize the immense contribution of communities of color within and beyond this church;**

**To refer the memorial and the background information provided to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Multicultural Ministries unit, to strengthen the impact of the ELCA's intent to become anti-racist;**

**To encourage those involved in Project Connect to share their learnings and discoveries throughout this church in accordance with the ELCA commitment to “encourage, welcome, and depend upon the lively and creative exchange of resources and ideas throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and**

**To renew the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's commitment to confront racism and review the factors that inhibit people of color from the fullness of leadership in this church by reviewing and using the ELCA social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, and its leaders guide.**

The chair declared that the action was adopted. Presiding Bishop Hanson invited Ms. Wallace to present Category B3: Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

**Category B3: Comprehensive Immigration Reform**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 17–18.

**1. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, Christians of various denominations are working together to see fair and humane immigration reform enacted in Congress because we share moral and theological principles that compel us to love, care for, and seek justice for the stranger among us; and

WHEREAS, all people, regardless of national origin or citizenship status, are made in the “image of God” and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect; and

WHEREAS, there is a responsibility to love and show compassion for the stranger among us; and

WHEREAS, immigrants are our neighbors, both literally and figuratively, and we are to love our neighbors as ourselves and show mercy to neighbors in need; and

WHEREAS, we oppose unjust laws and systems that harm and oppress people made in God's image, especially the vulnerable; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to call for the

Communication Services unit to provide ELCA members with information about comprehensive immigration reform that includes the five elements listed below:

1. Enforcement initiatives that are consistent with humanitarian values;
2. Reforms in our family-based immigration system that reduce waiting times for separated families to be reunited;
3. A process for all immigrant workers and their families already in the U.S. to earn citizenship upon satisfaction of specific criteria;
4. An expansion of legal avenues for workers and families to enter our country and work in a safe and legal manner with their rights and due process fully protected;
5. An examination of solutions to address the root causes of migration, such as economic disparities between sending and receiving nations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, call on the President of the U.S., the U.S. Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Attorney for Minnesota to suspend all immigration raids until comprehensive immigration reform is enacted.

## **2. Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2008, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), an agency of the Department of Homeland Security, conducted a raid at Agriprocessors at Postville, Iowa, which resulted in the apprehension of 389 people; and

WHEREAS, the May 12 raid created such a humanitarian crisis of turmoil, distress, and fear among the families, neighbors, and community that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) designated Postville, Iowa, a domestic disaster site; and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern Iowa Synod in assembly on June 28, 2008, adopted “A Resolution on Immigration Reform” (S.A.08.6.30), which encouraged the congregations and members of the Northeastern Iowa Synod to be active in prayer, study, and advocacy concerning immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2009, the Northeastern Iowa Synod joined with several other religious and community groups in sponsoring a “Day of Remembrance” to stand in solidarity with the 389 people who were detained and their families to promote awareness of the devastating effects of such raids and to call for comprehensive immigration reform, just labor practices, family unity, and an end to raids; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to designate May 12 as a Day of Prayer for Immigration Reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the congregations and members of the ELCA to continue to advocate for a just policy of immigration reform that respects the rights and aspirations of those who desire to immigrate to this country, holds employers accountable for their treatment of workers, respects the rule of law, and seeks to ensure humanitarian working and living conditions for all peoples; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the congregations and members of the ELCA to observe this day or a Sunday close to this day with prayer for those who continue to be affected by the May 12, 2008, raid in Postville, Iowa, for immigrant workers and their employers, and for legislators and enforcement officials until such time as the needed reforms are enacted.

### *Background*

The ELCA, through the churchwide organization, synods, and congregations, has partnered with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) in resettling refugees, providing services to immigrants, and advocating on their behalf. In support of the specific advocacy focus of LIRS on laws and regulations related to migration issues, ELCA bishops have formed a leadership

group known as a “ready bench.” This group has taken a leadership role in calling for comprehensive immigration reform that focuses on the humane enforcement of U.S. immigration laws and ensuring that the U.S. immigration system prioritizes family unity.

In partnership with LIRS, ELCA bishops have met with members of Congress, issued a number of statements calling for a temporary halt to immigration raids and addressing detentions and related subjects, authored op-ed pieces, and visited immigration detention facilities, among other activities. Bishop E. Roy Riley of the New Jersey Synod has spoken at press conferences and testified before Congress in support of reforming the immigration detention system. Bishop H. Julian Gordy of the Southeastern Synod made a statement in support of legislation that would support the reunification of immigrant families.

The ELCA advocacy department works through the Lutheran Office for World Community at the United Nations, the Corporate Social Responsibility program, and the office in Washington, D.C., to address human rights (especially in developing countries), climate change and adaptation to it, agriculture, and trade policies. In a global marketplace, these efforts are addressing factors directly related to an increase in global migration and are, therefore, having an impact on immigration and related policies in the United States.

In order to influence the vocation of members, its own institutional life, and the social reality through which some Americans view immigration policy, the ELCA produced the social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (1993) and a message on “Immigration” (1998). A revised message on immigration is forthcoming. These efforts are complemented by the recent publication of *They Are Us: Lutherans and Immigration* (Augsburg Fortress 2009), written by Stephen Bouman and Ralston Deffenbaugh.

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 reunification, and the humane enforcement of U.S. immigration laws.

Earned legal status for the undocumented is one of LIRS’s priorities within its comprehensive immigration reform statement.

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

### *Churchwide Assembly Action*

On behalf of the Memorials Committee, Ms. Wallace moved the following:

#### **MOVED:**

To thank the Minneapolis Area and Northeastern Iowa synods for their concern for immigration reform in the light of Christian faith and this church’s historical commitment to immigrants and refugees;

To note and reaffirm, without designating a specific day of commemoration, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) are committed to work toward comprehensive reform that balances respect for the law with a recognition of due process and respect for humanitarian principles;

To urge comprehensive reform of immigration policies and processes in the United States;

To call for the suspension of immigration raids until such comprehensive reform is enacted; and  
To anticipate a message on immigration in November 2009.<sup>43</sup>

The presiding bishop recognized the Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod], who described an immigration raid at Postville, Iowa.

Speaking in support of the memorial, the Rev. Steven L. Ullestad, bishop of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, emphasized the tragedy that had occurred at Postville, his hometown.

Mr. Timothy J. Mumm [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin], rose to a point of personal privilege to ask that Mr. Ralston H. Deffenbaugh Jr., president, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), be invited to address the assembly.

With the assembly's assent, the chair recognized Mr. Deffenbaugh. He indicated that LIRS would heartily endorse the passage of the memorial and gave thanks to God for the tremendous support from the ELCA, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for ministry to immigrants and refugees.

The Rev. Gerald L. Mansholt, bishop of the Central States Synod, speaking in favor of the memorial, related a story of a Hispanic congregation in Garden City, Kan., that had been affected by an immigration raid.

Ms. Jennifer G. DeLeon [Metropolitan Chicago Synod], vice president of the Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA, advocated for adoption of the memorial.

Mr. John W. Hoyum [Southwestern Washington Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-870; NO-67**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, member of the Church Council from Oak Harbor, Ohio, to lead the assembly in prayer. The presiding bishop then called for the vote.

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<sup>43</sup> Messages are normally brief communications that draw attention to a social issue and encourage action on it. They provide this church flexibility to respond on selected occasions with timely and perceptive counsel on new situations and pressing concerns.

Messages are communications that the Church Council adopts and are thus distinct from social statements, which are adopted only by the Churchwide Assembly. Messages are not the result of widespread deliberation in this church (as are social statements) but are intended primarily to encourage further discussion and action on specific current social issues among ELCA members. They are not new policy positions of the ELCA but build upon previously adopted social statements and social policy resolutions ("Policy and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns").

Messages address the contemporary situation in light of the prophetic and compassionate traditions of Scripture. They point to human suffering, grave injustice, pending danger, social perplexity, or hopeful developments and urge that evil be resisted, justice done, and commitment renewed.

Messages express the conviction of the leaders of this church who communicate them and who believe that their message should be heard in this church and beyond. They signal certain priority concerns that arise from this church's mission in the world. Messages are based upon and are consistent with this church's social statements and social policy resolutions.

## ASSEMBLY

### ACTION:

YES-873; NO-82

### CA09.03.11

**To thank the Minneapolis Area and Northeastern Iowa synods for their concern for immigration reform in the light of Christian faith and this church's historical commitment to immigrants and refugees;**

**To note and reaffirm, without designating a specific day of commemoration, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) are committed to work toward comprehensive reform that balances respect for the law with a recognition of due process and respect for humanitarian principles;**

**To urge comprehensive reform of immigration policies and processes in the United States;**

**To call for the suspension of immigration raids until such comprehensive reform is enacted; and**

**To anticipate a message on immigration in November 2009.**

The chair declared the motion passed and invited Pr. Richter to present the next memorial, Category B8: Worship and Liturgical Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio.

## Category B8: Worship and Education Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 31–34.

### 1. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, hymns are a wonderful tool for members of a congregation to use for inspiration as well as bringing joy, faith-building, and healing for their lives as a community as well as individually; and

WHEREAS, blind people are members of congregations and have the same spiritual needs as the sighted; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) produced a Braille version of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, and many blind people are accustomed to its use; and

WHEREAS, Braille printers are expensive for most people to purchase; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to commit sufficient funding for the publication of a Braille version of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

### 2. Southern Ohio Synod (6F) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA ignores this struggle by continuing to promote worship and educational resources (such as *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, the NRSV Bible, social statements, and Christian education materials) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille and large-print resources would encourage growth in membership of this church; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials; and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA in 1988 included an organization called the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille and Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Southern Ohio Synod call on the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

### **3. New England Synod (7B) [2009 Memorial]**

**RESOLVED**, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

### **4. Upstate New York Synod (7D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA should support this struggle as part of its commitment to promoting justice for all God's children; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille, large-print, and audio resources would encourage growth in our church membership; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print, audio, and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials; and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA included an organization called the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille and Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, since 2004 the ELCA has promoted worship and education resources (such as *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Book of Faith resources, social statements, and Christian education materials) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print and use audio resources; and



WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print and audio resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille, large print, and audio form.

## **5. Virginia Synod (9A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA should support this struggle as part of its commitment to promoting justice for all of God's children; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille and large-print resources would encourage growth in the membership of this church; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials; and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA in 1988 included an organization called the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille and Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, since 2004 the ELCA has promoted worship and educational resources (such as *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Book of Faith resources, social statements, and Christian education materials) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the bishop of the Virginia Synod be directed to present to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly this resolution calling the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

### *Background*

From the beginning of the ELCA, on the basis of work in predecessor church bodies, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization have understood that their mission includes ministry with and to people living with disabilities, including blindness and impaired vision. The churchwide aspect of this work was lodged in the former Division of Church and Society and its predecessors and, with the restructuring of the churchwide organization in 2005, was moved to the new Vocation and Education unit. Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, has been engaged with other parts of the churchwide organization and, with the assistance of grant funding from the former Division of Church and Society, provided a limited selection of Braille, large print, and audio resources until 2004. At that time, decreased funding, a key retirement, and other factors led to a substantial reduction in Braille and tape ministry.

A summary of the history of the important and challenging work in disability ministries among Lutherans is found in a report to the 1999 Churchwide Assembly, available in *Reports and Records: Assembly Minutes*, pages 717–736. To the limited extent possible, these ministries have been done in collaboration with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and ecumenical partners. In the ELCA the model intentionally has been decentralized and has focused on supporting networks linked to specific disabilities. Some have criticized the decentralized approach, however. The focus on churchwide organization support to networks recently has been reaffirmed in the Vocation and Education unit as a way of seeking to ensure that those most affected have a strong voice and as a means to multiply the impact of limited resources for churchwide staff and programs.

At the request of the churchwide organization, the ELCA Foundation established and maintains a Braille and Tape endowment fund that receives gifts designated for these ministries. Income from the endowment along with budgeted support through the Vocation and Education unit supports these ministries. Of course, like almost every other endowment, this one has declined in value in the last years, and income has been and will be reduced correspondingly. This comes at a time when reductions in mission support also are leading to restrictions on churchwide funding for all programs.

The Vocation and Education unit contracts with two people to provide as-needed services to congregations and synods seeking to serve people with blindness or visual impairment, to advocate for this work, and to seek funding for it. Largely through the efforts of those consultants and with support from the director for disability ministry and other Vocation and Education staff, the network of interested people has been re-invigorated for action and advocacy.

Technological changes have dramatically affected the way materials can be supplied to those who have visual impairments. Braille texts now can be produced and transmitted electronically. Computer-based publishing makes it possible to make printed texts available electronically for printing in enlarged versions to meet specific needs, although attention to copyrights puts necessary limits on this option.

Augsburg Fortress and the worship staff of the churchwide organization are in ongoing conversation with the Vocation and Education consultants regarding the completion of an electronic Braille edition of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW.) Augsburg Fortress has set late fall of 2009 as the goal for release of this product. Since ELW contains considerably more liturgical and musical material than any former Lutheran service book, a paper Braille version of the entire ELW would fill 14 large binders, making it both unwieldy and cost prohibitive. Available technology makes the electronic Braille version seem the most practical and the best stewardship. Users then can produce the Braille pages needed at particular times, though the cost of the needed Braille printers may be beyond the means of many individuals and small congregations.

A version of ELW with much of the content and somewhat enlarged print has been published, although the print size is still too small for many with visual limitations. However, staff members have concluded that publishing the entire ELW in a truly large print paper version is the inferior option because of high costs. A large print edition of selected materials is under consideration, but the design of ELW to be a resource encouraging congregations to exercise great flexibility in using the liturgical resources makes this sort of project challenging. Local worshiping communities that access ELW materials electronically (with the ELW Liturgies CD-ROM or through *www.SundaysandSeasons.com*) are equipped to produce versions of worship resources that are customized in size for those in their assemblies who would benefit from them. Additional approaches to making resources available, whether in print or electronic

form, likely will not be financially self-sustaining, so there must be ongoing discussions about support for the work.

Audio versions for parts of ELW also are being produced. Two volumes of the hymns are already available on CD, as well as two volumes of ELW liturgies. A third volume of liturgies is forthcoming. With that publication, all 10 settings of Holy Communion will be available as an audio resource.

Publication of Book of Faith initiative resources in languages and formats other than printed English (such as Braille, Spanish, and Hmong) has proven to be a significant challenge because the demand for the product is never sufficient to make the publication sustainable on its own. Augsburg Fortress receives no support from the churchwide budget, and other churchwide financial resources are severely limited. The needs are recognized, but alternative funding approaches will be necessary to meet them.

The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV) is copyrighted by the National Council of Churches of Christ with publishing rights controlled by a publishing company. Making the NRSV available to those living with blindness or visual impairment logically would be an ecumenical endeavor.

Central concerns for the present disability ministry program of the Vocation and Education unit include raising awareness and promoting informed theological understanding of visual impairment, facilitating availability of Braille and other resources to the extent financially possible, and nurturing the network of those particularly engaged with addressing these needs and drawing on the gifts of people with visual impairment.

#### *Churchwide Assembly Action*

On behalf of the Memorials Committee, Pr. Richter moved the following:

#### **MOVED:**

To receive the memorials of the Minneapolis Area, Southern Ohio, New England, Upstate New York, and Virginia synods calling for additional worship and educational materials in Braille, large print, and audio formats;

To affirm and celebrate the many ways individuals, networks, congregations, synods, the churchwide worship staff, Augsburg Fortress, and the Vocation and Education unit already are engaged in ministry with and providing resources for people with impaired vision;

To encourage appropriate churchwide staff to give continued attention to the needs articulated in these memorials and to continue collaboration with the network of people advocating for and facilitating these ministries;

To acknowledge with regret the funding challenges and the resulting limitations on this work;

To encourage the network and others to give particular attention to inviting contributions to appropriate endowments held by the ELCA Foundation; and

To direct the Vocation and Education unit to bring a progress report on these ministries and their funding to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

Mr. Thomas E. Madden [Upstate New York Synod] spoke in favor of the motion, telling the stories of several blind members in his congregation and the challenges they faced.

The Rev. Susan F. Sprowls [Southeast Michigan Synod] moved to amend the motion by addition.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend paragraph one of Memorial B8: Worship and Liturgical Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio by addition:*

To receive the memorials of the Minneapolis Area, Southern Ohio, New England, Upstate New York, and Virginia synods calling for additional worship and educational materials in Braille, large print, and audio formats, and other forms of technology as may be available;

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited Pr. Sprowls to speak to her amendment. She noted that, in her work as a campus pastor at the University of Michigan, she ministered to a law student who was blind. Through the law student, Pr. Sprowls learned of an electronic device that allowed her to take notes as well as prepare other materials. She felt that such technologies needed to be included in the motion.

Ms. Liz Michael [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, noting that more tools are needed to assist those with a variety of physical disabilities.

Seeing no one asking to speak, the chair called for a vote.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-929; NO-0**

**CARRIED:**

*To amend paragraph one of the proposed response to the memorials in Category B8: Worship and Liturgical Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio by addition:*

**To receive the memorials of the Minneapolis Area, Southern Ohio, New England, Upstate New York, and Virginia synods calling for additional worship and educational materials in Braille, large print, and audio formats, and other forms of technology as may be available;**

The chair declared the amendment was adopted. Presiding Bishop Hanson called for resumption of discussion on the memorial as amended.

The Rev. Samuel S. Payne [Northwestern Ohio Synod] spoke in favor of the memorial, calling it a unique document before this church that would allow disabled persons to be able to be a part of the body of Christ.

Mr. Lloyd O. Smith [New England Synod] spoke in favor of the memorial, noting that several members in his congregation in Connecticut were frustrated because they could not read their Bibles. He said that his congregation had done everything possible to assist those members who used large print and Braille for the music and liturgy in worship. He stated that he would like to see this church “do its part” by considering and approving the response to this memorial.

The Rev. Margaret G. Payne, bishop of the New England Synod, spoke in favor of the memorial, pointing out that her synod was one of those that had asked that it be taken out of *en bloc* because the efforts endorsed by the memorial were signs of inclusion.

The Rev. Kenneth M.C. Miller [Western North Dakota Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-917; NO-12**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, Presiding Bishop Hanson called on Ms. Judith Anne Bunker, member of the Church Council from Pinellas Park, Fla., to lead the assembly in prayer. The assembly then voted on the recommended action as amended.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

**YES-926; NO-10**

### **CA09.03.12**

**To receive the memorials of the Minneapolis Area, Southern Ohio, New England, Upstate New York, and Virginia synods calling for additional worship and educational materials in Braille, large print, and audio formats, and other forms of technology as may be available;**

**To affirm and celebrate the many ways individuals, networks, congregations, synods, the churchwide worship staff, Augsburg Fortress, and the Vocation and Education unit already are engaged in ministry with and providing resources for people with impaired vision;**

**To encourage appropriate churchwide staff to give continued attention to the needs articulated in these memorials and to continue collaboration with the network of people advocating for and facilitating these ministries;**

**To acknowledge with regret the funding challenges and the resulting limitations on this work;**

**To encourage the network and others to give particular attention to inviting contributions to appropriate endowments held by the ELCA Foundation; and**

**To direct the Vocation and Education unit to bring a progress report on these ministries and their funding to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.**

The chair declared that the amended motion had passed.

## **Announcements**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called upon Secretary David D. Swartling for announcements.

Secretary Swartling informed voting members that Plenary Session Five would begin at 2:00 P.M. The deadline for submitting proposed amendments to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies was 11:15 A.M. that day, as was the deadline for submission to the secretary of proposed amendments to the governing documents, and submission of requests for removal from the *en bloc* motion of amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*. The deadline for floor nominations for positions available would be 2:00 P.M. that day, and nominations were to be filed at the Nominations Desk in the Assembly Office.

The secretary informed the assembly that all unserved food from the Convention Center would be collected and donated to the food mission of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church,

Minneapolis. He also reminded voting members that the college corporation meetings would take place that afternoon at 4:00 P.M. in the course of Plenary Session Five.

The assembly viewed another video from the ELCA's "God's work. Our hands." video contest. The entry was from St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Jersey City, N.J.

## **Recess**

At the conclusion of the video, Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. John C. Richter, Church Council member, to lead the assembly in prayer.

The fourth plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 11:05 A.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Five

Wednesday, August 19, 2009

2:00 P.M.—6:30 P.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), called Plenary Session Five of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 2:01 P.M. CDT on Wednesday, August 19, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn. He invited all present to stand and join in singing “When Our Song Says Peace.”

## Recognition of Invited Guests

Presiding Bishop Hanson began the afternoon session by acknowledging three remarkable leaders who guided this church during its first two decades: the Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom, first presiding bishop of the ELCA (1987–1995); the Rev. H. George Anderson, second presiding bishop (1995–2001); and the Rev. Lowell G. Almen, first secretary of the ELCA (1987–2007). Presiding Bishop Hanson affirmed that their wisdom and vision continues to inform him and this church. The assembly rose to greet these servants with applause.

## Announcements

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the assembly to test the voting system. The presiding bishop instructed any voting members who were concerned that their votes had not registered to alert a page so that their devices could be checked. He informed members that any devices that were not working properly would be replaced.

He reported that the offering received at the midday worship service totaled \$6,448.25. The service was led by the Rev. Lit-Inn Wu, Schaumburg, Ill., presider; the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, Chicago, Ill., preacher; Sr. Virginia Strahan, Worcester, Mass., assisting minister; and Mr. Louis Tillman, Atlanta, Ga., lector.

## Bible Study

Ms. Diane L. Jacobson, professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., and director for the Book of Faith initiative, led the first Bible study of the assembly. The theme of the study was “Prodigal Son: A Plethora of Perspectives.”

Ms. Jacobson began with the premise that Christians cannot proclaim the good news without being deeply rooted in the Word themselves. She first reviewed the vision of the Book of Faith initiative: That the whole church become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered, and sent by the Word.

She told the assembly that it is important to find creative and refreshing ways to explore the Book of Faith. She listed what happens when Christians hear, read, or study the Bible:

- they experience the Word as Law;
- they experience the Word as Gospel; and
- the Bible delivers Christ to them.

The initiative's intent is to help people discover new ways to open the Book of Faith through questions that are fruitful and engaging. The Book of Faith employs four means of opening the text:

1. devotional reading
2. historical reading
3. literary reading
4. Lutheran theological reading

Ms. Jacobson then moved to an in-depth study of Luke 15:11–32. She had participants gather in small groups to discuss the passage.

Presiding Bishop Hanson interrupted the study to alert the assembly to a tornado warning for Minneapolis. He asked members to remain in the plenary hall until instructed that it was safe to leave.

Ms. Jacobson continued her study, requesting that the assembly look at the parable through several perspectives. She asked participants to consider the implications of viewing the parable under the following titles:

- “Parable of The Welcoming Father”
- “Parable of the Younger Son”
- “Parable of the Forgotten Servant”
- “Parable of the Bitter Elder Brother”

She called on the assembly to identify with the several characters and to consider these questions: “Do we hear the law? Are we repentant or recalcitrant? Do we hear the Gospel? Do we hear that God loves us? Can we bask in the grace shown to our sinful brothers?”

Ms. Jacobson concluded her study, “Each hearing of the Book of Faith is deep and true. The parable is spoken to us in Law and Gospel, and Christ is made alive for us.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson reminded members once again to remain in the hall during the tornado warning. He reported that the tornado had touched down in the vicinity, affecting a part of the convention center and doing some damage to Central Lutheran Church across the street.

The presiding bishop then read Psalm 121 to the assembly. After the psalm, he offered a prayer for the safety of the assembly, for those in jeopardy while working for the safety of others, and for those who have no place of safety. He called on the assembly to sing “Thy Holy Wings.”

## **Elections: Report on the First Ballot for Vice President**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15–16, 18–20; Section IV, page 1.*

Mr. Phillip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, presented the report of the first ballot for vice president. He stated that 914 ballots were cast, including 15 illegal ballots. Legal ballots cast were 899; 686 were needed to elect. A list of all those persons receiving votes, along with count of their votes, was distributed to the voting members. He instructed members to keep the list for use in casting the next ballot.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson declared that, on the basis of the report, there was no election. He announced that the second ballot for vice president would take place on Thursday, August 20, during Plenary Session Seven. Those who received votes on the first ballot but who wished to withdraw their names from consideration were instructed to do so by Thursday morning.

Secretary David D. Swartling reminded the assembly that those named in the report of the first ballot who are on the clergy roster would be ineligible for election, even if they did not withdraw.

Nominees on the first ballot, with spellings as submitted by voting members, were:



Carlos Peña	607	67.52%
Norma Hirsch	82	9.12
Nanette Dahlke	28	3.11
Gwen Arneson	9	1.00
Thomas Taylor	9	1.00
Priscilla Kinney	7	0.78
Melba Bangert	6	0.67
Susan Berg	6	0.67
Linda Chinnia	5	0.56
Shirley Gangstead	5	0.56
Ryan Schwarz	5	0.56
Mark Chavez	4	0.44
William Horne	4	0.44
Brett Koenecke	4	0.44
Al Quie	4	0.44
Willie Scott	4	0.44
Yolanda Tanner	4	0.44
Faith Ashton	3	0.33
Robert Benne	3	0.33
Lucinda Bringman	3	0.33
Caleb Geleske	3	0.33
Jim Martin	3	0.33
Mark Winzles	3	0.33
Yau Chiu	2	0.22
Gerald Clauson	2	0.22
John Emery	2	0.22
Brandon James	2	0.22
Norman Jones	2	0.22
Constance Kilmark	2	0.22
David Laden	2	0.22
John Litke	2	0.22
Cheryl Mader	2	0.22
Mark Myers	2	0.22
Tommie Robinson	2	0.22
Dennis Velander	2	0.22
Sally Williams	2	0.22
Marianne Yoder	2	0.22
Robbie Ahrlin	1	0.11
Greg Anderson	1	0.11
Howard Barlow	1	0.11
Raymond Bebee	1	0.11
Nancy Blean	1	0.11
Kevin Boatright	1	0.11
Rebecca Jo Brakke	1	0.11
Ed Cool	1	0.11
Susan Cyr	1	0.11
Rebeccah Dahlstrom	1	0.11

Elizabeth Gaskins	1	0.11
Judy Green	1	0.11
Henry Harms	1	0.11
Ronald Haugan	1	0.11
Mark Helmke	1	0.11
Meredith Hendricks	1	0.11
Nancy Hirsch	1	0.11
Susan Hirsch	1	0.11
Maren Hulden	1	0.11
Susan Humphrey	1	0.11
Larry Iverson	1	0.11
Jared Johnson	1	0.11
Duane Jones	1	0.11
Joshua Kelly	1	0.11
Craig Klopffleisch	1	0.11
Paul Konanz	1	0.11
Larry Larrabee	1	0.11
Jim Level	1	0.11
David Lillehaug	1	0.11
Edie Lohr	1	0.11
Paul Lumpkin	1	0.11
Carl Malmstrom	1	0.11
Karen Matthias-Long	1	0.11
Susan McArver	1	0.11
Liz Michael	1	0.11
James Moen	1	0.11
Evan Moilan	1	0.11
David Molmen	1	0.11
Carl Moyer	1	0.11
Carlos Nunyez	1	0.11
Jay Ostgaard	1	0.11
Elizabeth Parks	1	0.11
John Prabakhar	1	0.11
Carmen Rodriguez	1	0.11
Michael Root	1	0.11
Jim Schade	1	0.11
Bradley Schmeling	1	0.11
Jill Schumann	1	0.11
Dallas Shealy	1	0.11
Lloyd Smith	1	0.11
David Swartling	1	0.11
Marit Trelstad	1	0.11
David Truland	1	0.11
Robert Turner	1	0.11
Letty Villalon	1	0.11
Hans Vogel	1	0.11
Phyllis Wallace	1	0.11

Larry Whiteleather	1	0.11	Venice Williams	1	0.11
Randy Willhite	1	0.11			

## Consideration of Social Statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 19–38; Section VI, pages 63–96.

Consideration of the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, began with Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson reviewing the time the assembly had spent on the document in its first two days. The statement had been introduced to members through the 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, through an overview in Plenary Session Two, and through an open hearing Tuesday afternoon.

The presiding bishop reminded the assembly that social statements are important documents for this church. They guide the ELCA as it “steps forward as a public church,” because they form the basis both for this church’s public policy and for the presiding bishop’s public speech as the representative of this church.

He explained that the process for considering the social statement and its implementing resolutions would begin with the report and recommendations of the *ad hoc* committee, which had prepared a report both on the amendments that were submitted by voting members and on those submitted as memorials from synod assemblies. That report had been distributed to all voting members. The report of the committee was in two parts: 1) the amendments to the social statement and 2) the amendments to the implementing resolutions.

The chair informed the assembly that, after the motion to adopt the social statement was put before the assembly, the first part of the consideration would focus on the amendments that the *ad hoc* committee recommended in its report. After the assembly acted on the committee’s recommendations, motions for additional amendments to the social statement would be entertained. The assembly then would be asked to adopt the social statement as amended, with a two-thirds vote required.

The proposed implementing resolutions for the social statement would be considered only if the statement is approved, the chair further explained. That process would be similar to the one employed for the statement: it would begin with consideration of recommendations of the *ad hoc* committee, then other amendments could be offered. He explained that adopting the implementing resolutions would require a majority vote.

Several resource people joined Presiding Bishop Hanson on stage for the discussion, including the following: the Rev. Peter Strommen, chair of the task force; the Rev. David L. Tiede, the Rev. Timothy J. Wengert, and Dr. Diane Yaeger, members of the task force; the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society program unit; the Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for studies in Church in Society; Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, member of the Church Council and advisor to the task force; and the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee.

The Rev. Gerald L. Mansholt, bishop of the Central States Synod, led the assembly in prayer before the presentation of the report of the *ad hoc* committee.

Secretary David D. Swartling then read the recommendation of the Church Council regarding the social statement.

**MOVED:** To adopt *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for addressing Social Concerns” (2006).

Pr. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee, offered an overview of the process the committee employed to consider amendments that were proposed and to prepare its recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly. He reported that 13 amendments had been received and that all were included in the report. Of these, the committee recommended four amendments to the assembly for adoption. The recommendation on any proposed amendment was accompanied by a rationale in the printed report that had been distributed to voting members. Pr. Loy stressed that the brevity of the responses should not be taken to mean that the committee had not looked deeply at a given amendment; rather the rationale sought to be both thoughtful and concise.

Pr. Loy presented Amendment A1, which had been submitted by the Rev. Terri Stagner-Collier [Southeastern Synod].

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend page 36, line 1311, by substitution:*

“ . . . understand why this church ~~has taught~~ teaches that the greatest . . . ”

Pr. Stagner-Collier spoke to her amendment, saying it would express that this church continues to teach this understanding of the place of sexual activity in marriage, particularly as it might impact the development of future Confirmation materials.

There were no other speakers. The chair instructed voting members to vote on the amendment. A majority vote was required for adoption.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-804; NO-104**

**CARRIED:** *To amend page 36, line 1311, by substitution:*

“ . . . understand why this church ~~has taught~~ teaches that the greatest . . . ”

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared the motion to amend was adopted. The chair then asked unanimous consent that members be allowed to bring their voting pads with them to the microphones so that they could maintain their places in the queue and vote, if necessary. Assent was granted.

Pr. Loy presented Amendment A2, which had been proposed by the Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann [Sierra Pacific Synod].

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend page 24, lines 316 and 317, by substitution:*

“We recognize the complex and varied ~~callings people have in relation~~ situations people are in relative to human sexuality; . . . ”

The Rev. Serena S. Sellers [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to change “are in” to “have” for the sake of clarity.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To further amend the amendment by substitution:*

“ . . . situations people ~~are in~~ have relative to human sexuality . . . ”

Pr. Sellers spoke to her amendment. There being no further speaking, the chair called for a vote.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-713; NO-256**

**CARRIED:**

*To further amend the amendment by substitution:*

**“ . . . situations people ~~are in~~ have relative to human sexuality . . . ”**

The chair declared the motion to amend the amendment had passed.

Speaking to his amendment as now amended, Pr. Thiemann categorized the amendment as a theological argument. “Our calling is to build trust and community,” he said.

Ms. Lee Anne Lack [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke against the amendment. She declared that the paragraph in question was about individuals’ callings, and expressed her belief that the amendment would blur its purpose.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-556; NO-411**

**CARRIED:**

*To amend page 24, lines 316 and 317, by substitution:*

**“~~We recognize the complex and varied callings people have in relation~~ situations people have relative to human sexuality; . . .”**

The chair declared that the motion to amend had passed.

Pr. Loy presented Amendment A3, which had been offered by the Rev. James F. Mauney, bishop of the Virginia Synod.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend page 28, lines 620–628, by addition:*

**“ . . . The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have taught and recognized marriage as a normative, lifelong covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10:6–9: “But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one put asunder.” (Jesus here recalls Genesis 1:27; 2:23–24.) Marriage thus provides the possibility for the added blessing of children and the joy and responsibility for raising them in the faith.”**

Speaking to his amendment, Bp. Mauney said that he wanted the statement to connect the blessing of children to the relationship of husband and wife, and thereby provide clarity to this church’s teaching on marriage, family, and children.

Ms. Karmi Anna J. Mattson, [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke in opposition, saying, “We should not institutionalize the thinking that children of non-married people are not valuable.”

The Rev. Gregory R. Pile, bishop of the Allegheny Synod, said that this church might make historic changes at this assembly but that it should not miss opportunities to strengthen its teaching about marriage.

Ms. Nicole M. Garcia [Rocky Mountain Synod] asserted that this church must value the children in all relationships. She spoke against the amendment.

The Rev. Kenneth M.C. Miller [Western North Dakota Synod] stated that he opposed the amendment because there are certain biological or medical conditions that prevent couples from having children.

Mr. Larry A. Christensen [Southeastern Iowa Synod] argued that the original language better reflected the truth of experience. He listed several biblical heroes who were not married.

The Rev. Heidi W. Punt [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] supported the amendment. She urged members to read it as a friendly amendment about the blessing of children.

The Rev. Jennifer L. Czarnota [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] reminded voting members that children are not always a possibility in a marriage relationship. She asserted that the amendment did not reflect reality.

The Rev. H. Gerard Knoche, bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, moved to further alter the first line of text in the proposed amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To further amend the amendment by substitution:*

“ . . . The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions ~~have taught~~ teach and ~~recognized~~ recognize . . .

Bp. Knoche stated that the change reflected the understanding that this is current, not merely historical, teaching.

Mr. James T. Owens [South Carolina Synod] raised a point of order, questioning whether the amendment was germane. The chair ruled it a proper amendment. There being no further speaking, he called for a vote on Bp. Knoche’s amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** **YES-627; NO-356**

**CARRIED:** *To further amend the amendment by substitution:*

“ . . . The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions ~~have taught~~ teach and ~~recognized~~ recognize . . .

The chair declared that the motion to amend the amendment had passed.

Two voting members reported difficulties with their voting machines. The chair ruled that two votes would not have altered the outcome of the vote and returned the assembly to discussion of the amendment as now amended.

Mr. Lowell E. Wickman [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] sought to make a motion to postpone the vote on the adoption of the social statement until after discussion of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

The chair ruled that such a motion would be appropriate only after the amendments were completed and the social statement was on the floor as the main motion.

The Rev. Catherine A. Ammlung [Delaware-Maryland Synod] supported the amendment, saying that it strengthened the intent of the statement. She did not see the language as exclusionary.

The Rev. Carla R. Thompson Powell [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] opposed the amendment. She argued that this church should not state that the only approved life condition is that of being married with children.

The assembly paused for prayer led by Ms. Judith Anne Bunker, member of the Church Council.

Continuing debate, the Rev. Paul C. Koch [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke in support, affirming his belief that the amendment followed the word of Jesus that “the two become one flesh.” He held that the amendment did not say that children were the only way to validate a marriage but rather that they are a possibility that is a gift and should be recognized as such.

The Rev. Katrina D. Foster [Metropolitan New York Synod] related a story about her great-grandfather’s marriage at age 88 that was a blessing, even though there was no intention to bear children. She asked the assembly not to diminish marriages that do not produce children.

The Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod] supported the amendment, arguing that it did not diminish a childless marriage but rather strengthened the connection between marriage and children.

The Rev. David W. Rossow [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke against the amendment, which he believed to be unnecessary. He asserted that the text of the statement, as proposed, already clarified the issue addressed by the amendment.

Mr. Jeffrey C. Ruby [Grand Canyon Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-900; NO-66**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

The motion to end debate was approved. The chair called for a vote on the amendment as amended.

The Rev. Carl D. Shankweiler [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] rose to a point of order to inquire whether a motion to divide consideration of the two parts of the amendment would be in order. After consultation with the parliamentarian, the chair ruled that such a motion would be out of order.

**MOVED;**

**YES-432; NO-566**

**SECONDED;**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend page 28, lines 620–628, by addition:*

“. . . The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions ~~have recognized~~ teach and recognize marriage as a normative, lifelong covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10:6–9: “But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one put asunder.” (Jesus here recalls Genesis 1:27; 2:23–24.) Marriage thus provides the possibility for the added blessing of children and the joy and responsibility for raising them in the faith.

Pr. Loy moved Amendment A4, proposed by the Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend page 29, lines 740 and 741, by substitution:*

~~It must be noted that some,~~ Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, some people, though not all, in this church and within the larger Christian community, conclude that marriage . . .

Bp. Kusserow, speaking to his amendment, proposed that it would clarify the text to state clearly that tradition and the Lutheran Confessions hold that marriage is between a man and a woman.

There being no further speaking, the chair called for a vote on the amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-677; NO-276**

**CARRIED:**

*To amend page 29, lines 740 and 741, by substitution:*

~~It must be noted that some,~~ Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, some people, though not all, in this church and within the larger Christian community, conclude that marriage . . .

The chair declared the motion to amend had passed.

Pr. Loy announced that this concluded Part A of Part I of the report of the *ad hoc* committee. Part B, he stated, included amendments that the committee recommends not be adopted.

The chair stated that the assembly would now consider any additional amendments to the social statement.

The Rev. Michael E. Johnson [Western North Dakota Synod] moved the adoption of Amendment B5, one of the amendments not recommended by the committee.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend by deletion of pages 29–31, lines 751–868, and substitution of the following text, with endnotes added accordingly:*

#### Homosexuality

We affirm biblical teaching on homosexual behavior as articulated by our predecessor churches, The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America:

“Scientific research has not been able to provide conclusive evidence regarding the causes of homosexuality. Nevertheless, homosexuality is viewed biblically as a departure from the heterosexual structure of God’s creation.”<sup>1</sup> “We note the current consensus in the scientific community that one’s preferred sexual behavior exists on a continuum from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual and that homosexual behavior takes a variety of forms. We believe it appropriate to distinguish between homosexual orientation and homosexual behavior. Persons who do not practice their homosexual erotic preference do not violate our understanding of Christian sexual behavior.”<sup>2</sup>

“This church regards the practice of homosexual erotic behavior as contrary to God’s intent for his children. It rejects the contention that homosexual behavior is simply another form of sexual behavior equally valid with the dominant male/female pattern.”<sup>3</sup>

“We agree that homosexually-behaving persons need God’s grace as does every human being. We all need the care and concern of the congregation. We all need opportunity to hear the Word, to receive the sacraments, to accept the forgiveness God offers, to experience the understanding and the fellowship of the community of Christ. We all need the power of the Holy Spirit for ethical living sensitive to our own individual situations.

So saying we nevertheless do not condone homosexual erotic behavior. Nor do we condone idolatry, pride, disrespect for parents, murder, adultery, theft, libel, gossip, or the other sins known in our circles. The sacrifice God finds acceptable from each of us is “a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.” Then he can answer our prayer for a “clean heart . . . a new and right spirit within me.” (See Psalm 51.)<sup>4</sup>

“Persons who engage in homosexual behavior are sinners only as are all other persons—alienated from God and neighbor. However, they are often the special and undeserving victims of prejudice and discrimination in law, law enforcement, cultural mores, and congregational life. In relation to this area of concern, the sexual behavior of freely consenting adults in private is not an appropriate subject for legislation or police action. It is essential to see such persons as entitled to understanding and justice in church and community.”<sup>5</sup>

The 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly has committed this church to “continue to respect the guidance of the 1993 statement of the Conference of Bishops”<sup>6</sup> which reads: “We, as the Conference of Bishops of the ELCA, recognize that there is basis neither in Scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship. We, therefore, do not approve such a ceremony as an official action of this church’s ministry. Nevertheless, we express trust in and will continue dialogue with those pastors and congregations who are in ministry with gay and lesbian persons, and affirm their desire to explore the best ways to provide pastoral care for all to whom they minister.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sex, Marriage, and Family*, A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

<sup>2</sup> *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior*, A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

<sup>3</sup> *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior*, A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

<sup>4</sup> *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior*, A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

<sup>5</sup> *Sex, Marriage, and Family*, A Social State-ment of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

<sup>6</sup> 2005 Churchwide Assembly Action, CA05.05.18.

<sup>7</sup> 1993 Conference of Bishops Statement, CB93.10.25.



Speaking to his amendment, Pr. Johnson affirmed these words that came from social statements of predecessor church bodies and from the ELCA Conference of Bishops. He argued that this church did not condone behaviors such as adultery or idolatry, but believed that there was mercy and forgiveness for those who practiced them. He urged adoption of his amendment in order to avoid sweeping changes that would have consequences for years to come.

The Rev. Susan F. Sprowls [Southeast Michigan Synod] spoke against the amendment. She reminded the assembly of the presiding bishop's mention of a Sudanese church that lacked bread and wine for communion, and of the statistics concerning children who die of malaria and persons who are infected with HIV each day. She asked how the assembly could engage in "endless arguments over human sexuality" and urged that the assembly move on to approve the work of the task force so that time and effort could be expended instead for those who cry for justice.

The Rev. Michael J. Toomey [Eastern North Dakota Synod] argued that the amendment offered a more biblical lens of Law and Gospel.

Ms. Lucinda L. Bringman [Lower Susquehanna Synod] rose to a point of privilege to request time for voting members to read the remaining amendments in the report. Hearing no objection, the chair granted three minutes for members to read Part B of the *ad hoc* committee's report.

Before discussion resumed of Amendment B5, the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, member of the Church Council, led the assembly in prayer.

The Rev. Richard H. Graham, bishop of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, speaking against the amendment reported that he had found a statement from the Reformation period using Scripture and Church history to make the point that change is wrong except where the clearest traditions of Scripture or history require it. The source was the *Confutatio*, the Roman Catholic response to the Augsburg Confession. The document contended that the marriage of pastors would divide the church and plunge Christian people into chaos. "If our forebears had been deterred by those arguments, none of us would be here," the bishop argued. He stated that this church should not betray its Reformation heritage.

The Rev. Steven R. Frock [Western Iowa Synod] supported the amendment. He noted the social statement says that this church has no consensus, and argued that the amendment would be one way to test its mind to determine a consensus.

Pr. Larson, member of the *ad hoc* committee and executive director of Church in Society, spoke to the committee recommendation. She described the structure of the social statement as prescriptive up to the point where there is no longer consensus concerning same-gender relationships. After that point, the statement moves to a descriptive mode, describing four different understandings currently present in this church. According to Pr. Larson, the committee's recommendation not to adopt this amendment was based on the fact that it is not supported by the findings of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality.

Mr. John F. England Jr. [Rocky Mountain Synod] opposed the amendment. He suggested that the statement tries to distinguish between homosexual orientation and homosexual behavior. "The question is," he said, "where is the [discussion of] love?"

The Rev. Ryan D. Mills [Northern Texas-Northern-Louisiana Synod] supported the amendment as a proper distinction of Law and Gospel. "And I urge you, as we celebrate being Book of Faith people, to continue in this teaching, which rightly gives us God's Word as Law, Gospel, and most of all, Christ himself."

Ms. Allison A. Guttu [Metropolitan New York Synod], noting that the proposed amendment was based on statements from 1970 and 1980, declared that the assembly's task was to create

a new statement. She expressed her opinion that the amendment would break faith with that process. She urged its rejection.

Mr. Karl E. Moyer [Lower Susquehanna Synod] supported the amendment because, he said, God made human bodies for men and women to fit together. He argued that to try to fit together that which does not fit is “bad stewardship” of God’s gift.

Ms. Linda D. Bobbitt [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved the previous question on all matters before the house.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** To end debate on all matters before the house.

The chair clarified that the motion would apply to the pending amendment [B5] and to the social statement itself.

Mr. Jack S. Oakley [Southwestern Washington Synod] rose to a point of order to inquire whether the motion to postpone the vote on the social statement that Mr. Wickman had tried to make earlier would be in order after the amendment process had been completed.

The chair advised that, because Ms. Bobbitt had called the question on all matters before the house, the effect of approving her motion would be to move the assembly directly to a vote on the amendment currently under consideration and then to a vote on the social statement itself.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**DEFEATED:**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-449; NO-544**

To end debate on all matters before the house.

The chair announced that the motion to close debate had been defeated. Returning to the question of Mr. Wickman’s proposed motion to postpone a vote on the social statement, Presiding Bishop Hanson conferred with the parliamentarian to determine whether it would now be in order.

Mr. Y. T. Chiu [Northeastern Ohio Synod] raised a point of order, arguing that the house must first address the amendment that was currently on the floor and must first perfect the social statement before a postponement could be considered.

The chair ruled that Mr. Wickman’s motion would not be in order until after the assembly had finished amending the social statement. The chair offered Mr. Wickman opportunity to appeal the decision of the chair, but Mr. Wickman declined.

The presiding bishop returned the assembly’s attention to consideration of Amendment B5.

Mr. R. Guy Erwin [Southwest California Synod] characterized the social statement as a nuanced and authentically Lutheran contribution to the Christian conversation on sexuality and said, “Luther himself . . . overturned centuries of powerful Christian tradition that saw all sexuality as wrong by insisting that clergy have the right to marry, by refusing to value celibacy or even sexual abstinence in itself as a purer or more Christian life. Luther was the greatest sexual revolutionary in Christian history, and we carry forward his legacy even now.” He opposed the amendment.

The chair announced that consideration of the social statement was being interrupted because the orders of the day called for college corporation meetings. He stated that he would confer with staff to determine whether time could be added to the current plenary to continue discussion of the social statement. He also gave a brief update on a tornado that had touched down at the far end of the convention center and that had caused some damage to the roof as well as to the steeple of Central Lutheran Church.

## Introduction of ELCA College and University Presidents

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson acknowledged 14 presidents or representatives of the 28 ELCA colleges and universities. A number of the presidents were unable to attend due to the relatively late date of the Churchwide Assembly, classes having begun already. Those recognized were the following:

Mr. David R. Anderson, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.  
Mr. Loren J. Anderson, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash.  
Mr. Steven C. Bahls, Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill.  
Mr. Darrel D. Colson, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa  
Mr. Stephen E. Fritz, Midland Lutheran, Fremont, Neb.  
Ms. Pamela M. Jolicoeur, Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn.  
Mr. Edward F. Leonard III, Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kan.  
Ms. Kathryn Buchanan, representing Pres. Michael C. Maxey, Roanoke College, Salem, Va.  
Mr. Jack R. Ohle, Gustavus Adolphus College, Saint Peter, Minn.  
Mr. Robert C. Oliver, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S. D.  
Ms. Janet S. Philipp, Dana College, Blair, Neb.  
Mr. Wayne B. Powell, Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, N.C.  
Mr. Paul P. Pribbenow, Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minn.  
Pr. Ann M. Svennungsen, Texas Lutheran University, Seguin, Texas  
Mr. Richard L. Torgerson, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked the presidents for their leadership. He also congratulated those presidents elected since the last Churchwide Assembly:

Mr. Chris Kimball, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, Calif.  
Mr. Darrel D. Colson, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa  
Ms. Janet Moran Riggs, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa.  
Mr. Jack R. Ohle, Gustavus Adolphus College, Saint Peter, Minn.  
Mr. Troy D. VanAken, Thiel College, Greenville, Pa.

## Recess for College Corporation Meetings

Reference: *College Corporation Meetings*.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that the assembly would move into the corporation meetings for four of the ELCA colleges. He explained that the governing documents of the ELCA provide for a variety of relationship patterns between the ELCA and its colleges and universities and that four of this church's colleges had chosen to relate to this church through the Churchwide Assembly: Dana College, represented by Ms. Janet S. Philipp; Luther College, represented by Mr. Richard L. Torgerson; St. Olaf College, represented by Mr. David R. Anderson; and Wartburg College, represented by Mr. Darrel D. Colson. Also present were the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, and the Rev. Mark Wilhelm, director for colleges and universities in Vocation and Education.

The presiding bishop cited bylaw 8.32.06. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*, which provides for college corporation meetings to be held in conjunction with the biennial Churchwide Assembly. He declared the Churchwide Assembly to be in recess at 4:40 P.M. CDT. He informed voting members of the Churchwide Assembly that they were now serving as voting members of the college corporations of the four colleges. He noted that the actions were listed in the *College Corporation Meeting* booklet that had been distributed earlier. He pointed out that no motions or seconds would be required. The meetings would be held sequentially.

Minutes of the proceedings are kept in the records of the institutions.

## Resumption of Plenary Session Five

Plenary Session Five resumed at 4:50 P.M. CDT. Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson reported on the tornado damage to Central Lutheran Church's steeple. He reminded voting members that Central Lutheran had given much to the Churchwide Assembly as a neighbor and host. He invited the assembly to sing the hymn "Many and Great" from the *Worship and Song* booklet. He then led the assembly in prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson recommended that the assembly continue in session until 6:30 P.M. in order to continue the discussion of the social statement and to address the resolution on the quasi committee of the whole to be held concerning the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. He also informed the assembly that the staff was exploring the possibility of an additional plenary on Thursday night.

Mr. Y. T. Chiu [Northeastern Ohio Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege to ask that the assembly collect a special offering for Central Lutheran. The chair said that he would address that request at the end of the plenary.

The Rev. Terri K. Stagner-Collier [Southeastern Synod] rose to a point of order to ask whether a quorum were present.

The chair ruled that a quorum was in fact present.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the assembly's consent to extend the session to 6:30 P.M. Hearing no objection, he declared the change in the agenda adopted.

## Consideration of Social Statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (continued)

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 19–38; Section VI, pages 63–96.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that the assembly would now return to consideration of Amendment B5, submitted by the Rev. Michael E. Johnson [Western North Dakota Synod].

The Rev. William E. Baum [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-892; NO-46**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, the chair called for a vote on Amendment B5.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-303; NO-667**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend by deletion of pages 29–31, lines 751–868, and substitution of the following text, with endnotes added accordingly:*

### Homosexuality

We affirm biblical teaching on homosexual behavior as articulated by our predecessor churches, The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America:

“Scientific research has not been able to provide conclusive evidence regarding the causes of homosexuality. Nevertheless, homosexuality is viewed biblically as a departure from the heterosexual structure of God’s

creation.”<sup>1</sup> “We note the current consensus in the scientific community that one’s preferred sexual behavior exists on a continuum from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual and that homosexual behavior takes a variety of forms. We believe it appropriate to distinguish between homosexual orientation and homosexual behavior. Persons who do not practice their homosexual erotic preference do not violate our understanding of Christian sexual behavior.”<sup>2</sup>

“This church regards the practice of homosexual erotic behavior as contrary to God’s intent for his children. It rejects the contention that homosexual behavior is simply another form of sexual behavior equally valid with the dominant male/female pattern.”<sup>3</sup>

“We agree that homosexually-behaving persons need God’s grace as does every human being. We all need the care and concern of the congregation. We all need opportunity to hear the Word, to receive the sacraments, to accept the forgiveness God offers, to experience the understanding and the fellowship of the community of Christ. We all need the power of the Holy Spirit for ethical living sensitive to our own individual situations.

So saying we nevertheless do not condone homosexual erotic behavior. Nor do we condone idolatry, pride, disrespect for parents, murder, adultery, theft, libel, gossip, or the other sins known in our circles. The sacrifice God finds acceptable from each of us is “a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.” Then he can answer our prayer for a “clean heart . . . a new and right spirit within me.” (See Psalm 51.)<sup>4</sup>

“Persons who engage in homosexual behavior are sinners only as are all other persons—alienated from God and neighbor. However, they are often the special and undeserving victims of prejudice and discrimination in law, law enforcement, cultural mores, and congregational life. In relation to this area of concern, the sexual behavior of freely consenting adults in private is not an appropriate subject for legislation or police action. It is essential to see such persons as entitled to understanding and justice in church and community.”<sup>5</sup>

The 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly has committed this church to “continue to respect the guidance of the 1993 statement of the Conference of Bishops”<sup>6</sup> which reads: “We, as the Conference of Bishops of the ELCA, recognize that there is basis neither in Scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship. We, therefore, do not approve such a ceremony as an official action of this church’s ministry. Nevertheless, we express trust in and will continue dialogue with those pastors and congregations who are in ministry with gay and lesbian persons, and affirm their desire to explore the best ways to provide pastoral care for all to whom they minister”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sex, Marriage, and Family*, A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

<sup>2</sup> *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior*, A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

<sup>3</sup> *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior*, A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

<sup>4</sup> Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior, A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

<sup>5</sup> Sex, Marriage, and Family, A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

<sup>6</sup> 2005 Churchwide Assembly Action, CA05.05.18.

<sup>7</sup> 1993 Conference of Bishops Statement, CB93.10.25.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] moved to limit debate on any remaining amendments to 12 minutes each.

The motion was not debatable.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-812; NO-172**

**CARRIED:**

**To limit debate on any subsequent amendments to the social statement to 12 minutes each.**

The chair announced that the motion to limit debate was adopted.

The Rev. Randal R. Fett [Nebraska Synod] moved Amendment B3, which had been submitted both by Pr. Fett and Mr. Timothy L. Deal [North Carolina Synod].

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend by deletion of page 29, lines 740 through 750:*

~~Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, some people, though not all, in this church and within the larger Christian community, conclude that marriage is also the appropriate term to use in describing similar benefits, protection, and support for same-gender couples entering into lifelong monogamous relationships. They believe that such accountable relationships also provide the necessary foundation that supports trust and familial and community thriving. Other contractual agreements, such as civil unions, also seek to provide some of these protections and to hold those involved in such relationships accountable to one another and to society.~~

Speaking to his amendment, Pr. Fett argued that the text at this point in the statement was in contradiction with the understanding of marriage stated earlier in the document, and thus should be deleted.

Mr. David L. Lillehaug [Minneapolis Area Synod] sought to make a motion that the assembly accept the recommendation of the *ad hoc* committee with respect to all remaining amendments to the sexuality social statement.

Because there was already a motion on the floor, the chair ruled that Mr. Lillehaug would need to wait to make his motion until the assembly had acted on the motion currently before it.

Mr. Stephen M. Converse [New England Synod] moved to end debate on Amendment B3.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

The previous question.

The Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, rose to a point of order to alert the assembly that the wording of the lines to be deleted had been changed by Amendment A4, and that Pr. Fett's Amendment B5 as printed in the *ad hoc* committee's report no longer matched the text as amended.

The chair granted that Bp. Kusserow was making an important point, but ruled that the motion to end debate was still before the house.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-814; NO-150**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, the chair called for a vote on Amendment B5, reminding the assembly that the text to be deleted was the text as amended by Amendment A4.

An unidentified voting member asked Presiding Bishop Hanson to clarify the text on which members would be voting.

The chair called on the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee, to inform the assembly as to the wording of the previously approved text. Pr. Loy directed the assembly's attention to page 3 of the committee's report.

Presiding Bishop Hanson explained that the material proposed for deletion in the current amendment would include the amended text. The chair invited voting members to voice any confusion they might have about what was being voted on. Hearing no questions, the chair called for the vote on Pr. Fett's amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-282; NO-699**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend by deletion of page 29, lines 740 through 750:*

~~Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, some people, though not all, in this church and within the larger Christian community, conclude that marriage is also the appropriate term to use in describing similar benefits, protection, and support for same-gender couples entering into lifelong monogamous relationships. They believe that such accountable relationships also provide the necessary foundation that supports trust and familial and community thriving. Other contractual agreements, such as civil unions, also seek to provide some of these protections and to hold those involved in such relationships accountable to one another and to society.~~

The chair announced that the motion was defeated. The chair recognized Mr. Lillehaug, who made the motion he had sought to make earlier.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

To accept the recommendation of the *ad hoc* committee with respect to all amendments to the social statement on sexuality not yet considered.

Speaking to his motion, Mr. Lillehaug said, "I believe that the voting members have had adequate opportunity to consider all of these and like amendments, have expressed their will

already in certain votes and that it would now be appropriate to accept the recommendations of the *ad hoc* committee and move immediately to the social statement.”

Ms. Elizabeth A. Guthrie [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in opposition, arguing that one amendment was different from the others, dealing with cohabitation rather than with same-gender relationships. She asked the assembly to reject the motion in order to preserve the ability to talk about this other topic.

The Rev. Bruce H. Burnside, bishop of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, commended the work of the task force that had drafted the proposed social statement and suggested that the work of amending it had already been done through the lengthy process to which the draft had been submitted. He noted that 37 synods had approved the statement in their assemblies and asserted that this number indicated overwhelming support, even though not every individual might support everything in the statement.

Mr. Carroll S. Shaddock [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] argued that the motion would rob those who had proposed the amendments of the opportunity to voice their reasoning before the assembly and would imperil the unity of this church.

The Rev. Jeffrey J. Blain [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] rose to a point of order, questioning whether the wording in the *ad hoc* committee’s report, “The committee recommends that the amendment not be *adopted*,” meant that the amendment should not be *proposed*. He stated his understanding that the wording meant that all the amendments would be brought forward but that the committee was making a recommendation concerning the assembly’s response.

The chair responded by explaining that, according to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” any amendments not recommended by *ad hoc* committee must be brought to the floor by the maker of the motion. The effect of the motion, thus, would be to accept the committee’s recommendation for all remaining amendments that had been proposed.

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] rose to a point of order to ask for confirmation that the makers of the resolutions had been consulted by the *ad hoc* committee.

Pr. Loy affirmed that, to his knowledge, all authors had been contacted by the committee to inform them how the committee planned to proceed in respect to their motions.

Mr. John T. Gates Jr. [Florida-Bahamas Synod] rose to a point of order to ask if the motion applied to the implementing resolutions, as well.

The chair stated that the motion did not apply to the implementing resolution as the social statement would need to be adopted before the implementing resolutions could be put before the assembly.

The Rev. William E. Baum [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-869; NO-129**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, the chair called for a vote on Mr. Lillehaug’s motion.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-706; NO-286**

**CARRIED:**

**To accept the recommendation of the *ad hoc* committee with respect to all amendments to the social statement on sexuality not yet considered.**

The chair announced that the motion was adopted.



The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, member of the Church Council, was asked to lead the assembly in prayer.

The presiding bishop said that the assembly next would return to the general debate on the social statement, and he asked those who had registered in the microphone queue to resume their positions.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, spoke in support of the social statement. She urged the assembly not to become so focused on homosexual behavior that it missed the clear word that was being spoken about human sexuality by the statement.

Mr. Curtis A. Sorbo [Eastern North Dakota Synod] read from 1 Timothy 4:3–6. He stated that he did not believe that the statement was a teaching tool but rather was a description of different sexual relationships that members were being asked to accept because of “bound conscience.” He argued that this church needs a statement based on the Word of God and not on a description of public opinion and personal desires.

The Rev. Martin D. Wells, bishop of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, endorsed the statement, saying it was built on a promise-making and promise-keeping God who is trustworthy and who calls people to become promise-makers and promise-keepers themselves on behalf of a hurting world that is seeking something to trust. He lauded the proposed social statement as a work of trust.

The Rev. Craig L. Fourman [Southern Ohio Synod] expressed concern for the ELCA’s relationship with the Church catholic. He read from a letter from the Rev. Andrew Gulle, bishop of the East of Lake Victoria Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, which called for the questions of sexuality to be discussed by all Lutherans worldwide, rather than by only one church. Pr. Fourman urged that this church first engage in dialogue with its partners in the Lutheran World Federation before voting on its social statement. He requested that resource members the Rev. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, and the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit, be allowed to address the assembly on this matter.

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited Pr. McCoid and Pr. Malpica to speak to the assembly.

Pr. McCoid reported that there had been an ecumenical consultation on June 1, 2009, during which the ELCA had informed its ecumenical partners of the status of the deliberations in this church on human sexuality, and had received information from its partners about their own positions and status in relation to these questions. The Reformed Church in America has just completed a three-year dialogue on homosexuality and has no proposals to change its standards for ordination, he reported; the Moravian Church has a five-year moratorium on discussion of homosexuality, and, two weeks before the assembly, a unity meeting had rejected any discussion of homosexuality in the future; the United Church of Christ has a long-term practice of approving ordained pastors in committed same-gender relationships; in July, The Episcopal Church in convention had moved in the same direction as the United Church of Christ; the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in its General Assembly had approved changes in its rostering policy, but the presbyteries failed to ratify them. Concerning the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Pr. McCoid stated that, if the social statement and ministry policies were adopted, cooperation would continue in Life and Works, but Faith and Order activities would be reduced considerably. He further stated that this church would continue to be at the table in dialogue with these other churches.

Pr. Malpica reported that his office had received responses from two of the ELCA’s companion churches. He affirmed Pr. Fourman’s statement concerning the response from Bp. Gulle of the East of Lake Victoria Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and

indicated that a letter also had been received from the Rev. Nicholas Tai, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hong Kong.

The chair asked Pr. Malpica whether the letters from companion churches had addressed the social statement itself.

Pr. Malpica replied that neither letter had addressed the social statement.

The Rev. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod, urged adoption of the statement. She noted this church had been waiting a long time for this statement and recounted the history of the development of the document. She urged members “not to be sabotaged by anxiety or fear.”

Mr. Albert H. Quie [Minneapolis Area Synod] opposed the social statement because of what he characterized as “weak moral benchmarks.” He commented on the statistics concerning children born out of wedlock and saw these as a result of moral weakness. He recounted several experiences.

The Rev. Erik T. R. Samuelson [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] spoke in favor of the statement. He argued that some people were making a false distinction by characterizing one side as choosing the Law and the other side as giving up on the Law. He wondered whether perhaps God had given “this great gift of disagreement on this issue” in order to lead people back to the Bible in order for Christ to reveal to them where they are to go.

Mr. Caleb L. Geleske [Northern Texas-Northern-Louisiana Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-682; NO-303**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Mr. Lowell E. Wickman [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] rose to a point of order to ask if the motion to postpone the final vote would be in order at this point.

After consultation with the parliamentarian, the chair ruled that the motion would not be in order, because Mr. Geleske’s motion had come before Mr. Wickman’s, and the body had voted to approve ending debate. The effect of the motion to close debate was to call for immediate vote on the main question.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked for a time of silent prayer, followed by a prayer from Ms. Judith Anne Bunker, member of the Church Council.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-676; NO-338**

**CA09.03.13**

**To adopt *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (as amended) as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2006).**

The vote being 66.67 percent to 33.33 percent, the chair declared the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* to be adopted. Before moving to consideration of the implementing resolutions, he invited the assembly to sing “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love.”

# Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust

## I. Introduction

Invited to answer the question, “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus answered, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:36–40). Christians respond to these commands in the confident hope that by God’s grace alone we are set free to worship God and love our neighbor.

This social statement addresses the question: how do we understand human sexuality within the context of Jesus’ invitation to love God and love our neighbor (Romans 13:9–10; Galatians 5:14)?

## II. A distinctly Lutheran approach

Our first response to this question is to remember that, as Lutherans, we are the inheritors of a rich theological tradition that assists us in discerning how to live faithfully in a complex world. Our starting point is the foundational Lutheran understanding that we read and understand the Bible in light of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This “good news” of the Gospel that we are freed from captivity to sin (justification by grace through faith on account of Christ) allows us to respond to God’s mercy through love for and service to the neighbor<sup>1</sup> (our vocation in the world).

As Lutherans, understanding that God’s promised future is the transformation of the whole creation, we believe that the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is engaged deeply and relationally in the continuing creation of the world. We anticipate and live out the values of this promised future concretely in the present. It is therefore in the midst of daily life in the world that we are given the vocational task of serving the neighbor.

Central to our vocation, in relation to human sexuality, is the building and protection of trust<sup>2</sup> in relationships. As justified and forgiven sinners, our efforts to create trust are in response to God’s faithful (trustworthy) relationship of love for the world in Christ. We are called therefore to be trustworthy in our human sexuality and to build social institutions and practices where trust and trustworthy relationships can thrive.

### *Justified by grace through faith*

As Lutherans, we believe that we are justified by grace through faith. The Lutheran Confessions guide us in our understanding of justification by identifying three intersecting affirmations: *solus Christus*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide* (Christ alone, grace alone, and by faith alone).<sup>3</sup> Deeply grounded in Scripture, understood as the living Word of God, these together proclaim Jesus Christ as central to the Gospel:

- *Solus Christus* (Christ alone) insists that the purpose of Scripture is to reveal Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. Scripture is to be interpreted through the lens of Christ’s death and resurrection for the salvation of all.
- *Sola gratia* (grace alone) affirms that we are saved by grace alone. As with *solus Christus*, *sola gratia* means that there is nothing a person can do through his or her action that will create a right relationship with God. Only God’s grace can do that.
- *Sola fide* (by faith alone) affirms that, through the hearing of God’s Word, the Holy Spirit ignites faith (trust) in God within us.

These three emphases also tell us that sin does not have to do simply with the keeping or breaking of rules or laws. Rather, we sin when we turn away from God and look to ourselves.

Sin turns us toward obsessive self-concern, with disastrous consequences for ourselves and others.

We live therefore within the paradox that in our sexuality, as in other aspects of life, we always encounter both our own sinfulness and God's grace. It is only through Christ that we can turn in faith to trust God, which leads immediately to our baptismal vocation to love and serve the neighbor.

### ***Christian freedom in service of the neighbor***

Lutherans are not reluctant to live confidently within the difficult, complex, and ambiguous realities of daily life. Lutherans understand that active engagement in the world is integral to Christian identity. They are able to remain secure in Christ in the midst of the confusions, lack of clarity, and struggle that God's calling entails. "Did we in our own strength confide," sang Luther, "our striving would be losing." In Christ, "God is making his appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Peter 4:11). Lutheran theology prepares us precisely to hold in creative tension the paradoxes and complexities of the human situation. This is also the case with regard to human sexuality. God has created human beings as part of the whole creation and with the intention that we live actively in the world (Romans 12–13; Ephesians 5–6).

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul testifies that the foundation of Christian identity is what God has done for us through Christ (Galatians 2:20; 3:24–28). Luther echoes this affirmation in his treatise, *The Freedom of the Christian*, claiming that Christians are at one and the same time radically freed by the Gospel and called to serve the good of the neighbor:

A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none.

A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.<sup>4</sup>

Luther believed that these two affirmations were the key to understanding the entirety of Christian life in the world. Following Paul, he understood freedom to be the basis for Christian life and ethics.<sup>5</sup> Luther believed that this understanding of Christian freedom flowed from the doctrine of justification as that which "preserves and guides all churchly teaching and establishes our consciences before God."<sup>6</sup>

In other words, because we are radically freed in Christ, we are called in that freedom to love and serve our neighbor as Christ loved and served us (Galatians 5:1, 13). Only in the freedom from preoccupation with the self and the burden of unworthiness before the perfection of God's law can such concern for the neighbor become possible.

The Lutheran theological understanding of God's salvation and our utter dependence on God's grace, grounded as it is in Scripture (Romans 3:21–26; Ephesians 2:8–10), has crucial implications for Christian ethics and discernment:

- In emphasizing that salvation is not a reward for morally approved behavior, Lutheran theology teaches that salvation is by God's grace alone and not dependent upon human action. We receive in trust, as Paul declares, "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Romans 3:21–22).
- Justified by faith, Lutherans understand that, because of God's gift, their freedom in Christ leads to a vocation of responsible and humble service to the neighbor (Romans 13:8–10).
- Our vocation of service leads us to live out our responsibilities primarily in light of and in response to the neighbor's needs, often in complex and sometimes tragic situations.
- God's mercy and compassion instill in us the capacity to empathize with others as "the love of Christ urges us on" (2 Corinthians 5:14). They teach us to walk with each other in joy, humility, and tender care.

- The love of God and neighbor, fulfilled by faith alone, are the two commandments by which Christ taught us to measure and interpret every other commandment in Scripture (Matthew 22:36–40).

### ***God’s continuing creation***

Christians believe that God is the creator of all that is and that this ongoing handiwork is good, good, and very good! (Genesis 1:31). Both narratives of God’s creative activity in the book of Genesis (Genesis 1 and 2) reveal God’s goodness and desire for close relationship with human beings as integral to the ongoing handiwork of creation. In Genesis 1, this desire is expressed in humanity’s creation — male and female — in the image of God. In Genesis 2, that close relationship is revealed as God scoops up and breathes life into earth to form humankind. As a mark of personal confidence, the Creator even entrusts to human beings the task of naming and tending the inhabitants of the earth God so clearly loves. The tender love and goodness of God’s creative activity includes sexuality and gendered bodies (Genesis 2:23–25).

Just as both creation narratives reveal how God intends a relationship of trust with humanity, so also the creation of male and female (Genesis 1) and the companionship of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2) reveal that human beings are created for trusting relationships with each other. In these narratives of God’s creative activity, we understand from the beginning that love and trust are at the heart of God’s relationship with human beings. We also understand that creation is God’s ongoing activity and not yet complete.

The biblical narratives also depict how people violate God’s trust, turning away from God (Genesis 3). They want to be like God. They make excuses and apportion blame. They hide from God. They cover their nakedness. The full breakdown of relationship enters, complete with curses and exile, as depicted in the betrayal of brother against brother (Genesis 4). The relationship of trust with God and each other, entailed in the image of God, is broken. People sin; that is, human beings resist their own God-given identity and destiny.

Nevertheless, God remains faithful, seeking out and inviting all into intimate relationship as sons and daughters. This dignity of the human being reflects God’s deep love and stands against all forms of violence, discrimination, and injustice. Scripture reveals to believers that just as God does not abandon that which God loves, neither should we.

We recognize, therefore, our need for God’s law to order and preserve the world, expose our sins, and to show us the depth of our capacity to turn away from God and neighbor.

And yet we are consoled and encouraged because, even in the face of broken trust, God includes all of creation in the unfolding of the human community and the world. As human beings, we participate in creation’s work that continues even now in fruitfulness and productivity.<sup>7</sup>

For believers, it is hope in God’s future, not in an idealized past,<sup>8</sup> that inspires participation in God’s changing, open, and inexhaustible creation. Christians believe that God’s promised future includes the transformation of the whole creation (Romans 8:19–25). Guided by this vision, Christians anticipate and live out the values of God’s promised future concretely in the present.

Through the saving work of Jesus Christ, we understand how Scripture ultimately is future-oriented and filled with promise; creation is fulfilled in new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:1–5; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Isaiah 43:16–21). Even now, by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives may reflect the love of Christ crucified and risen. “The life I now live in the flesh,” declares Paul, “I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Thus, Christ-like love for the neighbor informs all our activities, sexual and otherwise, now and into God’s future. In anticipation of that future, the ethics of sexuality is

thus not purely a personal matter, but one that affects the witness of the Christian community and the well-being of the larger community (1 Corinthians 6:19; Galatians 6:10; Revelation 21:8).

### ***God's law at work in the world***

As Lutherans, we believe that God has given the law not only to reveal sin and order society (1 Timothy 1:9), but also to point us to God's intentions and promises for our lives.

Luther described two functions of the law, one theological and the other political or civil.<sup>9</sup> The theological use of the law reveals sin, confronting us when we have broken our relationship with God and driving us to the forgiveness offered in the Gospel. When the law forces us to examine the extent to which we are ensnared — individually and collectively — in patterns of self-serving, exploitation, abuse, and shame, we experience the power of the theological use of the law in revealing to us the brokenness of our relationship with God. Knowing that we can do nothing to bring about our own salvation, Lutherans reject the notion that we can perfect either ourselves or society.

The civil use of the law, at the same time, provides order in society to support the maintenance of peace and justice in this imperfect world. The function of the civil law is, in a sinful world, to protect from harm all those whom God loves, particularly the most vulnerable.<sup>10</sup>

Lutherans understand that God's law, in its civil use, permeates and undergirds basic structures of human society to support life and protect all people in a world that remains under the sway of sin. Such social structures,<sup>11</sup> as the Lutheran Confessions identify them, include ministry, marriage and family, civil authority, and daily work.<sup>12</sup> Because these structures are temporal, anticipating the arrival of God's promised future, they must respond continually to human needs for protection and flourishing.

### ***The Ten Commandments***

When asked to summarize what God requires in the law, most Christians will turn first to the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–17) as God's guide for their own behavior and that of others. What is distinctive about these commandments for Lutherans is that we understand them in light of faith, which confesses God as creator and redeemer of the world. Thus, in addition to revealing human sin, they constrain wrong behavior and point the way for us to serve the neighbor and care for the world.

The first three commandments together point to our need as sinful human beings “to fear, love, and trust in God above all things.” The remaining seven describe our responsibility to serve the neighbor, especially the most vulnerable. They identify those actions that violate trust and destroy relationships between people and within community. They also instruct us how to protect and nurture relationships and build up the community: to honor those wielding legitimate authority (fourth); preserve and enhance life (fifth); support boundaries, decency, and faithfulness in sexual relations (sixth); prevent exploitation (seventh); and put the best construction on the actions of all (eighth).

The ninth and tenth commandments “fence the heart.” They show us that not only individual acts but also thoughts, words, and legal actions done for base motives are wrong, and they invite us to right action. All these things honor God by loving the neighbor.

The sixth commandment relates in a particular way to human sexuality. To this end, as Luther wrote in the Small Catechism, “We are to fear and love God so that we lead pure and decent lives in word and deed, and each of us loves and honors his or her spouse.”<sup>13</sup>

When this commandment is violated, many things are adulterated — relationships are damaged, people are betrayed and harmed. Promiscuity and sexual activity without a spirit of mutuality and commitment are sinful because of their destructive consequences for individuals,

relationships, and the community. The Apostle Paul's list of vices (e.g., fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry) warns believers of the dangers of gratifying "the desires of the flesh," thereby turning away from belonging to Christ and God's kingdom (Galatians 5:19–21). The breakdown of trust through the sexual adulteration of the bonds of the committed, intimate, and protected relationship of marriage wreaks havoc for the family and the community, as well as for the people involved.

When this commandment is kept, however, care and attention are given to all aspects of life and behavior, including sexuality, which creates marriage relationships and practices of trust. "There is no law against such things," declares Paul, because "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" are the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22–26).

We are called to participate in God's continuing creation as people who seek to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. As such, we strive to lead lives that uphold relationships and a social order where human beings can thrive and to support one another in those endeavors. As sinners justified through the Gospel, we are able to receive creation fully as gift so that we can serve our neighbor in need freely.

### ***Our vocation to serve the neighbor***

We do not live in private worlds without thought or consideration for historic events or the impact of our actions on individuals, the community, or the environment. Rather, the responsibility to serve the neighbor through our daily callings seeks to shape human relationships and a world community that honors God and anticipates God's future transformation of all of creation. In so doing, all people, in whatever situation they find themselves, are called to promote actively the good of the neighbor.

We recognize the complex and varied situations people have relative to human sexuality: being in relationships, being single, being a friend, living in a young or aging body, being male or female, being young or old, or having different sexual orientations and gender identities. In whatever the situation, all people are called to build trust in relationships and in the community.

The way we live out these callings, of course, will be flawed and imperfect. As forgiven sinners, we recognize through faith that our imperfect lives are means by which God cares for and sustains creation. We can live both humbly and boldly, knowing that our efforts are still infused with God's love and blessing for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world. By the mercy of God, in the midst of evil, betrayal, brokenness, loneliness, and loss, we dare to believe that opportunities do open, forgiveness is sought and tendered, good may be rescued, and trust can be restored.

### ***Lutheran social ethics***

Lutherans understand human sexuality, and ethics in general, to be part of God's rule in this world, in contrast to God's rule in the coming world through the Gospel. "We know," declares Paul, "that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies" (Romans 8:22–23). Therefore, we believe that the way we order our lives in matters of human sexuality is important to faithful living, but is not central to determining our salvation. We are able to be realistic and merciful with respect to our physical and emotional realities, not striving for angelic perfection as if our salvation were at stake. Even marriage is an earthly blessing on this side of heaven (Matthew 22:30).<sup>14</sup>

A Lutheran approach to ethics makes use of Martin Luther's understanding of the two realms of God's action.<sup>15</sup> With the left hand (worldly realm), God rules in this world,

maintaining order and restraining evil through the law and reason. With the right hand (spiritual realm), God brings in the coming world of Christ's rule where sin, death, and evil will reign no longer. This new world is experienced by faith alone, most clearly when God announces in Word and sacraments the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

Set free by the death and resurrection of Christ (the spiritual realm), Christians are sent back into this created world, which is experienced no longer as a threat, but as God's gift. There we are called to love and serve the neighbor and to uphold and promote human community and the preservation of creation. This is work we undertake not only with other Christians, but together with all people of good will.

As we determine how to love and serve the neighbor in a complex world, Lutherans rely on Scripture. We also are guided by the Lutheran Confessions, and we bring to this task a particular appreciation for the gifts of knowledge and learning. We believe that God also provides insights to us through reason, imagination, the social and physical sciences, cultural understanding, and the creative arts (Philippians 4:8). One reason Lutherans have engaged so deeply in education and research is that we believe God works through such means to guide us in reading Scripture and in understanding how we will live in a world of continuing complexity and change.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, we recognize that this church's deliberations related to human sexuality require our best moral discernment and practical wisdom in the worldly realm, even though these matters are not central to determining our salvation. We also understand that in this realm faithful people can and sometimes will come to different conclusions about what constitutes responsible action. Therefore, this social statement seeks to assist this church in discerning what best serves the neighbor in the complexity of human relationships and social needs in the midst of daily life.

### **III. Trust and human sexuality**<sup>17</sup>

God loves human life so much that "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). We know, therefore, that God's love embraces us totally, including our sexuality. We also know that God created each of us not only as individuals, but also as people who live in a variety of social communities and contexts. In response to God's love for us, we seek life-giving relationships with others and create social structures and practices that support such relationships.

#### ***The complexity of human sexuality***

God created human beings to be in relationship with each other and continually blesses us with diverse powers, which we use in living out those relationships. These include powers for action, reasoning, imagination, and creativity.

Sexuality especially involves the powers or capacities to form deep and lasting bonds, to give and receive pleasure, and to conceive and bear children. Sexuality can be integral to the desire to commit oneself to life with another, to touch and be touched, and to love and be loved. Such powers are complex and ambiguous. They can be used well or badly. They can bring astonishing joy and delight. Such powers can serve God and serve the neighbor. They also can hurt self or hurt the neighbor. Sexuality finds expression at the extreme ends of human experience: in love, care, and security, or lust, cold indifference, and exploitation.

Sexuality consists of a rich and diverse combination of relational, emotional, and physical interactions and possibilities. It surely does not consist solely of erotic desire. Erotic desire, in the narrow sense, is only one component of the relational bonds that humans crave as sexual beings. Although not all relationships are sexual, at some level most sexual relationships are about companionship. Although some people may remain single, either intentionally or unintentionally, all people need and delight in companionship, and all are vulnerable to loneliness.



The need to share our lives with others is a profound good (Genesis 2:18). The counsel to love and care for the neighbor is not a command that is foreign to our created natures; rather, reaching out in love and care is part of who we are as relational and sexual beings. Even if we never have sexual intimacy, we all seek and respond to the bonds and needs of relationships.

Sexual love — the complex interplay of longing, erotic attraction, self-giving, and receiving defined by trust — is a wondrous gift. The longing for connection, however, also can render human beings susceptible to pain, isolation, and harm. The desire for sexual love, therefore, does not by itself constitute a moral justification for sexual behavior. Giving and receiving love always involves mixed motives and limited understanding of individual and communal consequences.

The sharing of love and sexual intimacy within the mutuality of a mature and trusting relationship can be a rich source of romance, delight, creativity, imagination, restraint, desire, pleasure, safety, and deep contentment that provides the context for individuals, family, and the community to thrive.

Though sexual love remains God’s good gift, sin permeates human sexuality as it does all of life. When expressed immaturely, irresponsibly, or with hurtful intent, then love — or its counterfeit, coercive power — can lead to harm and even death. Too often lust is mistaken for love, which in turn becomes the rationale for selfish behaviors. When infatuation, lust, and self-gratification take the place of the responsibilities of love, cascading consequences result that can be devastating for partners, children, families, and society.

In recognizing the many ways in which people misuse power and love, we need to be honest about sin and the finite limitations of human beings. We also recognize the complexity of the human and societal forces that drive the desire for companionship, for intimate relation with another, for belonging, and for worth. The deep interconnectedness of the body with the mind and spirit suggests the complexity of such situations. The biblical narratives both rejoice in the splendor of sexual attraction (Song of Songs 4) and are candid about the harm that can result from human sexuality (2 Samuel 11, 13; Matthew 5:27–30).

### ***Social trust and the common good***

Trust is a critical element that holds together couples and relationships, households and families, social structures and institutions. We normally relate concepts of trust, promise, loyalty, and reliance to individual relationships. These concepts, however, also describe economic life, political arrangements, social policies, and social structures. Contemporary social scientists call attention to these almost invisible bonds of trust and reliance that are necessary for a well-functioning society.<sup>18</sup> They are beginning to articulate what close-knit communities have long known: social trust undergirds healthy societies.

Trust is essential for the good of society. This is true in general terms for the proper functioning of communities and pertains especially to the social practices and institutions that affect and are affected by human sexuality. The development of social trust must be a central concern for all who seek the good of the neighbor in the pursuit of justice and the common good. Lutherans understand that social structures cannot create faith, hope, and love, but they trust that God does bless and provide appropriate gifts through such structures and, in some cases, in spite of them.

The concept of social trust has long been central to both Jewish and Christian social and political thought through the focus on the common good and the need of the neighbor. As the Apostle Paul writes, “So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all” (Galatians 6:10).<sup>19</sup>

When human beings serve their neighbor rather than themselves, they are acting in ways that enhance social trust. However, the challenge of establishing, maintaining, and fostering social trust involves more than private actions. It also requires shaping legal, commercial, technological, and civic structures for the common good. Examples include the social institutions of the family, the conduct of commerce, laws enacted and enforced by government, and community standards. A justice-oriented legal code, social contracts and institutions that protect the weak and most vulnerable, and the protection of human rights all illustrate the kinds of things that can contribute to and support social trust.<sup>20</sup>

Social trust is grounded in the practice of mutual respect for the dignity of all people and their consciences. Strong communities ensure social trust when they provide social support for disagreement and dissent, and nurture the values of mutual respect and regard for the opinions of others. Within the church community, we contribute to respect for the understandings and experiences of others by living out the eighth commandment: “We do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we . . . come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.”<sup>21</sup>

As this church and its members engage the changes and challenges of contemporary society related to human sexuality, careful thought must be given to which changes enhance and which erode social trust. The development of social trust must be a central concern for Christians who seek the good of the neighbor in the pursuit of justice and the common good. This church must be a leader in refocusing attention on practices and attitudes that build social trust. Likewise, it must contribute to the development of responsible economic and social policies and practices that shape the expression of sexuality within social life.

### ***Human sexuality and our calling to establish trust***

Sexual relationships may be among our most profoundly intimate, crucial, and self-giving expressions of trust. Here our human lives are vulnerable to joy and delight and to hurt and exploitation. From spiritual intimacy with God to the closest physical intimacy with another, relationships flourish according to the depth and trustworthiness of commitments. In the arena of human sexuality, no human relationships can thrive in the absence of trust.

Human beings learn about trust from God. When the Lutheran Confessions discuss faith in God, they understand it fundamentally as trust<sup>22</sup> or absolute confidence in God. In faith nurtured by the Holy Spirit through Word and sacrament, we entrust our whole lives to God. We experience God’s unfailing trustworthiness in God’s relationship with us through the Gospel and through God’s deep mercy and compassion in response to our human frailty. In response, as forgiven and justified people, we seek to respond to God’s love for us through care for the neighbor, fostering trust in order that individuals and society might flourish.

What, then, does trust in relation to human sexuality look like when understood in terms of service to the neighbor? In responding to this question, we reflect on God’s love for and continuing involvement in creation and on the saving action of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world. We look to Scripture, to the Lutheran Confessions, to the social and physical sciences, and to human reason, mercy, and compassion. In so doing, we boldly but humbly affirm that trustworthy relationships and social structures will:

- promote, value, and respect the human dignity of each individual;
- protect all from physical, emotional, and spiritual harm;
- demonstrate mercy, compassion, and justice for all, especially the “least of these” — those who are most vulnerable in relationships and in society;
- ensure accountability and responsibility in relationships and the community;
- promote the welfare of individuals and the common good of society; and

- value the security and protection afforded through the making of promises, including social and contractual commitments.

These foundational and protective conditions provide the necessary context and support for trusting relationships that are:

- loving, that include and reflect an abundance of *agape* (unlimited love, forgiveness, compassion, care, and concern), *eros* (passion, excitement, and joy), and *philia* (care for the neighbor);
- life-giving, where affirmation is mutually shared, encouragement is given and received, and individual talents are nurtured and supported;
- self-giving in the face of both opportunities and challenges;
- fulfilling, that is, a place where a spirit of joy and an atmosphere of peace prevails;
- nurturing of physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being;
- marked by truth-telling and honesty;
- faithful in word and deed, including sexual fidelity;
- committed, demonstrating loyalty in the face of difficult as well as good times;
- supportive for all who grow old, are vulnerable, or are weak;
- hospitable, offering support and encouragement to others;
- a blessing to society and serve the good of the neighbor.

#### **IV. Sexuality and social structures that enhance social trust**

Lutherans believe that God works through social structures for the good of society. The Lutheran Confessions identify marriage and the family as foundational structures that support human community.

##### ***Marriage: shelter and context for trust***

Trust is a quality of relationship that, while never perfected, is nurtured and reinforced over time. The trust and mutuality afforded by marriage can make marriage one of the most beautiful, abiding, and transformative forms of human relationship. Depth of care, matched to an intimacy of touch, creates relationships much stronger than simple and momentary erotic interest. Sexual intimacy, together with promises of fidelity and public accountability, nurtures bonds that allow people to thrive and provides a rich context for the care and support of children.

Marriage is a covenant of mutual promises, commitment, and hope authorized legally by the state and blessed by God. The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have recognized marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10: 6–9: “But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one put asunder.” (Jesus here recalls Genesis 1:27; 2:23–24.)

Lutherans long have affirmed that the public accountability of marriage, as expressed through a legal contract, provides the necessary social support and social trust for relationships that are intended to be sustained throughout life and within changing and often challenging life situations. In this country, pastors carry both legal and religious responsibilities for marriage. In carrying out these responsibilities, pastors hold and exercise pastoral discretion for the decision to marry in the church. In the community of the church they preside over the mutual promises made between a couple seeking the lifelong, monogamous, and faithful relationship of marriage.

Marriage requires constant care and cultivation. It is intended to protect the creation and nurturing of mutual trust and love as one foundation of human community. It is a binding

relationship that provides conditions for personal well-being, the flourishing of the partner, and the possibility of procreation and the nurturing of children. It also is intended to be a blessing to the community and the world. Because of promises of fidelity and public accountability, marriage provides a context of love, trust, honesty, and commitment within which a couple can express the profound joy of relationship as well as address the troubles they encounter throughout life.

Christians believe that marriage is not solely to legitimate physical sexual intimacy but to support long-term and durable communion for the good of others.<sup>23</sup> It is a communion within which the play and delight of physical love are crucial expressions of the depth of trust and in which lovemaking can be a tender and generous act of self-giving that tends to the joy and pleasure of the other.

The public character of marriage also implies a civil responsibility. Marriage is intended not only to protect the people who are married, but to signal to the community their intention to live a peaceful and mutually fulfilling life, even as they endeavor to strengthen the community in which they live. The public promises of marriage between a man and a woman, therefore, also protect the community by holding people accountable to their vows. Fidelity to promises blesses all who depend on this trust within and beyond the marriage.

The Christian commitment to marriage recognizes that sin enters all relationships, both within and outside the institution of marriage. All marriages fall short of intentions, and difficulties are inevitable, both because of the different needs and desires of the two individuals and because of sin, which places the anxious concern for self before the needs of the other.

Infidelity to marriage promises betrays the intimate trust of the partner, the security of the family, and the public trust of the community.

Precisely because marriage is the place where deep human trust and needs abide, it also can be a place of great harm. Many experience neither love nor trust within marriage. Harming another emotionally, physically, or spiritually, including through the misuse or abuse of power, is a profound injury. It also is a betrayal and violation of the shelter and trust that are intended within the marriage relationship. Particular care must be taken to support and find safe haven for all who are at risk within a marriage. This includes those whose sense of self is destroyed or damaged within the marriage relationship and, therefore, whose ability to act or advocate for their own health and safety may be inhibited or lost.

This church recognizes that in some situations the trust upon which marriage is built becomes so deeply damaged or is so deeply flawed that the marriage itself must come to a legal end (Matthew 19:3–12). This church does not treat divorce lightly nor does it disregard the responsibilities of marriage. However, in such situations, it provides support to the people involved and all who are affected. Divorced individuals are encouraged to avail themselves of pastoral care, to be assured of God's presence, forgiveness, and healing, and to remain in the communion of the church, recognizing the all-encompassing mercy of God.

This church will provide supportive pastoral care to those who are divorced. Further, it believes that those who wish to remarry may gain wisdom from the past and may be assured of the Gospel's freedom, in the midst of brokenness and forgiveness, to enter into their new responsibilities in joy and hope. This church will tend pastorally to the special concerns of blended families, to children of divorced parents, and to the particular tensions that may accompany family breakdown and transition.

Despite its awareness of the presence of sin and failure in marriage, the Christian tradition places great emphasis on the value of marriage for a husband and wife. It is in marriage that the highest degrees of physical intimacy are matched with and protected by the highest levels of

binding commitment, including legal protection. It is in marriage that public promises of lifetime commitment can create the foundation for trust, intimacy, and safety.

Both the couple's intent in their lifelong promises and the civil requirements for marriage are important. Mutual promises of enduring care and fidelity, made before God, allow a couple to open themselves to each other. They permit the sharing of profound and tender affection as well as deep vulnerabilities and anxieties. The legal contract creates a public arrangement within which a couple may safely and equitably share their assets and resources, arrive at joint decisions, anticipate children, protect and nurture them, and plan for a shared future.

The church's historical experience supports its confidence that solemn promises, made before a company of witnesses who ask for God's blessing on a man and a woman, have the power to create a unique framework within which two people, a new family, and the community may thrive. Consistent with that experience, this church has confidence that such promises, supported by the contractual framework of civil law, can create a lifetime relationship of commitment and cooperation.

Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, some people, though not all, in this church and within the larger Christian community, conclude that marriage is also the appropriate term to use in describing similar benefits, protection, and support for same-gender couples entering into lifelong, monogamous relationships. They believe that such accountable relationships also provide the necessary foundation that supports trust and familial and community thriving. Other contractual agreements, such as civil unions, also seek to provide some of these protections and to hold those involved in such relationships accountable to one another and to society.

### ***Lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships***

Within the last decades, this church has begun to understand and experience in new ways the need of same-gender-oriented individuals to seek relationships of lifelong companionship and commitment as well as public accountability and legal support for those commitments. At the same time, public debates and deliberations have continued regarding understandings of human sexuality in medicine, social science, and corresponding public policy about same-gender relationships.

We in the ELCA recognize that many of our sisters and brothers in same-gender relationships sincerely desire the support of other Christians for living faithfully in all aspects of their lives, including their sexual fidelity. In response, we have drawn deeply on our Lutheran theological heritage and Scripture. This has led, however, to differing and conscience-bound understandings about the place of such relationships within the Christian community. We have come to various conclusions concerning how to regard lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, including whether and how to recognize publicly their lifelong commitments.

While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues.<sup>24</sup> 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.

The ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God. This includes a pastoral responsibility to those who are same-gender in their orientation and to those who are seeking counsel about their sexual self-understanding. All are encouraged to avail themselves of the means of grace and pastoral care.

This church also acknowledges 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. We do not have agreement on whether this church should honor these relationships and uplift, shelter, and protect them or on precisely how it is appropriate to do so.

In response, this church 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. We understand that, in this discernment about ethics and church practice, faithful people can and will come to different conclusions about the meaning of Scripture<sup>25</sup> and about what constitutes responsible action. We further believe that this church, on the basis of "the bound conscience,"<sup>26</sup> will include these different understandings and practices within its life as it seeks to live out its mission and ministry in the world.

This church recognizes that, with conviction and integrity:

- On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that same-gender sexual behavior is sinful, contrary to biblical teaching and their understanding of natural law. They believe same-gender sexual behavior carries the grave danger of unrepentant sin. They therefore conclude that the neighbor and the community are best served by calling people in same-gender sexual relationships to repentance for that behavior and to a celibate lifestyle. Such decisions are intended to be accompanied by pastoral response and community support.
- On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that homosexuality and even lifelong, monogamous, homosexual relationships reflect a broken world in which some relationships do not pattern themselves after the creation God intended. While they acknowledge that such relationships may be lived out with mutuality and care, they do not believe that the neighbor or community are best served by publicly recognizing such relationships as traditional marriage.
- On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that the scriptural witness does not address the context of sexual orientation and lifelong loving and committed relationships that we experience today. They believe that the neighbor and community are best served when same-gender relationships are honored and held to high standards and public accountability, but they do not equate these relationships with marriage. They do, however, affirm the need for community support and the role of pastoral care and may wish to surround lifelong, monogamous relationships or covenant unions with prayer.
- On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that the scriptural witness does not address the context of sexual orientation and committed relationships that we experience today. They believe that the neighbor and community are best served when same-gender relationships are lived out with lifelong and monogamous commitments that are held to the same rigorous standards, sexual ethics, and status as heterosexual marriage. They surround such couples and their lifelong commitments with prayer to live in ways that glorify God, find strength for the challenges that will be faced, and serve others. They believe same-gender couples should avail themselves of social and legal support for themselves, their children, and other dependents and seek the highest legal accountability available for their relationships.

Although at this time this church lacks consensus on this matter, it encourages all people to live out their faith in the local and global community of the baptized with profound respect for the conscience-bound belief of the neighbor. This church calls for mutual respect in

relationships and for guidance that seeks the good of each individual and of the community. Regarding our life together as we live with disagreement, the people in this church will continue to accompany one another in study, prayer, discernment, pastoral care, and mutual respect.

### ***Loving families: ground and source for social trust***

One of the places where social trust is most important is in the context of the family. In contemporary society, the term “family” includes a variety of forms, more akin to the older term of “household,” exclusively employed by Luther to include immediate family members, relatives, and others.

Lutherans understand that intimacy, trust, and safety, particularly for those most vulnerable, are best sheltered within families. When safety and trust are eroded or destroyed within the family, it becomes a dangerous or even demonic place where abuse can reign. Thus, Lutherans take great care to support whatever creates and sustains strong families as a foundation and source of trust.

Children learn either trust or distrust from their earliest relationships of dependence upon parents and others in the household. Patterns of loyalty and confidence established in the family can reach into all future relationships. Those who do not learn to trust face significant obstacles to becoming trustworthy individuals in the more complicated relationships of modern life and may find it difficult to develop a mature and healthy sexuality.

The family is a primary source of trust precisely because of the remarkable level of commitment and care that characterizes familial bonds. While Scripture places family as secondary to the community of God’s people (Matthew 10:37; 12:49), it also attests to the family’s foundational role in protecting and nurturing human community (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1–4). The Lutheran Confessions recognize this role<sup>27</sup> and the connection between family and sexuality in their discussions of the commandments related to each.<sup>28</sup>

This church regards the family as an indispensable social institution because of its role in establishing conditions of trust and protection of the vulnerable. As such, society properly both regulates and shelters families through family law that exists to ensure that these critical responsibilities will be met and that dependent family members will be protected and treated justly when households dissolve.<sup>29</sup>

Social service ministries of this and other churches work to secure the well-being of families in many ways. They give particular attention to those who have no family or to families with limited resources. They raise their moral voice to affirm and celebrate the life-giving importance of familial covenants of care. They teach others to embrace these callings of responsibility and love.

At the same time, realistic awareness of weakness and sin prevents Lutherans from romanticizing family life or setting up false ideals. In particular, sexual abuse or betrayal of promises and commitments within the family constitute flagrant harm precisely because they occur within the context where trust is most assumed.

This church recognizes its responsibility in congregations and through social ministry organizations to support its members and others in all the difficulties that beset family life and to seek ways to ensure and support the protection of the most vulnerable.

Many current social trends<sup>30</sup> in the United States and elsewhere properly raise concerns about the health of families. While these trends do involve individuals who carry personal responsibility for their choices, they also are driven by economic and social forces that are both complex in origin and significantly resistant to correction.

In this country and throughout the twentieth century, the legally married, heterosexual “nuclear family” has been supported by strong social conventions.<sup>31</sup> The nuclear family is

well-structured to foster the development of trust in children and youth. The experience of millions of people and recent social science findings demonstrate its ability to do so.<sup>32</sup> This does not mean, however, that it has always done so effectively. Families can shelter sexism or domestic violence, and, in such situations, the safety of children or others who are harmed is of utmost importance.<sup>33</sup>

In this country and in our congregations, families are formed in many ways. There are natural and adoptive families, foster families, blended families, families with a missing generation, and families where the parents are the same gender. Millions of households in the U.S., and many in our church, are headed by single parents — mostly women — whether widowed, divorced, or never married. The critical issue with respect to the family is not whether it has a conventional form but how it performs indispensable individual and social tasks. All families have responsibility for the tasks of providing safety, shielding intimacy, and developing trustworthy relationships.

This church's first response toward families and households should be one of welcome and support that includes particularly the care for and safety of children. Children are to be invited into the community of the baptized regardless of their family situation.

This church responds to the needs of families through its ministry and service in various settings. It also has the task of addressing and advocating against social and economic trends that counter the development of strong families.

Through the proclamation of God's Word and the sacraments, God creates and strengthens faith and supports believers both inside and outside of families. Family life also is supported when its members strive to meet reasonable expectations to forgive and to seek forgiveness and to bear each other's burdens responsibly. These practices honor God and, when learned in the context of a loving and committed family, may lead to mature and healthy expressions of sexuality. When trust has been betrayed in such situations, then forgiveness, loving correction, and reconciliation must be attempted.

This church acknowledges with regret the way in which the misuse of historical teachings concerning sexuality has harmed individuals, deepened suffering, or torn families apart. This includes actions that abandon or shun people for unwed pregnancy or for a same-gender orientation. Hate crimes and violence against those who are regarded as sexually different sometimes have been perpetrated publicly in the name of Christ. Not only must such behaviors be denounced, but this church must work toward greater understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity.<sup>34</sup> It must seek that which is positive and life-giving while protecting from all that is harmful and destructive.

Since social trust is directly related to social justice, this church must call for justice in matters relating to families and sexuality. Complex and profound changes have occurred in family law over the past fifty years relating to divorce, alimony and child support, custody, adoption, parental rights, and civil unions. The continuing evolution of family law is of vital importance as legislators and courts strive to protect dependent individuals and justly assign responsibility for their care.

These laws have a direct impact on patterns of social trust within households and networks of kinship. Criminal statutes, state enforcement, and judicial handling of matters related to sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual threats, and domestic violence require our close attention. Victims of sexual violation must be able to rely on public institutions for intervention in troubled relationships. They must be able to expect protection when their trust in an individual has been abused.

Society at large must ensure that all who are dependent upon others in the family for spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being are protected by social policies and practices. Even



social institutions and practices not directly related to family institutions can and should facilitate and support familial care and responsibility. Examples include tax and poverty law, real estate and zoning regulations, and insurance industry policies and practices.

The ELCA will support familial relationships as central to nurturing and sustaining trust and security in human relationships. It will advocate for public policies that support and protect families. This church commits itself to continued attention to and discernment about changing family configurations and the ways they serve to shelter and protect relationships of mutual trust.

### ***Protecting children and youth in and for trusting relationships***

A strong and healthy family is a significant factor in the development of healthy individuals. The context of a healthy family nurtures growth, enhances trust, and offers protection. This is especially true for children and youth as they grow into sexual maturity.

Safety within and outside the family is of overriding importance because the damage done to children and youth through sexual abuse or molestation can be remarkably deep and lasting. Such harmful behavior may include inappropriate touching, exposure to pornography, exposing genitals to children or inducing children to do the same, and sexual or genital relations involving minors.

Criminal statutes prohibiting abuse and molestation contribute to the protection of children and youth. This church supports the prosecution of any individual who commits a sexual crime against a minor, including people in leadership positions in the church. Further, this church affirms appropriate laws requiring the reporting of suspected child abuse to authorities in order to prevent future harm to vulnerable minors who cannot protect themselves.

The ELCA also recognizes that congregations and other ministry sites must continue in their efforts to be safe places for children and youth. Much work already has been done to help congregations protect children. This church will continue its efforts for the protection of minors who participate in church-sponsored events and programs. This church calls for the adoption of preventive measures, including educational programs, appropriate policies, and screening of individuals who care for, supervise, or work with children within this church. It expects that all church leaders will report all instances of suspected child abuse.

Matters of concern to both society and the church extend beyond abuse and molestation to organized sexual exploitation. Commercial sexual exploitation is widespread throughout the United States and around the world. It continues to grow and involves surprising numbers of youth by taking advantage of their vulnerabilities.<sup>35</sup>

This church strongly reaffirms its 2001 message, “Commercial Sexual Exploitation,” which states: “Sexual exploitation in any situation, either personally or commercially, inside or outside legally contracted marriage, is sinful because it is destructive of God’s good gift [of sexuality] and human integrity.” This message notes that this is especially true with respect to the demonic harm sexual exploitation causes to children and youth.<sup>36</sup>

Children and youth live in a highly sexualized world. They are exposed early to patterns of adult sexuality and are pressured to associate their bodies with practices that devalue them. Examples include child beauty contests, sexually suggestive clothing, sexually charged prime-time and cable television programs, and movies. At an early age, children listen to sexualized music that is deliberately marketed to them. They “date” as couples and engage in genital activity at earlier ages. Children and youth are targets of sexual bullying, destructive language, and vicious humor.

The ELCA regards the over-exposure of emotionally maturing children and teens to adult sexuality as a failing on the part of adults and society. It challenges all individuals and institutions in society to fulfill their responsibility to protect and nurture children and youth and

provide for their appropriate development. Congregations should offer opportunities for adults to express these concerns and explore solutions together.

Expanding cyberspace and other electronic media create new challenges to the protection of children and youth. It is important that parents, society, and lawmakers continue to be extremely vigilant to protect the well-being of children and youth in this electronic world with its often-hidden dangers. The widespread electronic availability of violent and degrading pornography threatens children and youth as well as adults. It has the capacity to damage the normal sexual development in those who view it, often obsessively and in secret. How to address this problem is one of the most important child-protection issues of our time, and our church will be an active participant in this important conversation.

The sexual education of children and teens will be supported as a priority by this church. Anecdotal evidence among teens suggests that few parents or congregations meaningfully engage young people in either sex education or healthy conversations about sexuality, even though teens would welcome them.<sup>37</sup> This lack of engagement is remarkable, especially considering the associated dangers. This church will give particular attention to how children and youth are supported, nurtured, and accompanied in their sexual and relational formation.

Toward that end, this church reaffirms what it has said previously about providing comprehensive sex education within the context of Christian faith.<sup>38</sup> This education must begin early and emphasize responsibility and mutuality. Such education should focus on sustained conversation about what is good and what is harmful in ways appropriate to growing maturity levels. It should avoid simply requiring compliance with approved or rejected behaviors. Rather it should emphasize the exploration of why certain behaviors are rejected because they are damaging, why and how some pressures should be resisted, and what differentiates mature and rewarding sexual love from exploitative and demeaning forms.

Information about birth control, including the encouragement and support of sexual abstinence, is an important component of responsibility. Such education should engage all in conversation about the shared responsibility of couples to ensure the physical, emotional, and spiritual protection of each person.

It therefore follows that the ELCA reaffirms its interest in and responsibility for the care and protection of vulnerable children and youth. It understands itself as called to this mission through the vocations of its members, its own institutional practices, and its public policy positions. This work involves all adults, not only parents, since all contribute to the well-being of children and youth in untold creative ways. It understands that all children and youth, both inside and outside the church, are deserving of this church's concern.

## **V. Sexuality and trust in relationships**

### ***Sexuality and self***

Both sexuality and trust are fundamentally relational and grow out of the web of family ties and social interaction. Healthy, trusting relationships shape confident, healthy, and responsible people. We bring our failings, imperfections, and sin with us into our relationships, but part of living out the calling and freedom of the Christian in those relationships includes being the best we can be as individuals. This requires appropriate care for all aspects of a person, including the body.<sup>39</sup>

We are sexual beings from the beginning of our lives. The ancient psalmist envisioned the divine mystery of our embodied lives long before science investigated our biological and genetic complexity: "For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:13). The realities of our sexual bodies are visible in physical features and powerful in less visible characteristics.

This means much more than that we are born with male, female, or sometimes with ambiguous genitalia.<sup>40</sup> Our cells carry sex chromosomes, and our endocrine systems infuse our bodies with hormones. In ways that are still not fully understood, we develop strong gender identities at a very early age. While there is still much to be learned about the biological complexity of human beings, we have come to understand that this complexity suggests a variety of sexual orientations and gender identities.

Sexuality and gender are features of each person's very being. This is both a discovery and a gift, and a perplexity and a challenge at all life stages and in all relational situations. The medical and social sciences continue to explore how the range of human sexual identities and behaviors are understood, cared for, and regulated in various cultures and religions.

Sexual capabilities and experiences are part of life for all ages and physical abilities. One can experience the sexual in music, art, literature, and the beauty of people and nature. One can take sensual pleasure in food, touch, sound, smells, and activities. One can find expression for the self and for sexuality through the spoken word, touch, dance, music, and movement.

One does not need to be in a relationship to experience one's sexuality. Bodies do not suddenly become sexual at puberty and do not cease to be sexual when, for example, there are physical or developmental limitations, menopause, erectile dysfunction, or the absence of a sexual partner. This means that throughout our lives we need to find life-enhancing and appropriate ways of giving expression to this complicated dimension of ourselves.

We all have sexual identities that will find expression in our lives. We have sexual feelings that we are aware of and sometimes need to be negotiated when we are interacting with friends, courting a potential life partner, working closely with colleagues, or sharing our lives with another. Moreover, we must evaluate and respond constantly to the ways in which the sexuality of others is expressed. We must respond to sexual stimuli in the environment, including the varieties of human touch, which may vary from casual contact through flirtatious appreciation to invitations to intense physical intimacy. A healthy sense of sexuality is related to having a healthy body image. This church teaches that caring for the body and following practices that lead to physical and emotional wellness are part of the stewardship of created goodness.<sup>41</sup> It recognizes that a positive sense of one's own body supports a healthy sense of one's gender identity and sexuality.

Sexually mature, healthy individuals learn to be comfortable with their bodies and are able to entrust themselves to others. They call frankly upon others to respect and honor their privacy, their bodily integrity, and their wishes concerning welcome and unwelcome touch.

Sometimes, it can be very hard to develop and maintain positive attitudes about one's body. Too many people struggle for a healthy sense of body as a result of experiences of degradation or shaming by others, including family members and intimate partners. This church will support all in affirming and reclaiming a sense of healthy sexuality.

This church calls attention to the danger of embracing standards of physical attractiveness that exclude many, including the aged and people with disabilities, and which distort the understanding of what it means to be healthy. The young, whose bodies are changing and growing, may be especially vulnerable to idealized and commercialized images of a "perfect body" that play on insecurities and destructive self-loathing.

A holistic understanding of the interrelationship of body, mind, and spirit challenges such narrow understandings of beauty. It enables us better to affirm the many dimensions of beauty and to celebrate human variety and particularity. This church is committed to affirming throughout life the value, beauty, and health of the human body and human sexuality. It is mindful that physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual wellness contribute to a lower incidence of at-risk behaviors for all people, including youth.<sup>42</sup>

## ***Gender and friendships***

This church also calls attention to the immense value of friendship for people in all stages of life. Human life in relationship includes many different forms of rewarding human companionship. Friendships express our longing for human connection, touch, and growth. They allow space for self-revelation in the shelter of various degrees of mutual commitment and regard. The ELCA encourages and celebrates all situations and initiatives that engage people in relationships of friendship and trust, both inside and outside the church community. It also recognizes the importance of strong social support for friendships.

Many of our understandings of our own sexuality and sexual relationships may be formed or nurtured through conversations and confiding in friends. Friendships may help us develop a sense of our own beauty and the integrity of our bodies. As with parents or family members, we may learn from friends a sense of caring and safe touch in trusting relationships. Friendship, like family life, is a trust that can be betrayed, abused, and violated. It also must be recognized that dysfunctional friendships may be detrimental to health, development, and well-being.

This church calls people to be good, trustworthy friends who support one another in mature self-understanding and healthy companionship. Friends together have the shared power and responsibility to contradict demeaning and demoralizing messages from the media about sexuality and to overcome the effects of physical and emotional abuse. Friends also have the responsibility to respect one another's physical and emotional boundaries.

Community and workplace relationships are spheres of human life in which friendships and companionship can and do thrive. They are also places where trust and distrust mix in complicated ways.

Sometimes friendships become sexual in the narrower sense of giving rise to overtly erotic impulses and stimulation. Erotic interest between adults open to a romantic relationship can be a desired part of the growth of trust and intimacy. Erotic interest can also create conflicts and danger. These have to be faced honestly when one or both of the people involved already have made promises of fidelity to another. The conflicts and dangers have to be recognized, also, whenever one of the involved individuals does not welcome a deeper and more complicated closeness.

Reintroducing distance into such friendships or breaking them off may entail an acceptance of loss that requires courage and maturity. The violation of trusting relationships for sexual purposes is offensive and unacceptable, and, when criminal, should be punished accordingly. A particularly egregious violation of friendship is acquaintance rape.

## ***Commitment and sexuality***

Human beings remain sexual creatures for life. As a result, they must cultivate and manage relationships along a spectrum that runs from casual associations to intense intimacy. The deepening of trust and commitment is a lengthy process that requires deliberate attention and effort. Recognizing this provides a way of thinking about how people come to select life partners and about their sexual conduct in that process.

Couples, whether teenage, young adult, mature, or senior, move from a first acquaintance into a journey of increasing knowledge, appreciation, and trust in each other. This journey involves spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical dimensions of self-understanding. When these dimensions develop at similar rates, trust and entrusting are established and secured. When they are out of balance, trust may either not exist or disintegrate.

As trust and entrusting are established in a relationship, physical expression naturally becomes more intimate. That is, sexual intimacy would be expected to follow the same pattern of growth marked by the other dimensions of mutual self-understanding.

For this reason, this church teaches that degrees of physical intimacy should be carefully matched to degrees of growing affection and commitment. This also suggests a way to understand why this church teaches that the greatest sexual intimacies, such as coitus, should be matched with and sheltered both by the highest level of binding commitment and by social and legal protection, such as is found in marriage. Here, promises of fidelity and public accountability provide the foundational basis and support for trust, intimacy, and safety, especially for the most vulnerable.

This is why this church opposes non-monogamous, promiscuous, or casual sexual relationships of any kind. Indulging immediate desires for satisfaction, sexual or otherwise, is to “gratify the desires of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16–19). Such transient encounters do not allow for trust in the relationship to create the context for trust in sexual intimacy.

Such relationships undermine the dignity and integrity of individuals because physical intimacy is not accompanied by the growth of mutual self-knowledge. Absent the presence of physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual trust and commitment, such sexual relationships may easily damage the self and an individual’s future capacity to live out committed and trustworthy relationships. Fleeting relationships misuse the gift of sexual intimacy and are much more likely to be unjust, abusive, and exploitative.

Although this church strongly discourages such relationships, it nevertheless insists that every sexual relationship entails responsibility. All sexually active people have the responsibility to protect their sexual partner from both emotional and physical harm as well as to protect themselves and their partners from sexually transmitted diseases and the possibility of an unwanted pregnancy.

### ***Sexual intimacy and adult cohabitation***

Many contemporary pressures encourage adult cohabitation. When marriage is delayed for years beyond the age of physical sexual maturity, the emotional and physical pressures for intimacy may grow. Social trends in this society, such as extensive schooling, downward wage pressure, and even the desire for expensive weddings, may further encourage that delay.

While some of these trends are the result of individual choices, they also may be influenced by broader social forces: the increasing number of failed marriages, social acceptance of casual sex, and the strong cultural influence of individualism that largely ignores social responsibility and accountability. All are examples of why many may question the need for — and sometimes even the rationale for — binding relationships.

In addition, certain laws and economic realities in this society may create extreme economic hardship for some, including older adults, who desire to be legally married. This church calls for altering laws and the factors that create a significant impediment to marriage for such people.

Because this church urges couples to seek the highest social and legal support for their relationships, it does not favor cohabitation arrangements outside of marriage. It has a special concern when such arrangements are entered into as an end in themselves. It does, however, acknowledge the social forces at work that encourage such practices. This church also recognizes the pastoral and familial issues that accompany these contemporary social patterns.

In cases where a decision is made for cohabitation, regardless of the reasons, this church expects its pastors and members to be clear with the couple regarding the reasons for the position of this church and to support the couple in recognizing their obligation to be open and candid with each other about their plans, expectations, and levels of mutual commitment.

It should be noted that some cohabitation arrangements can be constructed in ways that are neither casual nor intrinsically unstable. In earlier generations, betrothal carried obligations similar to those of marriage. In certain situations, conventional or even legal obligations

accompany cohabitation arrangements. In some states, for instance, laws govern “common-law marriages.” Such arrangements may differ markedly from more transitory forms of cohabitation.

This church believes, however, that the deepest human longings for a sense of personal worth, long-term companionship, and profound security, especially given the human propensity to sin, are best served through binding commitment, legal protections, and the public accountability of marriage, especially where the couple is surrounded by the prayers of the congregational community and the promises of God.

## **VI. Sexuality and social responsibility**

### ***Sexuality and society***

Neither individuals nor families can succeed alone; they need healthy and supportive communities.<sup>43</sup> Individuals are deeply social and therefore profoundly shaped by these communities, even in their most private and intimate moments. Given this reality, we must appreciate the significant influence, both positive and negative, of social forces and social contexts on human sexual behavior.

This church must be prepared to speak out where such forces cause harm. In particular, it will oppose all forms of sexual exploitation within and outside this church. Justice for women in church and society must continue to be an important dimension of Lutheran concern and action.

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. Likewise, it will attend to the particular needs of children and the families of those with actual or perceived differences in sexual orientation or gender identity because they are especially vulnerable to verbal, physical, emotional, spiritual, psychological, and sexual abuse.

This church notes with grave concern the public commodification<sup>44</sup> of the human body as an economic asset. The sexual body is never to be used as an object for commercial purposes, and this church will speak against the public idolatry of pleasure, freedom, and wealth that undergirds such practices.

Especially deplorable are the billion-dollar global sex market and the economic systems that thrive on it, both in the United States and abroad.<sup>45</sup> The people trapped in this system are damaged and often destroyed by degradation, abuse, and, sometimes, torture. Companies that profit from this enterprise need to be identified and strongly denounced. This church supports building international agreements and national laws to prevent these practices.

The possibility of profit is not a sufficient moral basis to use human sexuality for purposes that harm individuals or undermine social trust.<sup>46</sup> The ELCA opposes the sale and purchase of pornography. It also objects to commercial and technological efforts to sell sex, including mass media and commercial marketing, since these negatively impact individuals and society in significant ways.

Christian responsibility includes naming economic forces and monitoring the ways in which they constrain or support healthy individual choices and social structures. This church will advocate against all that systematically undermines efforts to raise healthy children and to build solid marriages and trusting relationships, including the portrayal of responsible sexuality as abnormal and burdensome and promiscuous sexual activity as normal and consequence-free.

This church will respond in situations where business and corporate enterprises seek profit through disrespectful treatment of the human body. This church will work with public and private institutions<sup>47</sup> to create structures, policies, and practices of accountability to support

social norms of protection. These include codes of practice that protect society, especially children and the most vulnerable, from the misuse and abuse of sexuality for profit.

This church will work with all people to craft fair and comprehensive laws particularly aimed at protecting the weakest and most vulnerable among us, especially children, from sexual harm.

This church supports the development and use of medical products, birth control, and initiatives that support fulfilling and responsible sexuality. This church also recognizes the important role that the availability of birth control has played in allowing women and men to make responsible decisions about the bearing and rearing of children.

This church, in its concern for the neighbor, has a responsibility to be concerned about public health issues. All people who have contracted a sexually transmitted disease have an absolute responsibility to inform their sexual partners and all who are at risk.

Care must be taken in sex education materials and processes to inform about the dangers of diseases without teaching that sexual expression is intrinsically dirty and dangerous. Efforts at public education and protection from disease should be supported. This includes efforts that challenge stigma and discrimination, especially against those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. This church, including its institutions and agencies, should be an active partner in discussions about how to address and contain epidemics of such diseases.

This church supports social policies and practices that encourage the growth of healthy relationships and will question publicly those that erode social trust or undermine the structures within which trust is learned and preserved. The traditional concerns of this church for social justice and the protection of the vulnerable also will guide its teachings and practices in relation to social trust and sexuality.

### ***Sexuality and public ministry***

This church does not tolerate the abuse of the ministerial office for personal sexual gratification. This church holds high expectations for those individuals called to serve as rostered leaders. Pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who abuse the trust placed in them by engaging in promiscuity, infidelity, adultery, or forms of sexual abuse violate those high standards. Such violations severely damage the credibility of the public ministry to which this church and its leaders are called.

### ***Sexuality in the workplace***

In all workplaces, supervisors, co-workers, professionals, and clients must negotiate complex relationships. The sexual dimension of these relationships, both in the general sense and in the sometimes more specifically erotic sense, needs to be honestly recognized.

Employers and supervisors, including within this church, must pay particular attention to work relationships between colleagues, especially where there are power differentials, and where the workplace environment is rendered sexually offensive or hostile by the conduct of co-workers.

The workplace requires appropriate boundaries that are maintained through respect, good sense, best practices, and legal protections. This church remains committed to its own efforts to help make congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization safe and healthy places to live and work. The ELCA will not tolerate sexual harassment within the workplace.

## VII. Conclusion

### *Human sexuality and moral discernment*

This social statement grows out of the foundational theological understanding that Lutherans read and understand the Bible in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The “good news” of the Gospel that we are freed from bondage to sin (justification before God) allows us to respond to the Triune God’s mercy through love for and service to the neighbor (vocation in the world). The social statement further affirms that because God’s promises are trustworthy, each of us is called in Christian freedom to be trustworthy in our relationships with one another and to build social institutions and practices that create trust.

Because of the love of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we are a people set free for lives of responsibility committed to seeking the good of all. This statement responds to this church’s call for a foundational framework<sup>48</sup> that will help it discern what it means to follow faithfully God’s law of love in the increasingly complex sphere of human sexuality. It does not offer once-and-for-all answers to contemporary questions. Rather, it seeks to tap the deep roots of Scripture and the Lutheran theological tradition for specific Christian convictions, themes, and wisdom that will assist people of faith to discern what is responsible and faithful action in the midst of the complexity of daily life.

It proposes guideposts to direct this church’s discernment as it tries to be faithful. It provides markers by which individual and communal decisions can be tested under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It seeks to describe the social realities of this age and to address them pastorally. Insofar as it is possible, it also seeks to speak in ways that can address both religious and secular discussions of these matters.

### *The necessity of mercy, always*

Human lives are littered with broken promises and betrayed trust. Not everyone knows how to trust, and not everyone is trustworthy. Relationships end because trust has been broken. Given finitude and sin, many things happen that threaten trust in even the strongest relationships. Forgiveness and reconciliation, then, join with mutuality and justice to support trust and trustworthiness in relationships.

Seeking the Spirit’s guidance, we discern direction for living faithfully in terms of human sexuality. We do this not in some abstract ideal realm but amid all the complexities, conflicts, sorrows, discoveries, and joys of actual social and individual life. It is a task that this church accepts as a redeemed community. As simultaneously captive to sin and yet liberated and forgiven people of faith, we walk together both humbly and boldly toward God’s promised future.

## END NOTES

1. *Neighbor*, as used in this statement, includes various meanings. It often follows the use in Matthew 22, where Jesus clearly intends family, friends, co-workers, and local acquaintances. But it also can be enlarged to include groups and broad social networks, which are important in Scripture also (Galatians 6:10). The meaning here depends on the context.
2. *Trust*, as used in this statement, is a fundamental characteristic of right relationship. God is unfailingly trustworthy to us and all of creation. Just as we learn by faith that a right relationship with God is a relationship of trust rather than rebellious self-assertion, a right relationship with the neighbor is one in which each seeks to be truly worthy of the other’s trust. The trustworthiness that fosters and can bear the weight of the other’s trust emerges



as a central value to cherish and promote. Broken promises and betrayed trust through lies, exploitation, and manipulative behavior are exposed, not just as an individual failing, but as an attack on the foundations of our lives as social beings. Trust is misunderstood if reduced to an emotion, an abstract principle, or a virtue of one's disposition, although these all suggest its multidimensional role as an axis in human life.

In *The Responsible Self* (1963), H. Richard Niebuhr set Christian ethical reflection on a new course by treating trust as the center of Christian thinking, based on the question of trust or distrust of God as the fundamental option in human existence. In terms of human relationships, he wrote, "Faith as trust or distrust accompanies all our encounters with others and qualifies all our responses" (118). Philosophers and theorists such as Hannah Arendt (*The Human Condition*, 1958) and Michael Polanyi (*Personal Knowledge*, 1958) have advanced reflection on the centrality of promise and networks of trusting reliance in human affairs and knowledge. Some social scientists have begun to identify social trust as an indispensable feature of healthy organizations, institutions, and whole societies, and social distrust as one of the destructive forces at work in the breakdown and dissolution of organized social arrangements. Such reflections operate in the background of this statement.

3. Each "*sola*" points to the same saving event. That is, they together proclaim Jesus Christ as central to the Gospel, each perceived from a different dimension. Other dimensions of God's saving work, other "*solas*," also have been associated with Lutheranism. Especially in the nineteenth century, Lutherans began to emphasize *sola Scriptura*, although the Confessions rarely used that phrase. Luther more often spoke of the Word of God alone (*solus Verbo*), by which he meant fundamentally the oral proclamation of the Gospel. For a key source suggesting the *solas* listed here, see *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, IV. 120 in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, eds. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), hereafter referred to as "BC 2000."
4. Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian* in *Luther's Works*, 31 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), 344. This treatise also is available as part of *Three Treatises*, a printing of three key essays from 1520 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), 277.
5. Luther wrote that this book "contains the whole of Christian life in a brief form, provided you grasp its meaning." *Ibid.*, 343. See also the editor's introduction, 329.
6. This citation is taken from Martin Luther's preface to the published doctoral thesis on justification for Peter Palladius, who defended it before Wittenberg's theological faculty on June 1, 1537 (*Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [*/Schriften/*], 65 vols. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883–1993. [Hereafter identified by "WA.,"] 39 I, 205, 2–5). For the Lutheran Confessions, the article on justification is central for all church teaching. See, for instance, *The Formula of Concord*, Solid Declaration, III.6 (BC 2000:563), quoting the *Apology*, IV.2–3 (BC 2000: 120) and Luther's comments on Psalm 117 (*Luther's Works* 14:37). The connection to ethics is demonstrated in the *Augsburg Confession*, IV–VI and XX and the *Apology*, art. IV, especially par. 122–182 (BC 2000: 140–49).
7. For one example of how Martin Luther describes creatures as the hands, channels, and means through which God continually creates and blesses, see Large Catechism, Ten Commandments, par. 26 (BC 2000:389).
8. "The attempt — with the origin and nature of humankind in mind — to take a gigantic leap back into the world of the lost beginning, to seek to know for ourselves what humankind was like in its original state and to identify our own ideal of humanity with what God actually created is hopeless. It fails to recognize that it is only from the Christ that we can

know about the original nature of humankind. . . . Only in the middle, as those who live from Christ, do we know about the beginning.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1–3*, ed. John W. de Gruchy (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 62.

9. See Martin Luther, *Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed in The Christian in Society*, *Luther’s Works*, 45 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), 75–129. The term “third use” of the law, not named here, indicates the law’s role in guiding Christians as they seek to orient and conduct their lives; it receives significant attention in the *Formula of Concord*. This social statement streamlines its discussion of law by focusing solely on the “two uses” but does recognize the role of law as a guide for Christians. Since the third use is defined in the Confessions as the civil use of the law by the repentant and reborn who keep the law with a willing spirit, this practice seems warranted. See *Formula of Concord*, Epitome, VI.6 (BC 2000: 502).
10. *Smalcald Articles* III.2 (BC 2000: 311–312).
11. In Lutheran theology these structures have often been called “orders of creation” to express the point that they exist as structures that God uses to order human life. The origin of the term “orders of creation” and its original conceptualization can be traced to Christoph Adolf von Harleß (see *Christliche Ethik*, 7th ed. [Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1875], 491), who proposed this term to highlight the provisional nature of human social arrangements. It soon became linked to a static notion of creation, and the idea of “orders” began to be understood as fixed, one-time acts of God in the past.

As such, they came to indicate the establishment of human society in a hierarchy of fixed and unchanging social arrangements. On this basis, at various times some Lutheran theologians have objected to the democratic developments in modern states on the grounds of the divine right of kings, defended the legitimacy of Hitler’s regime, or rejected the ordination of women as contrary to nature. While “orders of creation” also has been theologically enriching within Lutheran tradition, the concept of social structures is used here because it is less technical and more suggestive of God’s ongoing creative activity to shape and reshape social structures for human protection and good.
12. *Augsburg Confession*, XVI (BC 2000:48–52); *Apology*, XVI (BC 2000:231–233); Small Catechism, Household Chart (BC 2000:365–367); Large Catechism, Ten Commandments (BC 2000: 400–425).
13. Small Catechism, Ten Commandments, par. 12 (BC 2000: 353).
14. “The Lutheran reformers developed a helpful approach to dealing with matters of morality and ethics. It serves both to safeguard the Gospel against the temptations for additional requirements than the grace of God, and to see within which context the issues of family, marriage and human sexuality can be addressed from a Lutheran point of view. Hence, we suggest that the doctrine of the two kingdoms can be applied as a useful tool to deal with these matters.” The Lutheran World Federation: Marriage, Family and Human Sexuality Proposed Guidelines and Processes for Respectful Dialogue, LWF Report, 6. [www.lutheranworld.org/Council/2007/20070322-Council.html](http://www.lutheranworld.org/Council/2007/20070322-Council.html) (February, 1, 2009). This report was received at the LWF Council in March 2007 and commended to LWF member churches.
15. This teaching about the two realms of God’s action often is called the “doctrine of the two kingdoms.” See *op cit. Luther’s Works*, vol. 45, especially 88–93.
16. The long-standing Lutheran emphasis on education stems, in part, from understanding it as an arena for service to the neighbor. See *Our Calling in Education* (Chicago: ELCA, 2007), 7–10.

17. This statement attempts to maintain the distinctions frequently made between “sexual/sexuality,” “sex,” and “gender.” Generally speaking “sexual/sexuality” here refers to biological facts, while “sex” refers to behavior, as in “having sex.” “Gender” is reserved, most often, to designate the social and cultural classifications and constructions of biology and behavior. These distinctions are, of course, hard to maintain with precision, but are consistent with dictionary definitions. The following selected definitions are taken from William Morris, ed., *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (Boston: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., 1969–1970.): *Sexuality*: “The quality of possessing a sexual character or potency.” *Sex*: “The sexual urge or instinct as it manifests itself in behavior;” or “Sexual intercourse.” *Gender*: “Classification of sex.”
18. One excellent source in the literature is theorist Niklas Luhmann. See *Trust and Power: Two Works by Niklas Luhmann*; trans. Howard Davis, John Raffan, Kathryn Rooney Chichester (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1979).
19. Scripture uses the words “obedience” (Romans 13) or “honor” (Exodus 20) not to refer to the slavish following of rules but to the relationship of mutual trust spoken of here in which the repentant sinner willingly responds to God’s commands. Luther captures this scriptural attitude well in his exposition of the fourth commandment in Large Catechism, Ten Commandments, especially par. 167–178 (BC 2000:409).
20. It is no accident, for example, that in economics “credit” plays a crucial role and uses a word from the same Latin root as “creed.” *Credit* literally means “he or she believes” that a person will repay a loan.
21. Small Catechism, Ten Commandments, par. 16 (BC 2000: 353).
22. The Latin version of the *Augsburg Confession* uses the word *fiducia* (trust).
23. Luther’s concluding explanation of the sixth commandment says about marriage: “. . . above all it is essential that husband and wife live together in love and harmony, cherishing each other wholeheartedly and with perfect fidelity.” Large Catechism, Ten Commandments, par. 219 (BC 200:415).
24. See ELCA Church Council minutes for 1993 and ELCA Churchwide Assembly minutes for 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1999 respectively: CC93.03.37; CA91.07.51; CA93.03.4; CA95.6.50; CA99.06.27. These actions may be found at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org).
25. “The difference between interpreters should not be understood as a conflict between those who seek to be ‘true to Scripture’ and those who seek to ‘twist the Bible’ to their own liking. The disagreements are genuine.” This is the conclusion of Dr. Arland J. Hultgren and Dr. Walter F. Taylor Jr. Both are members of the ELCA and both are highly regarded scholars and teachers. The citation is from Arland Hultgren and Walter Taylor, *Background Essay on Biblical Texts for ‘Journey Together Faithfully,’ Part Two: The Church and Homosexuality*. (Chicago: ELCA, September 2003), 18. This essay was written at the request of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality. It can be accessed at [www.elca.org/faithfuljourney/historical](http://www.elca.org/faithfuljourney/historical) (Feb.1, 2009).
26. The Apostle Paul testifies to conscience as the unconditional moral responsibility of the individual before God (Romans 2:15–16). In the face of different conclusions about what constitutes responsible action, the concept of “the conscience” becomes pivotal.

When the clear word of God’s saving action by grace through faith is at stake, Christian conscience becomes as adamant as Paul, who opposed those who insisted upon circumcision (Galatians 1:8). In the same way Luther announced at his trial for heresy, “Unless I am persuaded by the testimony of Scripture and by clear reason . . . I am conquered by the Scripture passages I have adduced and my conscience is captive to the words of God. I neither can nor desire to recant anything, when to do so against conscience would be neither

safe nor wholesome” (WA 7: 838; *Luther’s Works* 32:112). However, when the question is about morality or church practice, the Pauline and Lutheran witness is less adamant and believes we may be called to respect the bound conscience of the neighbor. That is, if salvation is not at stake in a particular question, Christians are free to give priority to the neighbor’s well-being and will protect the conscience of the neighbor, who may well view the same question in such a way as to affect faith itself. For example, Paul was confident that Christian freedom meant the Gospel of Jesus Christ was not at stake in questions of meat sacrificed to idols or the rituals of holy days (Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8:10–14 and 10:23–30). Yet he insisted that, if a brother or sister did not understand this freedom and saw eating this meat as idolatry to a pagan god, the Christian was obligated to “walk in love” by eating just vegetables for the neighbor’s sake (Romans 14:17–20)!

This social statement draws upon this rich understanding of the role of conscience and calls upon this church, when in disagreement concerning matters around which salvation is not at stake, including human sexuality, to bear one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2), honor the conscience, and seek the well-being of the neighbor.

27. This is evident in Luther’s commentary on parental responsibilities. See Small Catechism, Preface, par. 19–20 (BC 2000:350), and Large Catechism, Ten Commandments, par. 167–78 (BC 2000:409–410).
28. See, for instance, Luther’s reference to the fourth commandment while discussing the sixth: Large Catechism, Ten Commandments, par. 167–178 (BC 2000:413ff.); see also par. 206 and 218.
29. These include laws governing marriage, dissolution of marriage, inheritance, guardianship, custody, parental rights and duties, property, pensions, social security, taxes, and health benefits. The interdependence and mutual responsibilities of married couples are crucial in welding them into a legal unit as well as a loving household. Parents and guardians are legally compelled to attend to the welfare, support, protection, and education of their children and youth.
30. Such trends include remarkably large numbers of physically or psychologically absent fathers and teenagers with parenting responsibilities for which they are not prepared. They include the reluctance of some men and women to commit themselves to marriage. Stresses on marriages and individuals in marriages contribute to high rates of divorce with accompanying concerns for children and other extended family members.
31. Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions assume and encourage households, similar in some ways to this model, but historically and currently there are wide variations that include many other family members, widowed heads of households, laborers, and the like.
32. This point and the supporting data may be found in various sources. One source is the attempt by Don S. Browning to summarize and employ that data for a consecutive proposal in *Equality and the Family: A Fundamental, Practical Theology of Children, Mothers, and Fathers in Modern Societies* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005). See especially the citations in chapters four and seven.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Sexual orientation* is generally used to refer to an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction. *Gender identity* indicates a person’s own sense of identification with a gender (male or female) regardless of physiological characteristics. See also footnote 17.
35. “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (Chicago: ELCA, 2001), 3.
36. *Ibid.*, 1.

37. Reports were quite consistent on these points both anecdotally and in informal polls among youth and youth leaders attending workshops in 2007 and 2008 for *Free in Christ to Care for the Neighbor: Lutheran Youth Talk about Human Sexuality* (Chicago: ELCA, 2007).
38. The ELCA social statement on *Abortion* (Chicago: ELCA, 1991), 4–5.
39. See Luther’s brief but pointed comments regarding how care for one’s body should be understood as a Christian work in *The Freedom of a Christian in Career of the Reformer: Vol. I, Luther’s Works* 31 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1957), 365.
40. Some experts estimate that as many as 1 in every 1,500 babies is born with a disorder of sex development (DSDs). See [www.apa.org/topics/intersx.html](http://www.apa.org/topics/intersx.html) (February, 1, 2009). The phrase used here, “ambiguous genitalia,” is one form of DSD and indicates a birth defect in which the outer genitals do not have the typical appearance of either a boy or a girl. See [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003269.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003269.htm) (February, 1, 2009).
41. *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (Chicago: ELCA, 2003).
42. A variety of research supports this claim in relation to sexual activity. See, for instance, Peter C. Scales, et al., *Developmental Assets: A Synthesis of the Scientific Research on Adolescent Development* (Minneapolis: Search Institute Publications, 2004).
43. Statistically, the healthier that family and community institutions are, the higher the number of developmental assets found among its members, especially youth. Strong community institutions have a significant impact on lowering the incidence of at-risk behaviors among young people, including intimate sexual activity at young ages. The relative health of a community’s institutions, such as schools, churches, and civic organizations, matters significantly. *op. cit.* Benson.
44. Public commodification can be understood as the transformation of any created blessing of God into a commodity to be bought and sold.
45. This multi-billion dollar system often is perpetuated by slave-like conditions and outright slavery.
46. “While a market economy emphasizes what individuals want and are willing and able to buy, as people of faith we realize that what human beings want is not necessarily what they need for the sake of life.” *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (Chicago: ELCA, 1999), 3f.
47. This includes many varieties of social, economic, and business institutions.
48. The development of this social statement was mandated by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly. Reference can be found in the 2001 Churchwide Assembly minutes, CA01.06.36 and CA01.06.45.

## **Consideration: Implementing Resolutions to Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, page 39.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Secretary David D. Swartling to present the motion for the implementing resolutions for the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*.

Secretary Swartling asked consent to dispense with the reading of the resolutions.

There being no objection, the chair ruled that the reading could be dispensed with.

Secretary Swartling moved adoption of the implementing resolution.

### **MOVED:**

1. To embrace as a church our legacy of a rich theological tradition that proclaims God’s gracious love expressed in Jesus Christ as the basis of our salvation, hope, and unity, and to call upon members of this church

- on this basis to commit themselves to finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements;
2. To call upon this church to affirm the various studies created for the “Journey Together Faithfully” series as resources for ongoing deliberation and discernment, and to direct the program unit for Church in Society to maintain their availability as long as demand continues;
  3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to explore the feasibility of developing liturgical resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce;
  4. To encourage Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, to consider developing education curricula with particular attention to the needs of children, middle school, high school youth, and their parents for understanding Christian values and making responsible choices;
  5. To recognize that organizations like Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, Lutheran Youth Organization, and campus ministries foster and support friendships; to encourage them to lift up and celebrate the value of strong friendships and to support the formation of voluntary associations for nurturing them;
  6. To call upon all congregations, pastors, and other rostered leaders to reach out in welcome to all in accord with previous Churchwide Assembly actions as reaffirmed by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly [CA05.05.18], and to assist members to understand what it means to be hospitable to all in the name of Christ regardless of sexual orientation;
  7. To call upon the ELCA to amend the eligibility provisions of the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program, consistent with the policies of this church;
  8. To call upon this church to encourage the availability and funding of comprehensive sex education programs in public schools, as well as in Lutheran private schools;
  9. To affirm the 2001 ELCA Message “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” and its continuing value for the mission and ministry of the ELCA;
  10. To call upon this church’s advocacy and corporate social responsibility ministries to support and advocate measures consistent with this social statement;
  11. To express appreciation for the work being done by the churchwide organization, synods, institutions, and congregations to prevent sexual harassment and misconduct; to encourage strengthening these efforts by all expressions and ministries of this church; and to ensure the availability of effective resources for dealing with sexual misconduct and sexual harassment within this church;
  12. To call upon teaching theologians, bishops, pastors, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, educators, and others to continue to extend theological and biblical reflection as well as theoretical and practical understanding of human sexuality through intellectual discourse, moral deliberation, continued research, discussion, and writing;
  13. To recognize that the ELCA has adopted a strategy that will guide its response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and to call upon all units and expressions of this church to support that strategy;

14. To call upon all congregations, synods, early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry organizations, public policy advocacy ministries, and all churchwide units to carry out the substance and spirit of this statement; and
15. To call upon Church in Society and other appropriate churchwide units to oversee a process of implementation and accountability for this social statement and to report on implementation to the Church Council in early 2012.

The chair announced that the motion was now before the house.

An unidentified voting member asked if the chair could ask the assembly whether anyone had had a problem with their voting devices during the vote on the social statement.

Presiding Bishop Hanson ruled that, since time had elapsed and no notice had been given by members that they had had a problem, and, because he had not been making a practice of questioning the assembly about voting device problems after votes but rather on previous votes had responded to voting members' complaints if their devices had not worked properly, he would not put the question to the assembly.

The chair called on the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee, to present the committee's recommendations on proposed amendments to the implementing resolutions.

Mr. John T. Gates Jr. [Florida-Bahamas Synod] offered a motion to reconsider the vote.

Presiding Bishop Hanson explained that the motion to reconsider would only be in order if Mr. Gates had voted on the prevailing side. Mr. Gates stated that he had not voted in favor of the social statement, so the chair ruled the motion out of order.

Ms. Faith A. Ashton [North Carolina Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**                   The previous question.

The chair conferred with the parliamentarian and ruled that the motion was in order because Ms. Ashton had made her motion immediately following the secretary's moving of the resolutions.

The Rev. William R. White [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] expressed confusion that debate could be closed before anyone had said anything.

The chair ruled once again that the motion to call the previous question was in order.

The Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod] called for a division of the house on the social statement vote.

Mr. Carroll S. Shaddock [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] rose to a point of order to inquire whether the vote on the implementing resolutions was in order because he contended that it had been scheduled for Friday in the "Order of Business."

Presiding Bishop Hanson explained that Mr. Shaddock was confusing the implementing resolutions for the social statement with the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

The Rev. Michael J. Toomey [Eastern North Dakota Synod] rose to a point of order, stating his understanding that a rule had been passed that required at least three speakers on each side of a question be allowed to speak before closing debate.

The chair responded that such a rule had been considered but had been defeated.

An unidentified voting member rose to a point of order, arguing that electronic voting was in fact a division of the house.

The Rev. Gladys G. Moore [New England Synod] pointed out that the “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” Part One, precluded a division of the house when using electronic voting machines.

Presiding Bishop Hanson ruled Pr. Hahn’s motion out of order. He then called for a vote on Ms. Ashton’s motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-535; NO-428**

**DEFEATED:** The previous question.

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the consideration of the implementing resolutions would continue at a later time, as the orders of the day called for a quasi committee of the whole the next day to discuss the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, and the assembly needed to act on whether it wanted to approve such a quasi committee of the whole.

### **Introduction: Recommendation on Ministry Policies**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 41–42; Section V, pages 85–93, 95–97, 99–101, 103–122.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that the Recommendation on Ministry Policies that grew out of the second document prepared by the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality, the “Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies,” which had been requested by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, would be the next item to come before the house for deliberation. The presiding bishop stressed the distinction between the report from the committee, which appeared in Section V of the *Pre-Assembly Report*, and the action proposed by the Church Council, which appeared in Section IV. He advised that the conversation about this recommendation would take place over the next few days of the assembly.

He called on the Rev. Peter Strommen, chair of the task force since 2005, to introduce the recommended action.

Pr. Strommen reported that in four of the past five Churchwide Assemblies, considerable time had been given to discussion and debate on whether this church should recognize same-gender committed relationships in some way and whether provision should be made for rostering those in such relationships who are otherwise qualified for ministry. The 2001 Churchwide Assembly had directed a study to be presented to the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, which had considered ministry policies; and, in 2007, the question had come up once again, with the assembly directing the task force to make a Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Pr. Strommen noted that the task force had been particularly aware of the depth of differences on this matter, and the reality that there was little likelihood of achieving consensus in the foreseeable future. Regardless of differences within the membership of this church, the unity of this church mattered greatly to each person. The same differences had been present among the members of the task force, and minority voices were represented in the report by addenda with two dissenting opinions.

He explained that, given the important questions involved in a decision of this magnitude, the task force had decided that it would be helpful for this church to be able to address questions of principle before looking at any particular recommendation for change. Thus, the task force first invited this assembly into a process of discernment as to whether this church wants to move in the direction of change, and if so, under what conditions. The task force then offered its best wisdom as to how such change could come about. The resolutions before the assembly reflected this approach by the task force, he noted.



Pr. Strommen went on to explain that the task force had decided upon four questions, three general and one specific. 1) Do the voting members of this assembly wish for the ELCA to find ways to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships? To the task force, this seemed a critical prior question to that of rostered leadership. 2) Do the voting members wish for the ELCA to find a way for people in such relationships to serve as rostered leaders? This was the critical question behind the 2007 assembly's direction to the task force, Pr. Strommen stated. 3) If the assembly wishes to do both these things, how does this church choose to approach its significant differences on this matter? Is it willing to bear one another's burdens and respect bound consciences of all? 4) Does this church support the approach to rostering described in Resolution Four?

Of critical importance to the task force's deliberation, Pr. Strommen reported, was the notion of "bound conscience" understood as the Rev. Timothy J. Wengert had described it: "Concern for the bound conscience is not simply a matter of toleration for different points of view, but more profoundly realizing that the neighbor's conscience is bound to a totally different, perhaps even incorrect, understanding of the matter, and that to uproot that understanding would shake the neighbor's faith and trust in God's mercy and forgiveness."

Pr. Strommen said the task force had sought a response that would require this church to move beyond the "winner take all" attitude that can prevail in such heated discussions. This was reflected in the fourth and final resolution being put before the assembly. That resolution, he pointed out, would not change existing procedures for issuing calls or discerning candidates. To help voting members understand the thinking behind the proposed action, he described the lengthy candidacy process in the ELCA, including the chief milestones. Embedded in the candidacy and approval process, he pointed out, is contextual sensitivity. Candidates for rostered ministry are, finally, called by those most invested in their ministry, none more than the congregations themselves.

Pr. Strommen reminded members that effective ministry requires broad support from the calling community, whatever that may be. The resolutions, if passed, would allow for those individuals in same-gender, committed, monogamous relationships to be considered as candidates by congregations that would support them. However, as is already true in the ELCA, no congregation or other calling body would be forced to call a person against its will. This church would agree explicitly to honor "bound conscience" on this matter.

Any change to the documents "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" to remove the absolute prohibition on same-gender relationships for rostered people, he stated, will require the development of churchwide processes and guidelines to make this church's expectations clear and also to protect those whose consciences are bound in opposition. The ultimate decisions on calling would remain in the congregations, with those closest to the ministry.

Jesus promised to be with us always and to send the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, Pr. Strommen said. "This is not a guarantee of being right in all matters seriously considered. But it is a promise that, if wrong, we will be corrected and, if right, encouraged, and if it is somewhere in between, that God is not done with us yet."

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Pr. Strommen and turned the attention of the assembly to a resolution pertaining to a proposed quasi committee of the whole scheduled for Thursday morning that would give members opportunity to discuss the recommendation.

Secretary David D. Swartling offered the following motion pertaining to the consideration of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

**MOVED:**

To go into a quasi committee of the whole beginning at 8:00 A.M. on Thursday, August 20, to discuss the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies and responses proposed by the Memorials Committee to synodical memorials related to the recommendation. The discussion will begin with 90 minutes in small groups, which will take place at assigned tables in Ballroom A/B (the dining hall), followed by discussion of the whole assembly in the plenary hall until 10:40 A.M. To facilitate discussion during the time in the plenary hall, the rules regarding speaking on the floor in Part Three of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” will apply; people who are undecided or who want to ask questions may so indicate with a white card. In addition, during the quasi committee of the whole, no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.

No speaker came to the microphones to debate the motion.

The Rev. Martha Ramey [North Carolina Synod] rose to a point of information to ask the chair to identify where in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report* the dissenting opinions of the task force that Pr. Strommen had referred to could be found.

The chair said he would announce that information when he received it from staff.

The Rev. Jeffrey J. Blain [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] asked about the process for the quasi committee of the whole, particularly as it pertained to speaking at the microphones.

The presiding bishop explained that the next day’s discussion would include two steps: there would first be informal conversation at tables, followed by a general discussion in the plenary hall.

Pr. Blain remarked that some members tended to go very quickly to the microphones with prepared speeches, leaving those with questions unable to ask them.

The chair reminded the assembly that there was a motion on the floor. There being no debate, he called for the vote.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-870; NO-92**

**CA09.03.14**

**To go into a quasi committee of the whole beginning at 8:00 A.M. on Thursday, August 20, to discuss the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies and responses proposed by the Memorials Committee to synodical memorials related to the recommendation. The discussion will begin with 90 minutes in small groups, which will take place at assigned tables in Ballroom A/B (the dining hall), followed by discussion of the whole assembly in the plenary hall until 10:40 A.M. To facilitate discussion during the time in the plenary hall, the rules regarding speaking on the floor in Part Three of the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” will apply; people who are undecided or who want to ask questions may so indicate with a white card. In addition, during the quasi committee of the whole, no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the motion had passed.

The chair recommended, in response to Pr. Blain's complaint, that members could write down their questions, bring them to the small-group portion of the quasi committee of the whole, and give them to the resource members for response.

Following up on Pr. Ramey's question, the presiding bishop informed the assembly that the dissenting options to the report of the Task Force for ELCA Sexuality Studies were in Section V, pages 120–122 of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*.

The Rev. Martin D. Wells, bishop of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, inquired when it would be known whether there would be an evening session on Thursday.

Presiding Bishop Hanson responded that at the moment it looked less likely, although a more definitive answer would have to wait until Thursday morning.

The Rev. Cindy F. Breed [Southeastern Iowa Synod] asked whether the main hall would be open in the morning before the small group sessions.

The chair responded that the hall would not be open before 9:00 A.M.

The Rev. Corinne R. Johnson [Northern Great Lakes Synod] reported that she had some trouble with her voting device on a vote following the vote on the social statement and was told that the technicians could not respond to her inquiry about whether her vote had registered. She asked about the integrity of the voting system.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that he would solicit a technical response to Pr. Johnson's question but that he believed the devices had functioned very well for the assembly. He informed the assembly that he would collect responses to the various questions that had been raised and would share the answers with the voting members.

## Announcements

Secretary David D. Swartling made a number of announcements. These included reminders about the evening activities and the next morning's schedule. He also explained that the 10:40 A.M. time specified in the action authorizing the quasi committee of the whole was designed to allow members time to consider the first common ballot, which would be distributed on Thursday. He encouraged voting members to spend time in the evening to review the résumés of nominees as printed in Section VII of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*.

He reminded the assembly of the 11:15 A.M. deadline on Thursday, August 20, for submission of non-germane resolutions. He also reminded those persons who had been nominated for vice president and wished to withdraw their names from consideration to register that withdrawal before 11:15 A.M., Thursday, August 20, with the secretary's deputy, the Rev. Ruth E. Hamilton. Anyone who did not withdraw before that deadline would appear on the second ballot.

The secretary explained that worship on Thursday would include foot-washing and gave instructions for this process.

In response to persons who had reported that they did not have copies of the dissenting opinions to the task force report, Presiding Bishop Hanson responded that additional copies would be made available.

The Rev. Mark W. Jeske [Lower Susquehanna Synod] inquired about the suggested offering for Central Lutheran Church.

The chair responded that he did not yet have a response to that question but would have one in the morning.

## **Recess**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Ms. Lynette M. Reitz, member of the Church Council from Muncy, Pa., to lead the assembly in singing “We are Baptized in Christ Jesus,” after which she led the assembly in a closing prayer.

The fifth plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 6:43 P.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Six

Thursday, August 20, 2009

8:00 A.M.–11:15 A.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), called Plenary Session Six of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 8:00 A.M. CDT on Thursday, August 20, 2009, in Ballrooms A and B of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

## Quasi Committee of the Whole: Recommendation on Ministry Policies

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 41–42; Section V, pages 85–93, 95–97, 99–101, 103–122.*

As called for by the motion approved by the assembly the previous day, the Churchwide Assembly constituted itself as a quasi committee of the whole in order to discuss the Recommendation on Ministry Policies that had been transmitted by the Church Council. During the first portion of the session, the discussion was carried out in small groups. No minutes were kept of those discussions.

The small-group discussion continued until 9:30 A.M., at which time a 15-minute recess was allowed for voting members to return to Hall E for the resumption of the quasi committee of the whole. As voting members reconvened in the plenary hall, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson lit a candle and rang a bell, and he then asked the assembly to stand and sing “O Holy Spirit, Enter In.” He called on the Rev. Allan C. Bjornberg, bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops, to lead the assembly in prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson reminded the assembly that it was still meeting as a quasi committee of the whole and would continue to follow the rules for discussion: no applause or other demonstration of agreement or disagreement; a two-minute limit on each speaker; and alternating speakers in favor and against. He invited voting members to come to a green microphone to speak in favor, to a red microphone to speak against, and to bring a white card if not sure or for a general comment.

The chair noted that several resource persons were on the stage to respond to written questions submitted earlier. They included the Rev. Peter Strommen, chair of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality; the Rev. David L. Tiede and the Rev. Timothy J. Wengert, members of the task force; the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit; the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit; and the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit.

The Rev. Joel A. Benson [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] rose to a point of order to request that Presiding Bishop Hanson remind the assembly that cheering and applause after speeches and actions were not appropriate. He commented that some people had found the applause and cheers coming from voting members and the visitors’ area during the previous plenary to be hurtful.

The chair agreed to provide the reminder, and he apologized for not calling out of order those who had demonstrated their approval vocally.

Rising to a point of order, the Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod] said that he had wanted to make the same point as Pr. Benson, adding that he found such action to be an

inauspicious beginning for the implementation of a social statement that was premised on a call to respect the bound consciences of one another.

Ms. Kirsten M. Nelson Roenfeldt [Rocky Mountain Synod] urged the assembly to approve the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, acknowledging that the issue was a contentious one. She emphasized that the world was watching and that the assembly had an opportunity to be a powerful witness to Jesus. She stated that this church had lost heterosexual people who had experienced it as moralistic and judgmental, and she asserted that approving this recommendation would proclaim that the Gospel commits this church to uncompromising inclusivity. She added that the written Word of God proclaims a Gospel that frees and a Law that confronts this church to sacrifice its comfort for the inclusivity of the Gospel. She commented that this church must be bold and embrace this opportunity for evangelism.

Mr. Diakonda L. Gurning [Northwest Washington Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege, asking the assembly to remember this church's ethnic-specific ministries regardless of the vote's outcome.

The chair informed him that he needed to register to speak in sequence, then cautioned the assembly about the use of white cards, warning that their misuse was costing the assembly time. He stated the cards had been used too frequently in the previous plenary and informed voting members that many of the questions they were posing could be answered by their bishops or by staff.

The Rev. Ryan D. Mills [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] indicated that he lives and serves within the boundaries of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, and felt that he had "seen this movie before." Referring to the fallout in the Anglican Communion following certain decisions of The Episcopal Church, he said that the ELCA could not take this decision lightly. He argued that this is a church of the Word, that Christians are always called to repent, and that while pastoral practice needs latitude, the truth can never be compromised. He urged defeat of the recommendation.

The Rev. Paul A. Tidemann [Saint Paul Area Synod] observed that he heard the voices of those who had felt hurt by the previous day's actions and that he would offer prayer for them and all this church. He read from John 10, where Jesus declares himself to be the good shepherd who has sheep in other folds that he will bring in. He told of his twin brothers, both of whom were gay, one of whom drank himself to death at age 31 because he thought God hated him because of his sexual orientation. In supporting the resolution to roster partnered gay and lesbian persons, he said, this church may lift up a sign for people like his brother, who will see that there are people like them who can proclaim the Gospel and give life for all people.

Mr. John M. Prabhakar [Northern Illinois Synod] stated that he wanted to applaud the ELCA for openly addressing this issue and discussing it in an orderly manner. He indicated that he had received much correspondence while he was a member of the task force, and he had participated in independent study and research but came to a different conclusion from the majority of the task force and from 66.67 percent of this assembly. He indicated he found no compelling theological, biblical, or historical reasons to roster people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. The arguments he heard so far seemed to be emotional and personal. He said that he was not speaking because of personal reasons and that the issue was not inclusiveness, because there were more gay and lesbian people in the ELCA than people of color. He urged the assembly in its deliberations to consider the partner churches around the world who believed as he did.

The Rev. Jay M. McDivitt [Rocky Mountain Synod] urged support of the ministry policy resolutions, saying he had spoken to the Churchwide Assembly in Denver in 1999 on behalf of the youth convocation and the board of the Lutheran Youth Organization, encouraging change

of what he characterized as a discriminatory policy. When that plea for change failed, the youth held each other and wept, he reported. He also had participated in the silent protest in the plenary hall of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, and those protesters had held one another and prayed and wept. He said that he was aware that, if this assembly passed the recommendation, many will be devastated, will hold each other and weep, and will continue to wrestle with the question, "Should I stay or should I go?" He encouraged everyone to stay because this church needs them, and they need this church.

The Rev. Terri K. Stagner-Collier [Southeastern Synod] commented that she was aware that many compare the ordination of "practicing homosexuals" to the ordination of women or divorced people. She said, as a divorced woman pastor, that these were not comparable issues. Regarding women pastors, she noted that there are many passages in Scripture that speak positively of the role of women speaking God's Word, while on the question of homosexuality, she asserted, there are no such positive passages to outweigh the scriptural passages that speak against it. She further stated that, while she had been forgiven of the sin of divorce, she has never tried to define her divorce as "God's good intention." She agreed that passages against homosexuality can be interpreted in a way to make them irrelevant to mutual, loving, adult, same-gender relationships, but that the consistent message of Scripture is that God created male and female to be complementary partners in the gift of marriage.

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the assembly would hear two more speakers before he called on the resource persons to respond to the questions that had been submitted.

The Rev. Craig E. Johnson, bishop of the Minneapolis Area Synod, observed that his synod had become a welcoming, "Reconciling in Christ" synod in the 1990s and that the Synod Assembly has voted for change on these issues since 2003. What compelled him most, however, to support change was Scripture, in particular Jesus' life, actions, and parables. He cited examples from Scripture in which rejected, hated, marginalized, and defiled people were accepted, saved, and used to spread the Gospel. He stated that this church had built a wall among the baptized and asked the assembly to begin to break it down.

Mr. Roy L. Gibbs [Northwestern Ohio Synod] said it was obvious at his small-group discussion that there is a "Spirit problem" in this church. He asked, "If this [recommendation] is the work of the Holy Spirit, why is the Spirit speaking so distinctly to us, but not to the Methodists, not to the Presbyterians, not to the churches of Eastern Orthodoxy, not to the church of Rome? Does the Spirit speak differently to different communities?" He contended that the ecumenical movement has taught that the Spirit speaks uniformly and with clarity, yet some argued that this church is being called to do what only a small minority has done. He questioned whether the other churches were deaf to the Spirit. Was the ELCA the only church to which the Spirit was saying these things? "Or," he asked, "have other denominations that have rejected similar overtures from the gay community rejected the Holy Spirit?"

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Timothy J. Wengert of the resource panel to respond to questions that earlier had been submitted in writing.

Pr. Wengert explained that he would read the first questions, and then two resource members would answer: "What are the implications for pastors and congregations who have a bound conscience? What can they choose to do or not to do? Will they be required to perform blessings? Or, in some circumstances will they not be able to call someone they wish to call? How will this impact their 'standing' in this church?"

Pr. Wengert went on to say that, first, leaders of this church are called upon to recognize the bound consciences of such people; second, that those people must be clear in their hearts and words as to what they are bound to; and third, that they are free to follow their consciences as

to their understanding of Scripture and tradition. This means, he said, that they will have freedom to do the very things their conscience requires them to do.

Pr. Olson noted that, if the resolutions were adopted, the many policies that will be developed will have to respect the bound consciences of the other. No one will be required to act against conscience, but policies will have to be written to allow candidacy committees to do what they are charged to do: “to discern whether a person has the capacity to serve the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” He further stated that there are legal and churchly aspects involved. For example, in regard to marriage, the laws of the state must be respected. Congregations will continue to choose whom they will and will not call. Any person approved for the rosters of this church, he said, may be called by any congregation, and the standing of any individual or congregation will not be affected by the decision made in light of bound conscience.

The Rev. Earl L. Janssen Jr. [Delaware-Maryland Synod] recounted an incident from his internship in which two members of the same congregation, the one a German national who held her sister in her arms as she died in the carpet bombing in World War II, the other a man who felt guilty for his role as a bombardier that may have killed innocent civilians. Pr. Janssen said that when he asked the woman if it bothered her that this man was in the same congregation, she replied, “In Christ, he is a brother. Who am I to hold anything against him?” He told this story to illustrate that this is a church in which there are already many differences, but people have found ways to live with them.

The Rev. Janice A. Campbell [Southwestern Texas Synod] stated that the debate was not about judging others, which she defined as condemning someone to hell and claiming he or she is not worthy of God’s love. She argued that the Church does not have the right to do this, but, as mothers and teachers who love their children discipline them and give them grades out of love and concern for them, so does the Church have the obligation to criticize dangerous sexual behavior so that life may be preserved. This, she concluded, is the loving thing to do, and to do anything less would be tragic.

Ms. Allison A. Guttu [Metropolitan New York Synod] urged the assembly to vote for the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. Addressing those who argued that the ELCA was headed toward a schism with other Lutherans similar to that experienced by The Episcopal Church and the worldwide Anglican Communion, she argued that, unlike the Anglican Communion, the Lutheran church has a communion defined solely by the proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of the Sacraments. For 500 years, she said, Word and Sacrament have been enough to hold together slave-holding and slave-freeing Lutherans, women-ordaining and ordained-women-forbidding Lutherans, European and Asian Lutherans, high-church and low-church Lutherans, and Scandinavian Lutherans and German Lutherans. She maintained that, because Word and Sacrament keep Lutherans united, by voting to respect each other’s consciences, the assembly was not threatening Lutheran unity, but rather affirming the source of it.

Mr. James H. Borowick [Minneapolis Area Synod], speaking in opposition, read a letter from the Rev. Challa Baro of the Oromo congregation in Minneapolis, Minn., who wrote that when missionaries came to teach the Gospel of Jesus 100 years ago, they told the forefathers and mothers that the entire Bible was the inspired Word of God. “Today,” the letter-writer continued, “these missionaries’ descendants are telling us that the Bible is not to be read faithfully but rather must be interpreted according to the needs of a changing society.” Does this mean that the church has a new revelation from God, the writer queried, or that Christians are to accept that God has not been perfect, or that God has gained new insight into the world and of human nature? And how is a traditionally White church, the ELCA, to bring its witness to



people of color? The letter concluded by saying that the congregation had been praying all week for the assembly and for the recommendation to fail.

Presiding Bishop Hanson noted that he would next call on someone at the resource microphone, reminding the assembly that people with voice in the assembly are permitted to speak using the resource microphone but must wait for their turn in the queue just as everyone else did. He asked the speaker to identify himself and his role in the assembly.

The Rev. David L. Balch identified himself as a New Testament professor at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. He said he had two comments, one on interpretation of Scripture and the other on Romans 1. He related that he was a product of Lutheran mission, as he was not born a Lutheran but chose to become one. He was influenced in his decision when he learned that Lutherans taught that neither Paul nor Luther had a fundamentalist interpretation of Scripture and that the Gospel and Scripture can sometimes be in tension. He illustrated his point by highlighting contradictory statements about women in the New Testament. Yet, he pointed out, Lutherans moved in 1970 to ordain women. He concluded by saying he did not have time to talk about Romans 1, other than to remind the assembly that there was ongoing debate about the interpretation of that chapter, and he urged the assembly to pass the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

The Rev. Michael J. Toomey [Eastern North Dakota Synod] said he understood, as he listened in the assembly, that the vision of this church is twofold: first, to be an evangelical people, turning this church from being what he characterized as “a dying behemoth” into an evangelical movement, and, second, to spread the Gospel to the poorest of the poor by going to those with malaria and HIV and AIDS and giving them the healing power of Jesus Christ by providing for health care and other needs. He claimed that the ministry policies resolutions take away from the sharp focus and momentum needed to lead this church in those directions and, therefore, he strongly urged their defeat.

The Rev. Mark B. Lepper [Minneapolis Area Synod] used an illustration from an animated movie, “Lilo and Stitch,” to make his point that the ELCA is family and that family means no one gets left behind, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered brothers and sisters. He said that this church needs to keep and love all of its members, because it is incomplete without them and the unique gifts God has given to each person to build up the body of Christ.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Jeffrey B. Sorenson, member of the Church Council from Garretson, S.D., to pray. Pr. Sorenson explained that his prayer was an adaptation of Psalm 25.

Following the prayer, the chair called on the Rev. Peter Strommen to respond to another question: “What are the messages the ELCA has received from other U.S. churches and Lutheran World Federation (LWF) partners regarding the proposed ministry policies?”

Pr. Strommen called on the Rev. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to respond.

Pr. McCoid reminded the assembly that he had already reported the previous day on the positions of some full-communion partner churches and those with whom this church is in dialogue. He stated that the United Church of Christ has a long-standing policy of ordaining gay and lesbian persons in partnered relationships. The Episcopal Church moved in that direction at its convention in July. The Reformed Church in America, the Moravian Church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and The United Methodist Church do not admit as clergy those persons in same-gender relationships, nor do the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches.

The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit, stated that the ELCA had received written communication from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hong

Kong, representing the views of Lutherans in Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, urging this church not to approve the Recommendation on Ministry Policy. The previous day, a letter from the East of Lake Victoria Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, opposing the action, had been mentioned in the assembly. Late on the previous evening, he added, a letter had been received from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, asking the ELCA to take any such actions only within the context of the study process of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Pr. Malpica indicated that communications had been received from the Silesian Evangelical Church in the Czech Republic and from the churches in the Baltics, cautioning this church against positive action on the change in ministry policies.

The Rev. Barbara R. Rossing, professor of New Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and a member of the LWF Council and Executive Committee, recalled for the assembly that the LWF is in the midst of a five-year process called, “Marriage, Family, and Sexuality: A Process for Respectful Disagreement,” with the goal of learning how to talk about these issues. She said it was important to note also that the LWF churches are not of one mind, and some of the largest member churches, such as the Swedish church, the Norwegian church, and most of the churches in Germany, had already taken steps similar to the ones the ELCA is considering. She observed that this church already does not follow the model of other LWF churches on matters related to sexuality, noting that some member churches would excommunicate divorced and remarried persons, would not permit pastors to be divorced and remarried, would withhold communion from women during certain times of the month, and would not permit women to be ordained.

Viewing the length of the lines of speakers at the microphones, Presiding Bishop Hanson voiced his intention, once the assembly was back in plenary, to ask consent to go back into a quasi committee of the whole for another 15 minutes.

Mr. Gary A. Diers [Minneapolis Area Synod] observed that he had heard continually that the change in rostering proposals should not be church-dividing because unity is in Christ Jesus or because the change was small and really about love and justice. He began to relate a story about how even a good thing can be spoiled by a small amount of pollution.

The chair requested once again that the assembly and visitors refrain from responding to any speakers.

Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez [Rocky Mountain Synod] urged the assembly to vote for the resolutions. He referred to his experience in a Bible study in which he was confronted with the question of how he would see Christ in the face of a gay man. He recognized that his immediate response to that question could not be correct. The study of Scripture led him on a journey that opened his eyes to see that Christ, Creator and Savior, does not call anything he created unclean, as Peter learned in his dream. This revelation helped Mr. Hernandez understand that he could not call anyone unclean, nor did he believe any longer that he could choose who could preach the Gospel and who could not.

Ms. Mary E. Howe [Northern Illinois Synod] asked the assembly to vote against the recommendation. She asked how the ELCA could compromise 2,000 years of Christianity through only a few years of study. She asked who would be available to comfort those in this church offended by such a decision. She asked also why the ELCA was so eager to use bound conscience for guidance “without counting the costs.” She argued that the Church was not in the business of creating or interpreting traditions contrary to the Gospel. She pointed out that God gave humans guidelines to live by, including the Ten Commandments. She pointed to St. Paul, who wrote, “Am I seeking human approval or God’s approval?”

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that time for the quasi committee of the whole was at an end; the assembly was back in plenary. He asked the assembly's consent to extend the quasi committee of the whole for 15 minutes and to extend the closing time for the plenary to 11:15 A.M. Because there was some objection, a vote was taken to return to quasi committee of the whole and to extend the session.

**MOVED:**

**YES-727; NO-221**

**CARRIED:**

**To sustain the chair's request to go back into the quasi committee of the whole for 15 minutes and to extend the plenary by 15 minutes.**

The chair's request was approved. The presiding bishop declared that the assembly was back in a quasi committee of the whole for an additional 15 minutes.

The Rev. Jan A. Ruud [Southwestern Washington Synod] commented that what inspired him about the Recommendation on Ministry Policies was the impact he believed it would have on the mission of this church. He listed a number of ministries in his congregation that gay and lesbian people participate in and strengthen. He expressed thanks to all who would have voted against the social statement but who, because of their graciousness and vision for ministry, had seen the wisdom of remaining part of this church. He also referred to partner churches in Africa who do not ordain women, yet have stayed in close relationship with the ELCA and worked with the ELCA in mission for the sake of the Church's mission.

The Rev. Joel A. Benson [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] thanked those who had planned the morning's discussion, saying he was glad he had participated. He noted that a biblical story often used in the current discussion was the woman at the well to whom Jesus said, "I don't condemn you." He commented that he was troubled that people were stopping there and not reading the rest of the verse, which tells the woman to go and sin no more. He referred to comments by the Archbishop of Canterbury in *The Christian Century* telling The Episcopal Church that it was in danger of becoming "second-class citizens in the worldwide Anglican communion" for making similar decisions. He said the other thing that troubled him was that he believed this church had become idolatrous by focusing on this one issue.

Ms. Meredith L. Hendricks [Southeastern Synod] told the assembly that she was not a "cradle Lutheran." Although she had been a Lutheran for 30 years, she recounted that several years previously she had found herself feeling unfulfilled spiritually. She and her husband had visited a church in downtown Atlanta on Good Friday, were deeply moved, and eventually transferred their membership there. The church was St. John's Lutheran in Atlanta, whose pastor, Mr. Bradley Schmeling, was later removed from the roster of the ELCA because he was in a partnered relationship. She reported that the pastor was still serving the congregation and that St. John's was one of the most loving congregations her husband and she had experienced. She questioned how this church could deny what is going on at St. John's. She said that she was not asking other congregations to follow St. John's example but only to allow St. John's members to carry out their ministry.

Mr. David B. Olsen [Saint Paul Area Synod] noted that the LWF, which has 68.5 million members in 79 countries, is dedicated to Christian unity, which he declared was about to be dissolved with the passage of the social statement and the ministry policy resolutions. He recalled that 10 years ago the Churchwide Assembly had entered into an agreement of full communion with The Episcopal Church. This unity attempt had caused disunity in the ELCA, including the departure from this church of one of his friends, a pastor. He concluded that the assembly must vote against all four of the resolutions for the sake of Lutheran unity.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on members of the resource panel to address written questions.

The Rev. David L. Tiede, professor at Augsburg College, responded to this question: “What is meant by a ‘publicly accountable’ relationship? How is it related to state laws?” He stated that the words “publicly accountable” had been chosen carefully because of the Lutheran tradition’s understanding of the civil and public character of marriage. The task force had concluded that partnered people in public ministry should be held to the highest level of civil protection afforded to them. The difficulty is that there is no uniformity within the United States for such protection. Public recognition by the community of faith is part of what the task force was speaking of, he stated. Pr. Tiede yielded to Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel for the ELCA, to speak to the legal questions.

Mr. Harris explained that churches occupy a unique position of liberty under the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and that liberty extends to the churches’ right to call whomever they will to preach and teach the faith of the church. Uniformly, he indicated, civil courts have protected the rights of churches to determine who will be a minister and what standard of conduct they will establish for ministers without the interference of civil law. As for conducting marriages, state laws authorize several classes of individuals to officiate at marriages but do not require anyone in that class to perform a particular marriage ceremony.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson responded to another pair of questions: “What happens to the ELCA’s ‘Message on Sexuality: Some Common Convictions’? What happens to the ELCA bishops’ statement of 1993?” Pr. Larson responded that social statements are foundational documents of this church. “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns” also allows for adoption of messages, she reported, which are statements less comprehensive than social statements and can be adopted either by the Church Council or the Churchwide Assembly. Once a social statement is adopted, it takes precedence over previous messages on the same topic.

On the second question, Pr. Larson explained that, in 1993, the Conference of Bishops had issued a statement rejecting the establishment of a ceremony for blessing same-gender relationships. The 2005 Churchwide Assembly voted to continue to consider that statement as guidance for this church. However, with the approval of the social statement on human sexuality, the social statement now takes precedence as the foundational document of this church on the subject.

Mr. Larry D. Struve [Sierra Pacifica Synod] expressed thanks for the small-group discussions, which he had found very productive. He commented that the participants in his group had been struck by the number of people in the middle on this issue who want to respect the deeply held, conscience-bound views on both sides. He asked for clarification: Were the resolutions going to be linked, as they had been presented, or would they be voted on separately? He reported that his group had felt that Resolution Three, which called for bearing the burdens of the neighbor and respecting the bound consciences of all, should be the first resolution to be considered. Only if that resolution were in place, he stated, would some of those in his group be prepared to support Resolutions 1 and 2.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that he could not rule during a quasi committee of the whole, and even in plenary he would not be able to rule until there were something concrete to rule on. However, as he had described in the first plenary session, during which the rules were considered, the recommendation was being placed before the assembly by the Church Council as four separate resolutions in the order they appeared in the council’s recommendation in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*. He added that the assembly had the right to consider in plenary how to address the recommendation.

The chair announced that the quasi committee of the whole had come to an end and that a new microphone queue would be formed in the next day's session.

The Rev. Jay M. McDivitt [Rocky Mountain Synod] rose to a point of order to ask if it were possible to retain the current queue for the next session in which the ministry policy resolutions would be considered.

The presiding bishop answered that the quasi committee of the whole was not a legislative session. If the assembly wished to carry over the queuing to a plenary, it could make a rule to that effect.

Pr. McDivitt said that he would like to make such a motion.

The chair commented that the quasi committee of the whole was an open conversation about all of the resolutions, while in the plenary, the assembly would legislatively consider each of the resolutions. He asked Pr. McDivitt if he still wished to test the will of the body on this matter.

Pr. McDivitt replied that he did not.

## **Evangelical Outreach Testimony**

The assembly returned to plenary. Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on the Rev. E. Roy Riley Jr., bishop of the New Jersey Synod, to speak about evangelism in that synod.

Bp. Riley gave several examples that God's mission is alive and growing in the New Jersey Synod. He spoke of discovering large numbers of Brazilians in Newark who spoke Portuguese. One pastor, only three years from retirement, volunteered to learn to speak Portuguese so that outreach with them might begin. At the end of three years, a clergy couple in the Lutheran church in Brazil were willing to come help with the mission. This effort developed into a mission partnership with the Reformed churches in Newark. Then it was learned that a United Church of Christ (UCC) congregation had a building but no pastor and needed care for a group of some 20 octogenarian parishioners. The relationship developed to the point that the UCC congregation gave the building to the new congregation as its legacy. In June, the synod received this new congregation, St. Stephan's Grace Community Lutheran Church.

Bp. Riley added that synod leaders were so inspired by this new work and by a new multicultural outreach in Camden, N.J., the second poorest city in the nation, that the synod launched a number of mission initiatives, including one among South Asians, two Latino ministries, a West African mission congregation under development, and work in Jersey City along the waterfront facing New York City, where many affluent young people have taken up residence. He concluded by saying, "The Holy Spirit is blowing in New Jersey. She blows like the wind where she will, and we're just trying to keep up! Thanks be to God!"

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Bp. Riley. He then addressed the recommendation, made earlier, that an offering be taken to assist Central Lutheran Church in repairing damages from the previous day's storm. He stated that the Assembly Planning Committee had decided that the offering to be taken in Thursday's worship would be given to Central Lutheran for that purpose. However, as evidence of partnership in mission, Central Lutheran's leaders had responded that while they would receive the offering gladly, they would donate to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative that portion of the offering that represented what they had anticipated being able to give from the proceeds from the Carillon Café, which had been affected by the storm.

The presiding bishop then turned the chair over to Vice President Carlos E. Peña.

## **Video Contest: "God's Work. Our Hands."**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña introduced two "God's work. Our hands." videos: the first from Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Lake Ronkonkoma, N.Y., and the second from Mr. Zachary Meisner of Lexington, S.C.

## **Elections: First Common Ballot**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 13–16; Section VII, pages 1–88.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña proposed that the first common ballot be distributed so that voting members could begin to work on it over the noon hour. He called on Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel and chair of the Elections Committee, to provide instructions on the voting process. Mr. Harris did so and gave notice that ballots would need to be turned in to the ballot stations in the plenary hall by 6:00 P.M., after which time voting would be closed.

## **Announcements**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling for announcements. Secretary Swartling informed the assembly that the bags in which the day's lunch would be served had been donated by the ELCA Board of Pensions. He indicated that the deadline for casting the first common ballot most likely would be extended to 6:45 P.M. because it was anticipated that Plenary Session Seven would run longer than originally scheduled.

The chair reminded synod bishops that, if they had not already given their voting members the first common ballot, they needed to do so at the end of the session.

Mr. Peña called on Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, member of the Church Council from St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, to offer prayer.

## **Recess**

The sixth plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 11:13 A.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Seven

Thursday, August 20, 2009

2:00 P.M.—6:30 P.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), called Plenary Session Seven of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 2:00 P.M. CDT on Thursday, August 20, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

The members of the assembly sang “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked the assembly for the quasi committee of the whole discussion of the previous session, during which members had the chance both to speak and to listen in preparation for consideration of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies on Friday.

## Review of Agenda

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson proposed that the plenary be extended until 6:30 P.M. in order to complete the items planned for the session and to finish consideration of the implementing resolutions for the social statement on sexuality, which had been carried over from the previous day. There being no objection, the presiding bishop announced that the session would be extended until 6:30 P.M. He informed voting members that a dinner had been added for the evening, which would allow those who wished to attend the National Lutheran Choir’s “hymn sing” to do so.

Finally, the presiding bishop proposed the following order for this plenary: Bible study, a report from the Credentials Committee, the second ballot for vice president, consideration of the full-communion agreement with The United Methodist Church, ecumenical greetings and introductions, consideration of the implementing resolutions for *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee, the report of the Elections Committee on the second ballot for vice president, consideration of amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions*, the report of the Memorials Committee, reflection on the ELCA’s witness today, announcements, and a hymn and prayer.

## Reflections from the Presiding Bishop

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson shared with voting members some reflections on the work the Churchwide Assembly had completed thus far.

First, he expressed gratitude to the assembly for its preparation, patience, commitment to the work, and good spirit. He said that he was profoundly impressed by the dedication that the members of the assembly had demonstrated to this church.

Second, the presiding bishop offered an observation: “As we worked through the complexities of yesterday’s deliberations about the social statement amidst the deeply held convictions we bring to these decisions, our work became complicated by parliamentary inquiries, concerns, and suggestions. While it was clear that the members of this assembly wanted to ensure a fair process, my sense was that the use of white cards increasingly impeded our ability to work and my ability to guide us through a very complex process. I have a request that you trust me to lead us through these complex and deeply felt decisions. I am ready to do that, but I need your help. For example, the use of white cards often is helpful, but the overuse

of them can distract us from our shared work. I ask that you use them judiciously and only as provided in the assembly rules we adopted on Monday evening. You may also find that your synodical bishop can help you to answer a question rather than having to inquire of the chair. If you do come to the microphone with a white card, please do not wave them or whistle to get my attention. I want to repeat what I said in our first plenary session, ‘As the presiding officer, my commitment is to help the assembly do its work thoughtfully, respectfully, and in an orderly way.’ I am committed to doing that and deeply appreciate your help as we move forward.”

Third, the presiding bishop made some comments about the electronic voting process: “Following the vote on the social statement, a question was asked about the voting machines. A total of 1,014 votes were cast, the largest number of votes recorded for any vote taken so far in this assembly. As you recall, I paused before announcing the results. In that time, no one reported an inoperative voting keypad. Remember that your keypad shows ‘received’ after you’ve entered your vote. Even if the ‘received’ message appears on your screen after the vote is announced, we are confident that every vote was counted. After the session last night, some voting members approached assembly staff to ask that their individual voting record be checked in order to verify that the vote had been counted. We followed up on the requests we received last night and can state unequivocally that the votes in question were recorded. However, we cannot respond to any more of these requests. We have confidence in our technology and believe it is serving us well.”

The presiding bishop offered one further comment. “Yesterday, John Prabhakar suggested that we take an offering to assist Central Lutheran Church as it repairs damage from yesterday’s storm. The planning committee has suggested that the offering from today’s worship service be designated for Central. If you did not have a chance to give, contributions may be brought to the registration desk until 6:30 P.M. tonight.”

The presiding bishop also reported that God had “done some gardening” around Central Lutheran Church. Some old trees ready for removal had been uprooted by the tornado. Donated trees would be planted in their place.

## **Bible Study**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson welcomed the Rev. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod, to lead a Bible study.

Bp. Crist began with an illustration about the new bright sign that was designed for the Montana Synod office. On the sign was the ELCA logo, with its new tagline, “God’s work. Our hands.”

Bp. Crist read Luke 7:36–50, the story of the anointing of Jesus’ feet in the house of Simon by an unidentified woman, whom the bishop named “Hope.” She said, “Hope breaks all the rules, and in doing so she achieved what all the others have been conniving to do; she encounters God—with her hands, her unclean, sinful, woman’s hands, touching God.” She becomes the model of “God’s work. Our hands.” Sometimes God’s work falls into peoples’ hands, Bp. Crist said, and then reminded the assembly that the “our” of “our hands” includes the “wild and crazy intruders.” Jesus did not turn the woman away, but rather made her an example.

Bp. Crist asked members to discuss the following questions in small groups:

1. What impact does this encounter have on Hope, on the Pharisees, on Jesus, and on you?
2. Tell a story about what “you’ve got” and how you use it to do God’s work.
3. How has your sense of “our” expanded? Tell a story about someone doing God’s work that surprised you.
4. Do our hands always do God’s work? What else do they do? How can you tell the difference?



## 5. Can God's work ever be done outside the box?

Bp. Crist concluded with a litany: "God's work. Our hands. God's work. Our feet. God's work. Our brains. God's work. Our dreams. God's work. Our prayers. God's work. Our deliberations. God's work. Our assembly. God's work. Our church. God's work. God's church. God's work. Our hands."

### **Recognition of Invited Guests: "Tour de Revs"**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson thanked Bp. Crist for leading the Bible study, then expressed gratitude for the generosity of the members of the assembly. He announced that the offering received at the morning worship service had amounted to \$8,561.87. This offering would be given to Central Lutheran Church, which, as reported earlier, would return part of the offering to the ELCA for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. Prior to the assembly, the presiding bishop reported, \$10,484 was offered online by voting members. During the assembly thus far almost \$1,000 had been given online, for a total of \$11,474 in addition to the regular worship offerings.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson next introduced three pastors from the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod who had participated in the "Tour de Revs." On May 13, they departed from the Lutheran Center in Chicago on a 100-day journey dedicated to raising awareness and support for World Hunger as well as to promote health and wellness. The Rev. Frederick A. Soltow Jr., the Rev. David A. Twedt, and the Rev. Reinhold Schlak Jr., along with their crew, had been on a pilgrimage around the ELCA, visiting all 65 synods and the Youth Gathering in New Orleans. They rode their custom-made bamboo bicycle built for three, fondly named "Bob," for much of the journey. The assembly greeted the pastors with applause.

Pr. Soltow addressed the assembly by exclaiming, "God's work. Our legs." He continued by saying, "Today the Tour de Revs officially ends our journey. Our tour was not about reverends, but 'Revelation, Revolution, and Revenue.' The 'Revelation' is that there are over 2,100 verses in the Bible in which God says that there shall be no poor among you, feed my people, and eliminate injustice. Fighting poverty, injustice, and hunger are not 'feel-good moments,' but the Word of God." The assembly responded with applause.

Pr. Schlak then addressed the assembly. "The 'Revolution' calls us to share what God has first given to us and to give abundantly. This bag of 551 pennies is a gift from a homeless woman who walks the streets of San Diego gathering what others discard. She knew of our mission and wanted to help feed the hungry also." The assembly again responded with applause.

Pr. Twedt concluded the presentation by saying, "What breaks God's heart? A child dying from poverty and hunger every time we take a breath. Our 'Revenue' message is \$5 a month from every ELCA baptized member will raise a quarter of a billion dollars for the ELCA World Hunger appeal. We all have enough stuff. We have the resources to fight poverty and end hunger. Do we have the desire? It is God's will." The assembly responded with a standing ovation. Pr. Twedt presented Presiding Bishop Hanson with a "Tour de Revs" T-shirt.

### **Report: Credentials Committee**

At the request of the chair, Mr. David A. Ullrich, vice chair of the Credentials Committee, provided its report. He indicated that 1,045 voting members had registered "2,090 hands doing God's work."

## **Elections: Second Ballot for Vice President**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15–16, 18–20; Section IV, page 1.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced the second ballot for vice president. He welcomed Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel and chair of the Elections Committee, to provide information to voting members about the second ballot.

Mr. Harris stated that voting members had received a written report of the names of those who had withdrawn from the ballot. He reminded the assembly that clergy were not eligible for the position of vice president. If any voting members believed that names of clergy remained on the ballot, Mr. Harris advised that they should not receive votes. Mr. Harris instructed voting members to use the blue ballot.

The Rev. Katrina D. Foster [Metropolitan New York Synod] reported that her ballot had been removed from her seat in the plenary hall and asked if it were possible to receive another. Mr. Harris informed Pr. Foster that a new ballot could be provided only upon receipt of a damaged one.

Mr. Albert H. Quie [Minneapolis Area Synod] stated that he believed that the name of a pastor was included on the ballot. The presiding bishop pointed out that the name might also be the name of a lay person. He repeated Mr. Harris's request that voting members refrain from voting for an individual whom they knew to be a pastor because that person is not eligible to serve as vice president.

Before the vote, the presiding bishop led the assembly in prayer. The voting members cast their ballots, after which the second ballot for vice president was closed.

It was announced that the Elections Committee would present the results of the second ballot for vice president later in the session. A three-fourths vote is necessary for election on the second ballot.

## **Consideration: Full Communion with The United Methodist Church**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, page 13; Section IV, pages 3–10.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson informed the Churchwide Assembly that the next item of business was consideration of the agreement for full communion with The United Methodist Church (UMC). He began by expressing his appreciation to the Rev. Gregory V. Palmer, Resident Bishop of the Illinois Episcopal Area (Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference) of The United Methodist Church and president of that church's Council of Bishops, for the stirring sermon that he had delivered in worship that morning, and the Rev. Callista S. Isabelle, New Haven, Conn., who had presided. The presiding bishop called on the Rev. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations in the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

Pr. McCoid explained to the assembly that formal dialogue between Lutherans and Methodists had begun 32 years earlier, in 1977, with discussions of theology, sacramental understanding and practice, ministry and episcopacy, salvation by grace through faith, and ministry in the world and common mission. In 2005, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly approved, as did the UMC Council of Bishops, an agreement of Interim Eucharistic Sharing between the two churches. In July 2006, the Methodist World Council and its member churches affirmed their fundamental doctrinal agreement with the teaching expressed in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, which the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation ratified in 1999. The report of the ELCA-UMC bilateral dialogue, "Confessing Our Faith Together," which was widely circulated throughout the two churches for study and response, affirmed that there were no church-dividing differences precluding full communion between the ELCA and the UMC.

In 2008, Pr. McCoid reported, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, the parallel body to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, approved the Implementing Resolution for

Full Communion between the ELCA and the UMC. The vote to approve was 864–19, a 98 percent margin. Pr. McCoid explained that the Churchwide Assembly would now consider the same resolution to create a relationship of full communion. As with the UMC’s consideration in 2008, there would be a single vote, without amendment, to accept or reject the resolution.

Pr. McCoid introduced the Rev. Allan C. Bjornberg, bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod and co-chair of the ELCA-UMC dialogue, to present to the assembly the resource people who were present. Bp. Bjornberg first introduced those from The United Methodist Church: the Rev. Gregory V. Palmer, bishop and president of the UMC Council of Bishops; the Rev. Sally Dyck, bishop of the North Central Jurisdiction, Episcopal area of Minnesota; the Rev. Dr. Sarah Heaner Lancaster, Methodist Theological School of Ohio, member of the ELCA-UMC dialogue; and the Rev. Betty Gamble, staff member of the UMC’s General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

Bp. Bjornberg also introduced resource people from the ELCA: Dr. Kathryn L. Johnson, member of the ELCA-UMC dialogue, Office of Ecumenical Affairs, Lutheran World Federation; the Rev. Timothy J. Wengert, member of the ELCA-UMC dialogue, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; and Mr. Michael R. Trice, associate director for ecumenical and inter-religious relations.

Bp. Palmer brought greetings to the assembly from The United Methodist Church. He referred to Jesus’ prayer for the unity of the Church, stressing the words “in order that,” words that he said are often ignored. But Christians work for unity in order that the world may believe. Ecumenism is, he said, a deeply evangelistic work that is done in the name of Jesus.

Pr. McCoid listed for the assembly a number of hymns in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* that were written by the Methodist Wesley brothers. Born into a Methodist family, Pr. McCoid observed that the full-communion proposal would be a “family reunion” for him. He quoted to the assembly stanzas one and five of the hymn “Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing.”

Bp. Bjornberg urged the assembly to adopt the full-communion agreement and expressed great anticipation for the gifts that would be given to this church by the UMC.

Secretary David D. Swartling read the proposed action. Because it came as a recommendation from the Church Council, it needed no second.

**MOVED:** RESOLVED, that this Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America accept the implementing resolution as the basis for a relationship of full communion to be established, as follows:

### **Implementing Resolution for Full Communion Between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The United Methodist Church (UMC) hereby agree that in their legislative bodies there shall be one vote to accept or reject, without separate amendment, the resolutions which follow. If adopted by both churches, each church agrees to take the following measures to establish a relationship of full communion:

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ calls us to unity so that the world may believe; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church share a common heritage of faith and a commitment to mission; and

WHEREAS, “Confessing our Faith Together,” the report of the ELCA-UMC bilateral dialogue, affirmed that there are no church-dividing differences precluding full communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church hereby:

- 1) Recognize in one another the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith as it is expressed in the Scriptures, confessed in the Church's historic creeds, and attested to in the Lutheran Confessions and the doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church;
- 2) Recognize the authenticity of each other's Baptism and Eucharist, and extend sacramental hospitality to one another's members;
- 3) Recognize the validity of our respective ministries, including:
  - each other's ordination of persons to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament;
  - the authentic diaconal service of ordained deacons in the UMC and rostered lay ministers in the ELCA; and
  - each other's polity and ministries of oversight (including the interpretation of church doctrines, discipline of members, authorization of persons for ordained and lay ministries, and provision for administrative functions);
- 4) Recognize the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, subject to the constitutionally approved invitation for ministry in each other's churches;
- 5) Authorize the establishment of a joint commission to:
  - coordinate the implementation of these resolutions;
  - assist joint planning for mission;
  - facilitate consultation and common decision-making through appropriate channels in fundamental matters that the churches may face together in the future; and
  - report regularly and appropriately to each church;
- 6) Direct this joint commission to:
  - develop worship materials to celebrate our churches' full communion;
  - foster ongoing theological discussion;
  - formulate joint educational materials; and
  - encourage continuing education opportunities for lay and clergy leaders regarding full communion;
- 7) Applaud one another's ecumenical conversations with other church bodies, acknowledging that each church remains free to pursue additional full-communion agreements as each deems appropriate, so that the world may believe.

The chair informed the assembly that the resolution was not amendable, nor were substitutions permitted. He explained that the resolution was exactly the same as the one that The United Methodist Church had adopted and must be considered as it was proposed. He then opened the floor to discussion.

The Rev. Barbara M. Wills [Northeastern Iowa Synod] moved to refer the motion.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

To refer to the Office of the Presiding Bishop the full-communion agreement with The United Methodist Church in order that the synods, congregations, and members of the ELCA may have further opportunity for discussion and exploration of the proposed recommendations in preparation for consideration at the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

Pr. McCoid responded by reminding voting members of the work that had preceded consideration by this assembly. The documents "By Water and the Spirit" (a study of baptismal

theology), “This Holy Mystery” (a study of eucharistic theology), and “Confessing Our Faith Together” had been available since 2005, he pointed out. In 2007, “Building a Relationship: Best Practices” was published. There had been wide discussion of the agreement within both churches. He asked that this church respect the process that had been established, and he urged the assembly to defeat the motion.

The Rev. Larry D. Smoose [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-893; NO-82**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, the chair called for the vote on the motion to refer.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-96; NO-890**

**DEFEATED:**

To refer to the Office of the Presiding Bishop the full-communion agreement with The United Methodist Church in order that the synods, congregations, and members of the ELCA may have further opportunity for discussion and exploration of the proposed recommendations in preparation for consideration at the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

The motion to refer was defeated. Discussion continued on the full-communion proposal.

Mr. R. Guy Erwin [Southwest California Synod] highlighted the ways that the two churches have been intertwined in history. He commended the warm personal piety and the strong ethical position of the UMC.

The Rev. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod, thanked all who had worked on the agreement. In Montana, she noted, the UMC is the most likely partner for the ELCA because the UMC is second in numbers only to Lutherans. She said that she celebrates the possibility of a full-communion relationship, one that, she believes, will support mission and ministry.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, affirmed that the full-communion agreement would also be a boon to mission and ministry in the Northeastern Ohio Synod.

The Rev. Gregory R. Pile, bishop of the Allegheny Synod, presented the example of Simpson Temple United Parish in Altoona, Pa., which he characterized as a joyous expression of unity in Christ. The joint Lutheran-Methodist ministry offers diversity and celebrates unity at the food pantry and at the table. He urged the adoption of the agreement.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, said that, as the former executive for worship and liturgical resources in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, he delighted in the similarity and complementary of worship in the ELCA and UMC.

The Rev. Wm. Chris Boerger, bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod, stated that, when visiting with congregation councils, he asks, “What are you doing with our full-communion partners?” The answer, he reported, usually is “Not much.” However, a number of congregations in his synod are involved with UMC congregations.

Mr. Steven R. Chapman [Northwest Washington Synod] spoke in favor of the resolution and asked, “What took so long?” He wondered what dishes the United Methodists might bring to church potluck suppers.

Bp. Dyke responded that the Methodists have the same recipe books as the Lutherans.

The Rev. Marie C. Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, reported on her synod's history of work with the UMC and other full-communion partners, including a 25-year-old ELCA-UMC parish. She stated that, although the full-communion agreement is not perfect, it will draw the two churches more fully into conversation so that they may witness together more effectively.

Mr. William T. Franz [Virginia Synod] commented that he has served on the faculty of a United Methodist university for 26 years. He declared that the UMC and ELCA have similar core values and share similar commitments to higher education and mission. He rejoiced that the UMC has accepted the ELCA as its first full-communion partner.

The Rev. Robert A. Rimbo, bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod, said that a UMC bishop was the first judicatory head to contact him following his election as bishop. He pointed out that anyone who has questions about the UMC theology concerning holy communion should consult "This Holy Mystery," from which he read a eucharistic prayer.

The Rev. Claire S. Burkat, bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, told the assembly that her synod has been working with the UMC on an informal basis.

The Rev. Michael F. Keys, bishop of the Alaska Synod, shared news of a new evangelical outreach ministry in Alaska called PLUME, which stands for "Presbyterian, Lutheran, United Methodist, and Episcopal." Cooperation is vital in rural areas, he observed, and is critical in sharing the Gospel in Alaska.

The Rev. H. Julian Gordy, bishop of the Southeastern Synod, told the assembly about Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Rincon, Ga., which recently celebrated its 275th anniversary. Early in that church's history, Moravians, Methodists, and Lutherans worshiped together, he informed the assembly. The Rev. John Wesley, who lived in that area for a time, was impressed with the congregation's piety and music.

The Rev. Callon W. Holloway Jr., bishop of the Southern Ohio Synod, spoke in support of the proposal. He stated that Lutherans in Southern Ohio are "in a sea of Methodists." "We're swimming well," he said, and added that there is work Lutherans could not do without their United Methodist brothers and sisters.

The Rev. Stephen S. Talmage, bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod, shared with the assembly that he was baptized in a Methodist church on June 7, 1959, and that his sister is a member of a United Methodist congregation. As bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod, he knows the challenge of finding pastors in large, rural areas. The proposed agreement will help both the Lutherans and the Methodists, he argued.

Mr. John T. Gates Jr. [Florida-Bahamas Synod] reported that he had come to the assembly with reservations about the proposal. However, at the hearing he had asked questions about the UMC view of salvation, justification, and other important doctrines and had received answers with which he was pleased. He is now enthusiastic about the agreement.

The Rev. Larry V. Smoose [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke of his participation in an ELCA delegation to this church's ecumenical partners in Europe, where he learned about the deep respect with which the ELCA is regarded around the world because of its ecumenical work and global leadership. In his opinion, this proposal provides an opportunity to deepen that kind of leadership.

The Rev. Kenneth M.C. Miller [Western North Dakota Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-949; NO-24**

Prior to taking a vote on the proposal, the presiding bishop called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, member of the Church Council from Oak Harbor, Ohio, to lead the assembly in prayer.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-958; NO-24**

**CA09.04.15**

**RESOLVED, that this Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America accept the implementing resolution as the basis for a relationship of full communion to be established, as follows:**

**Implementing Resolution for Full Communion Between  
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and  
The United Methodist Church**

**The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The United Methodist Church (UMC) hereby agree that in their legislative bodies there shall be one vote to accept or reject, without separate amendment, the resolutions which follow. If adopted by both churches, each church agrees to take the following measures to establish a relationship of full communion:**

**WHEREAS, Jesus Christ calls us to unity so that the world may believe; and**

**WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church share a common heritage of faith and a commitment to mission; and**

**WHEREAS, “Confessing our Faith Together,” the report of the ELCA-UMC bilateral dialogue, affirmed that there are no church-dividing differences precluding full communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church; therefore, be it**

**RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church hereby:**

- 1) Recognize in one another the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith as it is expressed in the Scriptures, confessed in the Church’s historic creeds, and attested to in the Lutheran Confessions and the doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church;**
- 2) Recognize the authenticity of each other’s Baptism and Eucharist, and extend sacramental hospitality to one another’s members;**
- 3) Recognize the validity of our respective ministries, including:**

- each other's ordination of persons to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament;
  - the authentic diaconal service of ordained deacons in the UMC and rostered lay ministers in the ELCA; and
  - each other's polity and ministries of oversight (including the interpretation of church doctrines, discipline of members, authorization of persons for ordained and lay ministries, and provision for administrative functions);
- 4) Recognize the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, subject to the constitutionally approved invitation for ministry in each other's churches;
  - 5) Authorize the establishment of a joint commission to:
    - coordinate the implementation of these resolutions;
    - assist joint planning for mission;
    - facilitate consultation and common decision-making through appropriate channels in fundamental matters that the churches may face together in the future; and
    - report regularly and appropriately to each church;
  - 6) Direct this joint commission to:
    - develop worship materials to celebrate our churches' full communion;
    - foster ongoing theological discussion;
    - formulate joint educational materials; and
    - encourage continuing education opportunities for lay and clergy leaders regarding full communion;
  - 7) Applaud one another's ecumenical conversations with other church bodies, acknowledging that each church remains free to pursue additional full-communion agreements as each deems appropriate, so that the world may believe.

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the motion had passed. The assembly responded to the action with a standing ovation. The members of the assembly joined in singing "Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing."

The chair asked Secretary Swartling to read the recommendation on the formation of a Joint Commission on ELCA-UMC Full Communion.

**MOVED:**

To fulfill the vision of full communion between The United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, there shall be a Joint Commission on ELCA-UMC Full Communion. The commission shall serve the following functions:



- a. coordinate the implementation of action taken by the two churches to achieve full communion;
- b. assist joint planning for mission;
- c. facilitate consultation and common decision-making through appropriate channels in fundamental matters that the churches may face together in the future; and
- d. report regularly and appropriately to each church.

The Rev. Jeffrey J. Blain [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-933; NO-21**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called for a vote on the implementing resolution.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-922; NO-15**

**CA09.04.16**

**To fulfill the vision of full communion between The United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, there shall be a Joint Commission on ELCA-UMC Full Communion. The commission shall serve the following functions:**

- a. coordinate the implementation of action taken by the two churches to achieve full communion;**
- b. assist joint planning for mission;**
- c. facilitate consultation and common decision-making through appropriate channels in fundamental matters that the churches may face together in the future; and**
- d. report regularly and appropriately to each church.**

The chair declared that the motion had passed.

As the chief ecumenical officer of the ELCA, Presiding Bishop Hanson expressed his gratitude for the adoption of this full-communion agreement with The United Methodist Church, and thanked those who had participated in the lengthy ELCA-UMC dialogue that had preceded this action.

### **Video Contest: “God’s Work. Our Hands.”**

Another finalist video in the contest on the theme “God’s work. Our hands.” was shown to the assembly. It was produced by Emmaus Road Lutheran Church, Fairless Hills, Pa. This video depicted the congregation’s prayer shawl ministry by which joy is spread through “God’s work. Our hands.”

### **Ecumenical Greetings: Full-Communion, Conciliar, and Bilateral Partners**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson informed the assembly that since 1997 this church has established full-communion relationships with six partner churches. He stated that it was

exciting to see these relationships bearing fruit within synods and among congregations. He said, “Where we once knew only the names of church bodies, we now know the names of people. Where once congregations were separated by denominational barriers, they now share worship, mission, and sometimes clergy.” The presiding bishop affirmed this church’s welcome to these partners as friends and colleagues in mission.

The presiding bishop continued by saying, “The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is committed to fostering unity between the children of God for the sake of the world. In our ecumenical life, we are active at many tables of conversation and places of ministry with Christians at the grassroots, synodical, national, and global levels. Our ecumenical involvements are represented in full-communion agreements with the Moravian Church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, The Episcopal Church, and The United Methodist Church.”

He pointed out that this church’s ecumenical involvements are represented in various councils of churches (the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, Christian Churches Together, and Churches Uniting in Christ) and in bilateral dialogues and conversations (with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, as well as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Mennonite, and Disciples of Christ churches).

There is great and rich diversity among the churches in theological understanding, in histories and experiences, and in policies and practices, he observed. The churches have grown in their understanding of one another, and this church has been seeking to live out the vision expressed in its document, “Ecumenism: A Vision of the ELCA,” and in its relationships, agreements, and commitments. He explained that guests from each of the categories of relationship in which this church is engaged had been invited to bring video greetings to the assembly.

Representing the ELCA’s full-communion partners was the Rev. Dr. John H. Thomas, general minister and president of the United Church of Christ, who was completing his term after 10 years of leadership. Pr. Thomas expressed gratitude for the partnership of the ELCA and offered his prayers for the assembly. Quoting Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *Life Together*, he said, “It is not I who sing, but the Church who sings.” He thanked the members of the Lutheran churches for the song they have sung to support his life ever since he entered Gettysburg College 40 years ago. He reminded the members of the assembly that Christian unity transcends potentially church-dividing issues, and he urged continued trust in Jesus, who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Representing bilateral dialogue partners in this year of the observance of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ)*, Archbishop Wilton Gregory, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs, also brought video greetings. He told the assembly of the prayerful support for them from Roman Catholic brothers and sisters, and he cited Jesus’ prayer that his disciples might be one just as he and his Father are one. Much has been done since Vatican II to heal the divisions between the two churches, he commented. Through dialogues, the two churches have wrestled with several core issues. As a result, in 1999 the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation signed the JDDJ. He urged the assembly to remain open to the Holy Spirit, who binds believers’ consciences with truth. Finally, he reminded the assembly that without adherence to Scripture the unity of the Church is lost.

The presiding bishop responded to Archbishop Gregory’s presentation by affirming that the ELCA is committed to be in conversation with its partners.

The third video presentation was offered by a representative of the ELCA's conciliar relationships, the Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon, general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC). He began by saying that when others ask him what the member churches of NCCC have in common, he tells them that believers transcend the barriers of a fragmented culture when they are in Jesus. He reminded the assembly of the many programs and projects for which NCCC is known, including Bible translations (e.g., the New Revised Standard Version), Christian education materials, theological dialogue, and a common social witness for issues like health-care reform, environmental justice, and peace in the Middle East. Pr. Kinnamon observed that the member churches do not always agree about these issues and projects, but they do have a common commitment to combat racism, poverty, damage to creation, and war as contrary to the will of God. "The essence of the NCCC is not what we do together, but what we are together," he exclaimed. He thanked the ELCA for its contributions to the NCCC, mentioning this church's insistence on theological depth, global mission, beautiful worship, and leadership in forging ecumenical relationships. He concluded his address by saying, "Apart from one another we are all desperately impoverished."

The presiding bishop acknowledged the presence of the Rev. Peg Chamberlin, a Moravian clergywoman, executive director of the Minnesota Council of Churches, and president-elect of the NCCC. He then invited all ecumenical guests present at the assembly to join him on stage. Those welcomed to the stage included Pr. Chamberlin; Ms. Clare J. Chapman, NCCC; the Rev. Sally Dyck, bishop of The United Methodist Church; the Rt. Rev. C. Christopher Epting, The Episcopal Church; Dr. Thomas C. Ferguson, The Episcopal Church; the Rev. Betty Gamble, The United Methodist Church; the Rev. Dr. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, Reformed Church in America; Dr. Kathryn L. Johnson, Lutheran World Federation; the Rev. Susan C. Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada; Dr. Sarah Heaner Lancaster, The United Methodist Church; Father James Massa, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; the Rev. Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod; the Rev. Gregory V. Palmer, bishop of The United Methodist Church; Dr. John D. Roth, the Mennonite Church USA; the Rev. Chaz Ruark, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); the Rev. Lydia Veliko, the United Church of Christ; and the Rev. David Wickman, Northern Province of the Moravian Church USA. The assembly greeted these ecumenical guests with applause, then joined in singing "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness."

## **Evangelical Outreach Testimony**

The Rev. Jianhua N. Hao [Northwest Washington Synod] shared the story of Grace Chinese Lutheran Church in Seattle, a congregation that is growing in evangelical mission. He began his witness by saying that the congregation has baptized 38 people in the past nine years. It has sent nine people to seminary for study, and five have been ordained as ELCA pastors. Because of these new pastors, another three Chinese Lutheran congregations have been started in Seattle. The congregation is alive and enriching this church.

## **Parliamentary Matters**

Mr. Eric D. Wong [Northeastern Minnesota Synod] moved to amend the rules.

### **MOVED:**

### **SECONDED:**

To amend the rules to limit discussion to no more than four speakers speaking on one side of an action before the assembly if no one is speaking in opposition.

The Rev. Robert J. Rasmus [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] spoke in opposition to the rule change, arguing that it was not a good idea to limit debate under any condition. He asserted that members were present to attend to the business they had been called to do, and that work included speaking and listening. He spoke of the “temptation” involved in limiting debate, mentioning as an example the ways that motions to end debate had been used.

Mr. Ross A. Hardie [La Crosse Area Synod] spoke against the motion. All of the issues before the assembly were important, he stated, and people who were passionate about these issues deserve to be heard.

Mr. Kenneth M.C. Miller [Western North Dakota Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment to the rules, citing his opinion that many of the arguments being put forth were repetitive.

Mr. Matthew A. Cleaver [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] wondered whether voting members came to the microphones because the assembly was being broadcast live to thousands of people. He called for approval of the rule change.

Ms. Katherine N. Knoerzer [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-849; NO-40**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, the chair called for the vote on amending the rules.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-506; NO-386**

**DEFEATED:**

To amend the rules to limit discussion to no more than four speakers speaking on one side of an action before the assembly if no one is speaking in opposition.

### **Consideration: Social Statement Implementing Resolutions (continued)**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, page 39; Report II of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, pages 8–11.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that voting members next would continue to consider the implementing resolutions for the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*. The chair asked for and received the assembly’s consent to dispense with the reading of the resolutions. The presiding bishop asked the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee, to review the committee’s recommendations.

Pr. Loy informed the assembly that the *ad hoc* committee recommended that none of the proposed amendments be adopted. He encouraged voting members to review the rationale printed after each of the proposed amendments.

The chair reminded voting members that the rules of the assembly allowed the makers of any of the amendments to move them, in spite of the *ad hoc* committee’s recommendation, if they chose. If anyone wished to propose new amendments, a majority of the voting members would need to approve consideration of those.

Ms. Elizabeth A. Guthrie [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] stated that she would like to make an amendment to Implementing Resolution 3.

The presiding bishop clarified that her intent was to make a new amendment not addressed in the *ad hoc* committee’s report, then replied that the matter would have to wait until after any amendments that had been proposed before the deadline had come to the floor of the assembly, should their makers desire to move them. He inquired whether anyone was standing at a microphone who wished to move one of these amendments.

Mr. John T. Gates Jr. [Florida-Bahamas Synod] called the attention of the assembly to the fact that the *ad hoc* committee had made no recommendation on amendment D1 that he had submitted, and he moved it.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend by deleting Implementing Resolution 3, lines 16–19, page 39:*

- ~~3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to explore the feasibility of developing liturgical resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce;~~

Speaking to his amendment, Mr. Gates stated that it was unclear to him what resources the assembly was being asked to consider. He asked whether it would be a celebration of divorce, a solemn declaration of divorce, or a rite in which the couple would release one another from their vows. He questioned the wisdom of creating a church rite that in his opinion would violate the promises that the couple had made before God. He acknowledged that divorce is a tragic reality in this society and that it was sometimes “the lesser of many evils,” but it never is something to be celebrated. Thus, he encouraged the body to consider whether it would be appropriate to create a liturgical resource for this situation.

Because Mr. Gates seemed to be seeking information, the chair introduced the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit. Pr. Larson explained that the resolution had arisen out of the social statement’s discussion of the topic of divorce and the pastoral care concerns attached to it. She called attention to the word “feasibility” in the resolution. She explained that the resolution did not attempt to decide the matter one way or the other but rather called on the appropriate churchwide unit to explore whether relevant liturgical resources were needed and available to this church.

The Rev. Kay S. Richter [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against the amendment. She noted that divorce is a reality in the congregations of this church. She stated her belief that pastors and congregations need resources to help support people who are leaving abusive relationships or marriages that are no longer workable, as well as resources to support children as they begin new lives following the breakup of a marriage.

Ms. Elizabeth A. Guthrie [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to amend Mr. Gates’s amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend by substitution:*

- ~~3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to explore the feasibility of developing liturgical resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce;~~
3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to develop pastoral care resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce.

The presiding bishop, after conferring with the parliamentarian, ruled that Ms. Guthrie’s amendment would be in order if it were worded as a substitution to Mr. Gates’s amendment. He invited her to speak to her motion.

Ms. Guthrie addressed her proposed substitution, stating that she was not in favor of deleting the proposal entirely, given the reality of divorce. However, she believed that resources should be devoted to pastoral care, rather than being liturgical in nature.

The chair opened the floor to discussion, explaining that, by the assembly's rules, speakers could address either Ms. Guthrie's substitute motion or Mr. Gates's amendment.

Mr. Gates withdrew his motion.

The presiding bishop asked whether anyone opposed this withdrawal. Hearing no opposition, he stated that the motion before the assembly was now Ms. Guthrie's motion to substitute.

The Rev. Jean K. Larson [Montana Synod] spoke against the motion. She said that as a divorced and remarried person, she thinks that liturgical resources could be healing in times of sorrow. She compared such a resource to a funeral service because divorce is a sort of death. She argued that such resources could allow people to speak truth in love and to begin healing.

The Rev. Bruce H. Burnside, bishop of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, urged defeat of the motion, arguing that ritual could be important at the time of divorce.

The Rev. Beth J. Costlow [Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in opposition. As a divorced and remarried person, one who had been in an abusive relationship, she stated her belief that, as she left that abusive relationship, a public rite would have helped her bring closure. She pointed out that people stand before God and make sacred vows when they form a marriage, and when those vows need to be broken, they need an equally public liturgical rite that would give the promise of God's continued grace in the midst of brokenness. She noted that there already is an abundance of pastoral care resources for use with divorced people and argued that what was needed was a liturgical rite.

The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer, executive for worship and liturgical resources in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, speaking as a resource person, called the attention of the assembly to two resources, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Pastoral Care* and the pew edition of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. He cited materials in both of these volumes for people going through divorce—both couples and their children.

The Rev. Leslie K. Williamson [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] asked that the motion be defeated. She stated that when she had gone through a divorce, she would have benefitted from a public rite in which she could have confessed her culpability in the brokenness of her marriage. She argued that a word of confession and absolution means more when responsibility for one's errors and sins also is accepted publicly.

The Rev. Karen R. Grandall [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] moved to close debate.

**Moved;**

**Seconded:** The previous question.

The Rev. Jeffrey J. Blain [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] inquired whether "pastoral care resources" would preclude liturgical resources.

The presiding bishop declared that the motion to end debate took precedence over Pr. Blain's inquiry. He asked the assembly to vote on the motion before it.

**Moved;**

**Seconded;**

**Carried:** The previous question.

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-764; NO-202**

Debate being closed, Presiding Bishop Hanson called for a vote on Ms. Guthrie's motion.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-345; NO-629**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend by substitution:*

- ~~3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to explore the feasibility of developing liturgical resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce;~~
3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to develop pastoral care resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce.

The presiding bishop stated that the motion to substitute was defeated and asked whether other voting members wished to move their amendments that had been brought to the *ad hoc* committee before the deadline.

Mr. Roy L. Gibbs [Northwestern Ohio Synod] moved the following amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend Implementing Resolution 9, lines 50–53, page 39, by addition and substitution:*

9. To affirm the 2001 ELCA Message “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” and the 1996 ELCA Message “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” and its their continuing value for the mission and ministry of the ELCA;

Pr. Rebecca S. Larson informed the assembly that social statements are the foundational documents from which messages are derived. The 1996 message cited here derived from the social statement of a predecessor church body. According to “Policies and Procedures for Addressing Social Concerns,” the newly adopted social statement prevails if it contradicts the 1996 message.

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved to close debate on all matters before the house.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-685; NO-284**

**CARRIED:**

**To close debate on all matters before the house.**

The chair explained that the assembly would vote first on Mr. Gibbs’ amendment and then on the implementing resolutions.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-316; NO-663**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend Implementing Resolution 9, lines 50–53, page 39 by addition and substitution:*

9. To affirm the 2001 ELCA Message “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” and the 1996 ELCA Message “Sexuality: Some Common Convictions” and ~~its~~ their continuing value for the mission and ministry of the ELCA;

The presiding bishop asked Mr. Willie G. Scott, vice president of the Southeast Michigan Synod, to lead the assembly in prayer. Mr. Scott asked that the Holy Spirit come into the hearts of those present and to enlighten their thoughts with wisdom.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

*YES-695; NO-285*

- CA09.04.17**
- 1. To embrace as a church our legacy of a rich theological tradition that proclaims God’s gracious love expressed in Jesus Christ as the basis of our salvation, hope, and unity, and to call upon members of this church on this basis to commit themselves to finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements;**
  - 2. To call upon this church to affirm the various studies created for the “Journey Together Faithfully” series as resources for ongoing deliberation and discernment, and to direct the program unit for Church in Society to maintain their availability as long as demand continues;**
  - 3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to explore the feasibility of developing liturgical resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce;**
  - 4. To encourage Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, to consider developing education curricula with particular attention to the needs of children, middle school, high school youth, and their parents for understanding Christian values and making responsible choices;**
  - 5. To recognize that organizations like Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, Lutheran Youth Organization, and campus ministries foster and support friendships; to encourage them to lift up and celebrate the value of strong friendships and to support the formation of voluntary associations for nurturing them;**
  - 6. To call upon all congregations, pastors, and other rostered leaders to reach out in welcome to all in accord with previous Churchwide Assembly actions as reaffirmed by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly [CA05.05.18], and to assist members to understand what it means to be hospitable to all in the name of Christ regardless of sexual orientation;**
  - 7. To call upon the ELCA to amend the eligibility provisions of the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program, consistent with the policies of this church;**
  - 8. To call upon this church to encourage the availability and funding of comprehensive sex education programs in public schools, as well as in Lutheran private schools;**



9. To affirm the 2001 ELCA Message “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” and its continuing value for the mission and ministry of the ELCA;
10. To call upon this church’s advocacy and corporate social responsibility ministries to support and advocate measures consistent with this social statement;
11. To express appreciation for the work being done by the churchwide organization, synods, institutions, and congregations to prevent sexual harassment and misconduct; to encourage strengthening these efforts by all expressions and ministries of this church; and to ensure the availability of effective resources for dealing with sexual misconduct and sexual harassment within this church;
12. To call upon teaching theologians, bishops, pastors, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, educators, and others to continue to extend theological and biblical reflection as well as theoretical and practical understanding of human sexuality through intellectual discourse, moral deliberation, continued research, discussion, and writing;
13. To recognize that the ELCA has adopted a strategy that will guide its response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and to call upon all units and expressions of this church to support that strategy;
14. To call upon all congregations, synods, early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry organizations, public policy advocacy ministries, and all churchwide units to carry out the substance and spirit of this statement; and
15. To call upon Church in Society and other appropriate churchwide units to oversee a process of implementation and accountability for this social statement and to report on implementation to the Church Council in early 2012.

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the motion had passed.

### **Video Contest: “God’s Work. Our Hands.”**

Another of the finalist videos in the “God’s work. Our hands.” competition was presented to the assembly. This entry had come from First Lutheran Church, Malden, Mass., and featured its ministries with refugees, immigrants, and the hungry, rooted in worship. The members of the assembly joined in singing “Sing, Give Thanks.”

## Report: Reference and Counsel Committee

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked the co-chairs of the Reference and Counsel Committee, Mr. Mark S. Helmke and the Rev. Susan Langhauser, to come to the stage to guide the assembly through the committee's report. They announced that the resolutions would be considered in the following order:

- Motion A: Health Care Reform;
- Motion B: Bylaw Amendment Regarding the Batak Special Interest Conference of North America;
- Motion C: Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding;
- Motion D: Electronic Distribution of the Churchwide Assembly *Pre-Assembly Report* and Notice;
- Motion E: Wills and Living Trusts.

The co-chairs further stated that Motions B and D would have a first reading during the current session and the assembly would return to them during another plenary.

Motion A: Health Care Reform was before the assembly. It had been submitted by the Rev. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod.

### **MOVED:**

WHEREAS, the 2003 ELCA Social Statement, "Caring for our Health: Our Shared Endeavor" states: "We support: a comprehensive approach to health care as a shared endeavor among individuals, churches, government, and the wider society; a vision of health care and healing that includes individual, church, and social responsibilities; a vision of a health care system that is based on understanding health, illness, healing, and health care within a coherent set of services; equitable access for all people to basic health care services and to the benefits of public health efforts; faithful moral discernment guiding individual participation and public policymaking in health care services," (pages 2-3); and

WHEREAS, "health care in the United States, its territories, and Puerto Rico suffers from a prolonged crisis" (page 1); and

WHEREAS, "the stress on individuals and families because of society's inability to fashion an adequate health care system makes action increasingly urgent" (page 2); and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress is working on comprehensive health care reform for passage; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in assembly, commit this church in all of its expressions to the premise that "each person should have ready access to basic health care services that include preventive, acute, and chronic physical and mental health care at an affordable cost" (page 13); and be it therefore further

RESOLVED, that this assembly request that the ELCA Washington Office, in partnership with the synods, congregations, and members of the ELCA, convey the urgency and sense of this resolution to Congress and the White House.

Speaking to her motion, Bp. Crist informed the assembly that all 65 synod bishops had added their support to this motion. There was a moral imperative, she said, for passing this resolution because at present, people were paying attention to issues of health care reform. She pointed out that Lutherans long have gone on record as supporting health care for the most vulnerable members of society.

Mr. Ronald P. Larkin [Florida-Bahamas Synod] rose in opposition to the motion. He said that the pressure “to do something now” was detrimental to health care reform.

The Rev. Jennifer L. Czarnota [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] supported the motion. She said that the “Christian voice” in public debate was not identical with the ELCA’s voice. She asserted that this church employs thoughtful social advocacy.

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] spoke in favor, saying that what has not been talked about in the public forum is the growing number of Americans without health care. He argued that the members of this church need to speak out on behalf of their neighbors who need health care. He called the assembly’s attention to the e-advocacy network.

Mr. Larry D. Struve [Sierra Pacific Synod] stated that 220 people were losing their health insurance each day in Nevada, and he warned that the situation could lead to disaster.

Mr. James T. Owens [South Carolina Synod] favored the resolution; however, he wondered about the shift in language between line 27 and lines 42 and 43.

Mr. Helmke responded that the two quotations came from different parts of the social statement. There were not substantive differences between them.

The Rev. Rani R. Abdulmasih [Southeast Michigan Synod] offered strong support for the motion, stating that the ELCA can be a public witness for this basic need. He cited both immigrants and poor families as being particularly vulnerable. He related that a young person from his congregation had died from lack of health care.

Mr. David M. Thom [South Dakota Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-536; NO-26**

**CARRIED:**                   **The previous question.**

Debate being closed, Motion A was before the assembly.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-799; NO-126**

**CA09.04.18**

**RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in assembly, commit this church in all of its expressions to the premise that “each person should have ready access to basic health care services that include preventive, acute, and chronic physical and mental health care at an affordable cost” (page 13); and be it therefore further**

**RESOLVED, that this assembly request that the ELCA Washington Office, in partnership with the synods, congregations, and members of the ELCA, convey the urgency and sense of this resolution to Congress and the White House.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the motion had passed.

## Elections: Second Ballot for Vice President

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15–16, 18–20; Section IV, page 1.

Mr. Philip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, presented the results of the second ballot for vice president. He reported that 977 ballots were cast, including three illegal ballots, and noted that 733 votes (75 percent) were needed for election on the second ballot.

He announced the names of the eight nominees who had received the greatest number of votes and who would be responding to questions in Plenary Session Nine:

Mr. Carlos E. Peña, 657;      Ms. Nannette C. Dahlke, 37;      Mr. Yau T. Chiu, 6; and  
Ms. Norma L. Hirsch, 146;      Mr. Robert Benne, 21;      Mr. Jim Martin, 6.  
Mr. Ryan Schwartz, 43;      Mr. Thomas Taylor, 16;

The nominees were asked to fill out biographical information forms available from the Assembly Office. The third ballot for vice president would be held during Plenary Session Nine.

## Consideration: Amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 17–18; Section IV, pages 45–53.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked the assembly to consider the proposed amendments to the ELCA's *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* that had been recommended by the Church Council. He asked Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr., chair of the Church Council's Legal and Constitutional Committee, and Secretary David D. Swartling to present the amendments and to note those amendments that voting members had requested be removed from the *en bloc* resolution.

Secretary Swartling announced the items removed for separate consideration. He informed the assembly that it would begin with consideration of the *en bloc* resolution as presented on p. 45 of Section IV of the *Pre-Assembly Report*. He moved the adoption of the *en bloc* resolution. No second was needed because the recommendation had come from the Church Council.

**MOVED:** To adopt *en bloc*, with the exception of such amendments as may be considered separately, the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

The chair then called for the vote on the motion.

### ASSEMBLY

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

### ACTION

**YES-891; NO-51**

### CA09.04.19

**To adopt *en bloc*, with the exception of such amendments as may be considered separately, the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.**

***To amend 7.41.17. and 7.52.24. and create a new 7.41.18. and 7.52.25. to separate matters of retirement from those of disability:***

**7.41.17.Retirement. Ordained ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on the roster of ordained**

ministers of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, ~~or may be designated as disabled~~, and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status ~~or for designation of disability~~ on the roster of ordained ministers shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If an ordained minister who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ordained minister to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.41.18. Disability.** Ordained ministers may be designated as disabled and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the roster of ordained ministers shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If an ordained minister who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ordained minister to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52.24.Retirement.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, ~~or may be designated as disabled,~~ and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status ~~or for designation of disability~~ on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52.25.Disability.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may be designated as disabled, and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

- b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

*To renumber current 7.41.18. as 7.41.19. and current 7.52.25. as 7.52.26. and amend for clarity:*

**~~7.41.18:~~7.41.19.Retention of Roster Records. When an ordained minister resigns or is removed from that roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.**

**~~7.52.25:~~7.52.26.Retention of Roster Records. When an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister resigns or is removed from the roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.**

*To add a new 8.51. and renumber current 8.51. as 8.52. to clarify the establishment of relationships with other Lutheran organizations:*

**8.50. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER LUTHERAN ORGANIZATIONS**

**8.51. This church may establish relationships with Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies whose purposes are compatible with its mission and ministry. Policies**

and procedures to create and implement these relationships shall be adopted by the Church Council.

~~8.51.~~ 8.52. This church shall not, in any manner, be responsible for the debts or liabilities of other Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies, whether independent of or affiliated with this church.

*To amend 17.41.02. to increase the size of the ELCA Foundation board of trustees and to add continuing resolution 17.41.C09. to implement staggered terms:*

17.41.02. The Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees that shall be comprised of at least nine but not more than 12 ~~nine~~ persons elected to six-year terms by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with no consecutive reelection and with approximately one-third of the members elected each biennium. . . [*with the rest unchanged*].

17.41.C09. To implement staggered terms for board members, if more than four persons will be elected in 2009, the fifth person elected will serve a four-year term, and the sixth person will serve a two-year term.

*To amend 17.51.01 to increase the size of the Mission Investment Fund board of trustees and to add continuing resolution 17.51.B09. to implement staggered terms:*

17.51.01. The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees of at least nine but not more than 12 ~~nine~~ members, who shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly for six-year terms with no consecutive reelection and with approximately one-third elected each biennium as provided in Chapter 19.

17.51.B09. To implement staggered terms for board members, if more than four persons will be elected in 2009, the fifth person elected will serve a four-year term, and the sixth person will serve a two-year term.



*To amend 17.61.03. and to add continuing resolution 17.61.C09. to provide for staggered terms for plan members and plan recipients on the board of trustees for the Board of Pensions:*

- 17.61.03.** The Board of Pensions shall have a board of trustees composed of 15 persons elected for one six-year term with no consecutive reelection and with one-third elected each biennium as provided in Chapter 19.
- a. The board of trustees of the Board of Pensions shall include persons with expertise in investments, insurance, and pensions, and ~~four~~ two to five persons who are members of the plan, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister who is a plan member.

*17.61.C09. To implement staggered terms for plan members and plan recipients on the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions and to move to a board consisting of at least four plan members, at least one of whom is a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits, at least two people, one ordained minister who is a plan member and one lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits, shall be elected by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Thereafter, at least one plan member shall be elected as a trustee by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, and one additional plan member shall be elected by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. An amendment to 17.61.03.a. shall be proposed to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to provide that the board shall include at least four persons who are members of the plans, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister who is a plan member.*

*To amend 19.11.01.c. to reflect changes in governance instituted by the 2005 Plan for Mission:*

- 19.11.01.** In the nomination and election process the following general considerations shall be observed:
- a. It shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to assure that this church maintain its commitment to inclusive representation.

- b. In all elections by the Churchwide Assembly, other than for the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for election. If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the second ballot. On the second ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- c. Members of ~~the Church Council~~ and the boards or committees of churchwide units, other than those in restricted categories, who have served less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for election to one full term to be served consecutively upon the conclusion of the partial term.

*To amend 19.11.01.f. to reflect the language used in 14.32.01. concerning the composition of the Church Council:*

- f. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop from each region to serve a four-year term as ~~an advisory~~ a liaison member of the Church Council. Each biennium the Conference of Bishops shall select a bishop to serve as an advisory member of each board, program committee, and advisory committee of the churchwide organization. No synodical bishop shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit.

*To amend 19.31.01.b. and c. to make them consistent with 19.31.01.a.:*

- 19.31.01.
- b. The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. *[with the rest unchanged]*
  - c. The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. *[with the rest unchanged]*

*To add 19.31.A09. to provide for background checks for those nominated as officers of this church:*

**19.31.A09. Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as churchwide officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Church Council.**

*To amend 19.51.A06. and renumber it as 19.51.A09. to make it consistent with 19.51.02., which specifies that the European-American ethnic association nominates Caucasian members:*

**19.51.A06: 09. *Nomination for Multicultural Ministries Program Committee***

*In each biennium in preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—on behalf of the Nominating Committee—shall solicit from the ELCA ethnic associations names of persons for possible election to serve on the program committee for the Multicultural Ministries unit. The names of two persons in specified categories shall be presented in each biennium by designated associations to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations to vacant terms designated for multiracial or biracial ~~and Caucasian~~ members shall be determined in the customary manner by the Nominating Committee. Floor nominations in specified categories shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.*

*To amend 20.12.01., 20.21.19., 20.23.07., 20.41.A01.c.4. and 20.61.A92.c.4. and to renumber the last two to bring them into conformity with 20.41.04.i.5. concerning the recording of hearings:*

**20.12.01. “Fundamental procedural fairness” means and includes: avoidance by committee members of written communications to or from either the accused or accuser(s) without copy to the other; avoidance by committee members of oral communications with either the accused or accuser(s) outside the presence of the other; maintaining decorum during the hearing; allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to present their cases without unnecessary interruptions; keeping**

a verbatim record of the hearing, made either by a stenographer or court reporter or tape by audio or video recording; allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to be accompanied at the hearing by a representative (who may, but need not, be an attorney) who also may participate in the proceedings; impartiality of the committees that consider the charges; and the right to be treated in conformity with the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**20.21.19.** At the hearing, the accuser(s) may present evidence in support of the charges and thereafter the accused shall be entitled to present evidence. The accused and the accuser(s), or other person acting on behalf of either of them, shall be entitled to question the other party or any of the witnesses appearing on behalf of the other party. A verbatim record shall be made by a stenographer or court reporter or by tape audio or video recording of the hearing.

**20.23.07.** The discipline hearing committee shall decide, consistent with rules adopted under 20.23.04., to what extent the accused shall be able to confront or cross-examine witnesses testifying on behalf of the accuser and to what extent the accuser shall be able to confront or cross-examine witnesses testifying on behalf of the accused. A verbatim record shall be made by tape a stenographer or court reporter or by audio or video recording of all meetings of the committee at which testimony is presented. The accused and the accuser may be accompanied at the meeting(s) by a friend or advisor. Such friend or advisor shall not participate in the proceedings before the committee.

**20.41.A01.09.** c. *The chair of the Congregation Council must furnish the record on appeal to the Synod Council (in care of the vice president of the synod), certifying to the completeness and accuracy of the record on appeal, within 30 days of the receipt of the written notice, unless the vice president allows additional time for compelling reasons. The record on appeal will consist of the following:*

- 4) *the verbatim record made by the stenographer or court reporter or the audio or video recording of the hearing before the Congregation Council;*  
...  
*[with the rest unchanged]*

**20.61.A92-09.**

- c. *The material that shall be reviewed by the Committee on Appeals (herein referred to as the record on appeal) shall consist of the following:*
- 4) *the verbatim record made by the stenographer or court reporter or the tape audio or video recording of the hearing before the discipline hearing committee;*  
*[with the rest unchanged]*

**Constitution for Synods**

*To amend S7.26. and add S13.40. and S13.41. to separate information about the Synod Assembly from more general information about synodically authorized worshiping communities:*

- S7.26.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered recognized congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21. ~~Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.~~

- S13.40.** Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities  
**S13.41.** Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the

**Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.**

*To add †S8.16. and †S8.16.01. to incorporate procedures concerning matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops, as required by 10.32. and 10.32.01. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

**†S8.16 Conflicts of Interest**

**†S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops:**

- a. Whenever a synodical bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synodical bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synodical bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.**
- b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (†S14.13.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synodical bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.**
- c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synodical bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, or in-law (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a**

sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).

*To amend S8.42. to provide additional clarity:*

- S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:
- f. ~~Giving of corporate surety in the amount determined by the Synod Council, which shall be in the custody of the secretary, and the premium therefore shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.~~  
Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

*To add †S9.12. to require background checks for nominees for officers of synods:*

- †S9.12. Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synodical officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Synod Council.

*To amend †S11.01. to require each synod to have an Audit Committee, to add †S11.05. to specify its composition, and to amend †S15.31. to give to the Audit Committee responsibility for recommending a certified public accountant firm to conduct the annual audit:*

- †S11.01. There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, an Audit Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set

forth in this constitution or in the bylaws or continuing resolutions, and shall be subject to any applicable provisions or requirements of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S11.05. The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom are members of the synod staff. Up to half of the committee members may be Synod Council members. The Audit Committee members shall be elected by the Synod Council for a term of three years and be eligible for re-election to a second consecutive three-year term. The terms of the Audit Committee members shall be staggered. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the synod's accounting, financial reporting, internal control systems, and external audit processes as provided in †S15.31.

†S15.31. This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved selected by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.

## Model Constitution for Congregations

*To amend C12.03. to make it consistent with C12.02.:*

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. ~~Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.~~

*To amend \*C15.02. because a member cannot be compelled to appear:*



- \*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. ~~A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written citation at least ten days prior to the meeting.~~ The written citation that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council and requests the presence of a member charged with the offense shall be sent at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

### Changes in Multiple Constitutions

*To amend the following to provide for the termination of a call when a parish arrangement terminates:*

- 7.46. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between an ordained minister and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons: . . .
    - 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or  
*[with the rest unchanged]*

- †S14.13. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons: . . .
- 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or  
*[with the rest unchanged]*
- \*C9.05. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons: . . .
- 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or  
*[with the rest unchanged]*

*To add \*C20.04. to make explicit what happens to a call when a parish dissolves:*

**\*C20.04. Whenever a parish arrangement is terminated, the call of any rostered person serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that formerly was part of the parish arrangement desire to issue a new call to that rostered person, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.**

*To amend 10.41.02. and 10.41.03. to make them consistent with revised S7.22 and S7.23. and to add voting rights for those on disability:*

**10.41.02. Synods may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, or those designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01. above.**

**10.41.03. Synods may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call or those**

**designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01. above.**

*To amend S7.22. and S.73. to make them consistent and to add voting rights for those on disability:*

**S7.22. The synod may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. The synod may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call, or those designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.**

**S7.23. ~~All retired ordained ministers, all ordained ministers on leave from call, all associates in ministry on leave from call or retired, all deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on leave from call or retired, and all diaconal ministers of this church on leave from call or retired, all of whose names appear on the rosters of this synod, shall have the privilege of voice but not vote at all meetings of the Synod Assembly.~~ The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the motion had passed.

The chair next turned the assembly's attention to the proposed amendments that had been removed from the *en bloc* resolution. He referred voting members to amendments beginning on p. 51 of Section IV. He asked that the assembly delay consideration of the amendments related

to youth and young people until the following day, when members of the Youth Convocation would be present.

Secretary Swartling moved the amendments to the governing documents that would make the process for relocation of a congregation parallel to the process for establishment of additional sites for worship and that would provide an interdependent process for the establishment of additional sites for worship.

**MOVED:** To amend and add the following to make the process for relocation parallel to the process for establishment of additional sites for worship:

*To amend:*

9.53.06. A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

*To add:*

†S13.19. A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

*To amend:*

\*C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

*To add the following to provide an interdependent process for the establishment of additional sites for worship:*

9.53.08. A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

†S13.20. A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

\*C6.07. If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

Secretary Swartling called the assembly's attention to the requirement, contained in both processes, of conferring with the bishop of the synod before proceeding.

The Rev. Judith A. McKee [Lower Susquehanna Synod] spoke against the amendments, saying that the matter did not need to become a constitutional amendment. It rather should be a policy decision. She argued that making it a constitutional requirement would add an unnecessary layer to the processes.

The Rev. Jeffrey J. Blain [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] asked what effect these amendments would have on the *Model Constitution for Congregations* and the *Constitution for Synods*.

Secretary Swartling replied that the required provisions would need to be incorporated into those documents.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, spoke in favor of the amendments, saying that failure to confer with the synod bishop has led to difficulties in some instances.

The Rev. Siri C. Beckman Sorenson [South Dakota Synod] contended that decision-making may need to happen quickly, and conferring with the synod slowed the process. She urged defeat of the amendments.

The Rev. Allan C. Bjornberg, bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod, reported "unfortunate" consequences in an instance when no consultation with the synod bishop about relocation had taken place. He asked the assembly to adopt the motion to amend.

The Rev. Serena S. Sellers [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments. She told the assembly that it is easy to confer with the synod bishop. She reminded voting members that to be a congregation of the ELCA is to be part of a synod.

Ms. Anna L. Warnke [Southern Ohio Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-921; NO-35**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, action on changes to the governing documents regarding relocation and new worship sites was before the assembly.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-772; NO-188**

**CA09.04.20**

**To amend and add the following to make the process for relocation parallel to the process for establishment of additional sites for worship:**

***To amend:***

**9.53.06.A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located**

and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

*To add:*

†S13.19. A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

*To amend:*

\*C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

*To add the following to provide an interdependent process for the establishment of additional sites for worship:*

9.53.08. A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

†S13.20. A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

\*C6.07. If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide

**organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the motion had passed.

**Video Contest: “God’s Work. Our Hands.”**

Another finalist in the video contest was shown to the assembly. This one was produced by First Lutheran Church, Inglewood, Calif. To the music of “This Little Light of Mine,” children and youth from Kids Krew Summer Camp 2009 celebrated the theme “God’s work. Our hands.”

**Report: Memorials Committee**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 6, 9, 12, 39; Section VI, pages 1–96.*

The presiding bishop called upon the Rev. John C. Richter and Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, co-chairs of the Memorials Committee, to continue the report of this committee.

**Category E3: Lutheran Disaster Response**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 54–60.*

**1. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happen through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the presiding bishop to create an advisory committee charged with crafting

a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm the ELCA's commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners and community resources to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to effectively develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

## **2. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Church in Society program unit of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be "a public church that witnesses boldly to God's love for all that God has created"; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God's work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering on-going assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offers opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation's response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of



LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Disaster Response use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

### **3. Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR currently lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Disaster Response use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

#### **4. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR currently lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through

the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it effectively to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

## **5. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, over the last decade the ELCA, in cooperation with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happen through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the presiding bishop to create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm the ELCA’s commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the

staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to encourage Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to effectively develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

## **6. Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, this nation since September 11, 2001, has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR currently lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church

in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly direct the Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

## **7. West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit

to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Disaster Response use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

### *Background*

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is the collaborative program of the ELCA and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) to respond to disasters domestically. LDR responds to disasters through affiliated local Lutheran social ministry organizations of the ELCA and recognized service organizations of the LCMS working together with synods, districts, and congregations. In most areas, the social ministry organizations have statewide service areas.

LDR came into being at the beginning of the ELCA in 1988, although its roots extend into predecessor church bodies. It has, therefore, been responding to disasters for over 20 years. Over the years, the work of LDR has grown and changed, resulting in a national network of individuals, groups, and organizations involved in disaster response. This involvement ranges from hundreds of volunteer hours by a group of volunteers from one congregation, for example, to multimillion-dollar case-management grants from the federal government managed by a social ministry organization.

The size and scale of LDR's work, however, always has been determined by the availability of donated funds, coupled with the capacity of volunteers. This means that in response to some disasters the financial capacity of LDR allows for a more extensive response, while for other disasters, the financial capacity has been modest. In all disaster response situations, however, local Lutheran congregations, serving in their own communities, amplify what is available with their own contributions, including volunteers. This financial support does not come through LDR.

The ELCA raises funds for LDR through the ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal. The ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal receives gifts in two categories: designated and undesignated. Designated gifts are dedicated for disaster response in response to particular events and specific places (e.g., a particular hurricane). Undesignated gifts may be used both for smaller disasters for which there is no large-scale fundraising and for LDR program development and support to build or sustain capacity for disaster response.

The national scope of disasters, such as September 11, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, stretched and expanded the capacity of LDR significantly. Within the ELCA, gifts to the ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal designated for these disasters showed the generosity of Lutherans in response to need. During this same period, gifts to the undesignated disaster response fund of the ELCA also were larger than at any other time in LDR's history.

These gifts made it possible for LDR to make preparedness grants for program support and capacity-building to the social ministry organizations through which LDR works. Introduced in 2003 at a time when funding for LDR was very strong, these grants continued through 2008. In 2008, funds available in the undesignated disaster response fund were depleted to the point that LDR could not both respond robustly to disasters and continue to provide preparedness grants for program support. During this period as well, funding support from the LCMS to the work of LDR was reduced dramatically. Therefore, LDR-related social ministry organizations were notified early in 2008 that these grants would not be offered in 2009.

These memorials address the question of how the LDR network can continue to work effectively in a time of reduced funding when LDR cannot provide external support to social ministry organizations for preparedness. The ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal

continues to raise funds for disaster response, but disaster response giving, like giving to many other programs, has decreased significantly due to a variety of factors, including the recent economic downturn.

The disaster response goals and the capacity of the ELCA through LDR always have been and always will be limited to the financial resources available. During more than 20 years of responding to disasters, however, LDR has consistently maintained an excellent reputation, even when funds were more limited, such as at the present time.

Since LDR is a collaborative ministry of the ELCA and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, the ELCA cannot unilaterally dictate the creation of a level of consultation or governance for LDR. It should be noted, however, that the LCMS and the ELCA are together engaged in a process to address the future nature and focus of LDR. In addition, a strategic planning task force has been convened by LDR as a direct result of the concerns raised by these synods. It includes the chief executive officers from five LDR-affiliated social ministry organizations to advise LDR on effective and appropriate response mechanisms in a time of limited financial resources.

### *Churchwide Assembly Action*

Ms. Wallace moved the recommendation of the Memorials Committee regarding Category E3: Lutheran Disaster Response.

#### **MOVED:**

To thank the Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synods for their strong support for and concern about Lutheran Disaster Response;

To acknowledge that Lutheran Disaster Response is a collaborative ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS);

To acknowledge that Lutheran Disaster Response currently is involved in a strategic planning process, including the chief executive officers from five Lutheran Disaster Response-affiliated social ministry organizations;

To anticipate that this process will address effective, appropriate, and sustainable response mechanisms and the future nature and focus of Lutheran Disaster Response;

To acknowledge that the ELCA and LCMS are currently involved in a facilitated process regarding their relationship in Lutheran Disaster Response;

To encourage the ELCA to continue to deepen and develop its process for working together with churchwide units, synods, and social ministry organizations in times of specific disasters; and

To request that the Church in Society program unit bring a progress report to the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

Mr. Edward C. Cool [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to amend the response by adding a new fourth paragraph to call for consideration of the creation of an advisory committee and the definition of a process for succession of advisory committee members.

#### **MOVED;**

#### **SECONDED:**

*To amend by inserting a new fourth paragraph:*

To give consideration to creating a permanent Lutheran Disaster Response advisory committee and to defining a process for succession of committee membership;

Mr. Cool spoke to his motion, saying that there had been financial struggles that had affected local social ministry organizations. He appreciated that LDR is engaged in a strategic planning process, but he stated that he believes that it is important to create a permanent LDR advisory committee.

The Rev. Serena S. Sellers [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke against the amendment. Terrible disasters had occurred, she pointed out, but LDR has grown in capacity.

The Rev. Clifton D. Eshbach [Lower Susquehanna Synod] argued that creation of an advisory committee would make LDR more effective, so he urged the adoption of the amendment.

The Rev. Marie C. Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, spoke against the amendment, asserting that action to create an advisory board might work against the development of a strategic plan for LDR.

There being no more speaking to the amendment, the chair called for a vote.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-549; NO-345**

**CARRIED:**

*To amend by inserting a new fourth paragraph:*

To give consideration to creating a permanent Lutheran Disaster Response advisory committee and to defining a process for succession of committee membership;

The resolution as amended was now before the assembly.

Bp. Jerge thanked the assembly for the help that her synod had received following an airplane crash in Clarence, N.Y. She spoke in favor of the motion, highlighting the need for the work to be done with strategic planning.

The Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, spoke in favor of the memorial. He stated that it was a joy to see people coming to do the work of the church through LDR, especially those who were not engaged in any other way.

There being no further speaking to the motion, the presiding bishop called on the Rev. Murray D. Finck, bishop of the Pacifica Synod, to lead the assembly in prayer.

The chair then called for a vote on the response to Memorial Category E3: Lutheran Disaster Response, as amended.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-929; NO-20**

**CA09.04.21**

**To thank the Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, and West Virginia-Western Maryland synods for their strong support for and concern about Lutheran Disaster Response;**

**To acknowledge that Lutheran Disaster Response is a collaborative ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in**



**America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS);**

**To acknowledge that Lutheran Disaster Response currently is involved in a strategic planning process, including the chief executive officers from five Lutheran Disaster Response-affiliated social ministry organizations;**

**To give consideration to creating a permanent Lutheran Disaster Response advisory committee and to defining a process for succession of committee membership;**

**To anticipate that this process will address effective, appropriate, and sustainable response mechanisms and the future nature and focus of Lutheran Disaster Response;**

**To acknowledge that the ELCA and LCMS are currently involved in a facilitated process regarding their relationship in Lutheran Disaster Response;**

**To encourage the ELCA to continue to deepen and develop its process for working together with churchwide units, synods, and social ministry organizations in times of specific disasters; and**

**To request that the Church in Society program unit bring a progress report to the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared that the motion had been adopted.

## **Category B4: Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 18–24.*

### **1. Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, great swaths of Palestinian land have been taken by Israel on the West Bank and an apartheid-like occupation has allowed housing for Israeli Jews, called settlements, and non-Jews are not allowed to live in these colonies; and

WHEREAS, 11,000 Palestinian prisoners are in Israeli prisons, many of whom have never been charged; and

WHEREAS, Israel continues to build a wall across Palestinian land, and that wall is four times as long as the ten-foot-high Berlin wall, while the twenty-five-foot-high Israeli wall separates Palestinian families, homes, and businesses, and travel through checkpoints is difficult; and

WHEREAS, Gaza is one large ghetto, an open-air prison, with Israel controlling all exits and entrances, its air space, and its sea ports, and with meager food and medical supplies allowed to enter; and

WHEREAS, American taxpayers give Israel approximately \$7,000,000 per day, and Americans are considered by much of the world as equally responsible for Israeli violations of human rights; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to ask the U.S. government to give an accounting of the amount and use of American taxpayer dollars being used by Israel; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America encourage and support efforts by the American government to bring Israel into real negotiations with all of the Palestinian parties to find a peaceful two-state settlement, which includes removal of Israeli

West Bank settlements and returning the land to the Palestinians, and further to give the Palestinians in Gaza control and freedom in their own land; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ask the U.S. government to open an investigation on the financial support and alleged foreign policy interference by American Christian Zionism in the West Bank and Gaza.

## **2. Southwestern Texas Synod (4E) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has committed itself to peace-making through the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine” adopted at the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, which assumes that ELCA action will, among other things, (§II.A.):

- provide clear and reliable information to ELCA members;
- be balanced in terms of its care for all parties in the conflict;
- be shaped by a commitment to listen and learn from companions and from both those with whom participants agree and those with whom they disagree;
- take responsibility for careful consideration of the political and humanitarian implications of our theology, and reflect zero tolerance for anti-Jewish and/or anti-Muslim sentiments or actions; and

WHEREAS, the strategy seeks among its outcomes (§II.B):

- a better understanding among ELCA leaders and members, along with their legislators, about the situation in Israel and Palestine;
- a deepening of mutual understanding between Jews and Lutherans and Muslims and Lutherans through dialogue and shared action;
- the enrichment of ELCA strategy for engagement in the Holy Land through these relationships, and increased cooperation and collaboration between the ELCA and Jewish groups in the U.S.—and with groups within Israel—that seek peace with justice in Israel and Palestine; and

WHEREAS, this church’s calling to cultivate a culture of peace involves a process of informed moral deliberation that seeks “the powerful vision of difference in unity . . . call[ing] us to engage differences, not to ignore or fear them . . . [and] to strengthen [our] own particular communities in ways that promote respect and appreciation for people in other communities” (ELCA Social Statement on Peace, §5A); and

WHEREAS, the war of words in the Arab Israeli Palestinian conflict includes both intentional and negligent misrepresentations of the history of the region and of Arab, Israeli, and Palestinian actions and policies; and

WHEREAS, this church’s moral deliberation must take adequate account of a region with a long, complex history, for which different parties have widely disparate narratives and interpretations, and with multiple conflicts including those between the Israelis and Palestinians, between different Palestinian factions, and between nations in the region; and

WHEREAS, the quest for peace between Palestinians and Israelis has recently been complicated by the increasing regional influence of Iran, which has avowed a strategic goal of annihilating Israel and has supported militias with the same intent; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has been and remains committed to accompanying the Palestinian Lutheran brothers and sisters in their suffering and in their striving for Palestinian political autonomy and recognition in a viable, contiguous state; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its 1994 Declaration to the Jewish People expressed the “urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people,” whose corporate identity and self-expression is intimately tied to the state of Israel; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm this church’s commitment to peace-making in the Arab Israeli Palestinian conflict through implementation of its Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine to the fullest extent possible, and in so doing to:

- embody a multilateral solidarity with the state of Israel and the Palestinian people as the primary communities involved and with all those with whom this church finds common cause for peace, justice, and dignity; and
- educate and equip members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies of the ELCA for advocacy on behalf of all parties to the conflict who seek peace through nonviolent action; and
- resist preferential identification with any party in the conflict that may inhibit members of the ELCA’s roles as witnesses for peace and facilitators of reconciliation; and
- renounce the use of language and materials that caricature or over-simplify the conflict, dehumanize Arabs, Israelis, or Palestinians, or challenge the political legitimacy of their respective national movements, and counsel our strategy partners against such use; and
- encourage and empower ELCA members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies to become more familiar with and engaged with both Israeli and Palestinian schools, humanitarian organizations, and co-existence projects.

### **3. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has committed itself to peacemaking through the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine,” adopted at the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, which assumes that ELCA action will, among other things (§II.A.):

- provide clear and reliable information to ELCA members,
- be balanced in terms of its care for all parties in the conflict,
- be shaped by a commitment to listen and learn from companions and from both those with whom participants agree and those with whom they disagree,
- take responsibility for careful consideration of the political and humanitarian implications of its theology, and
- reflect . . . zero tolerance for anti-Jewish and/or anti-Muslim sentiments or actions; and

WHEREAS, the strategy seeks among its outcomes (§II.B):

- a better understanding among ELCA leaders and members, along with their legislators, about the situation in Israel and Palestine,
- a deepening of mutual understanding between Jews and Lutherans and Muslims and Lutherans through dialogue and shared action,
- the enrichment of ELCA strategy for engagement in the Holy Land through these relationships, and
- increased cooperation and collaboration between the ELCA and Jewish groups in the U.S.—and with groups within Israel—that seek peace with justice in Israel and Palestine; and

WHEREAS, this church’s calling to cultivate a culture of peace involves a process of informed moral deliberation that seeks “the powerful vision of difference in unity . . . , call[ing] us to engage differences, not to ignore or fear them . . . [and] to strengthen [our] own particular communities in ways that promote respect and appreciation for people in other communities” (ELCA Social Statement on Peace, §5A); and

WHEREAS, the war of words in the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict includes both intentional and negligent misrepresentations of the history of the region and of Arab, Israeli, and Palestinian actions and policies; and

WHEREAS, moral deliberation must take adequate account of a region with a long, complex history, for which different parties have widely disparate narratives and interpretations, and with multiple conflicts, including those between the Israelis and Palestinians, between different Palestinian factions, and between nations in the region; and

WHEREAS, the quest for peace between Palestinians and Israelis recently has been complicated by the increasing regional influence of Iran, which has avowed a strategic goal of annihilating Israel and has supported militias with the same intent; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has been and remains committed to accompanying its Palestinian Lutheran brothers and sisters in their suffering and in their striving for Palestinian political autonomy and recognition in a viable, contiguous state; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its 1994 Declaration to the Jewish People expressed the “urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people,” whose corporate identity and self-expression is intimately tied to the State of Israel; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm this church’s commitment to peace-making in the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict through implementation of its Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine to the fullest extent possible, and in so doing to:

- re-affirm this church’s renunciation of violence; and
- embody a multilateral solidarity with the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples, as the primary communities involved, and with all those with whom we find common cause for peace, justice, and dignity; and
- acknowledge the State of Israel as a legitimate political self-expression of the Jewish people, as well as the urgency of national sovereignty as a political self-expression of the Palestinian people; and
- educate and equip members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies of the ELCA for advocacy on behalf of all parties to the conflict who seek peace;
- resist preferential identification with any party in the conflict that may inhibit members’ roles as witnesses for peace and facilitators of reconciliation, even as we continue this church’s unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land; and
- renounce the use of language and materials that caricature or over-simplify the conflict, dehumanize Arabs, Israelis, Palestinians, or Arabs, or challenge the political legitimacy of their respective national movements, and counsel this church’s strategy partners against such use; and
- encourage and empower ELCA members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies to become more familiar with and engaged with both Israeli and Palestinian schools, humanitarian organizations, and co-existence projects; and
- position this church’s witness more strongly to challenge any injustice in the region.

#### **4. New England Synod (7B) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to reaffirm this church’s commitment to peace-making in the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict through implementation of its Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine to the fullest extent possible, and:

- to encourage the leaders and members of the ELCA engaged in this difficult work and to commend them in their faithful resolve;
- to embody our multilateral solidarity with our partners without sacrifice to the duties of witness against injustice and violence;
- to be scrupulously clear in our support of Israel’s legitimate security concerns, and morally cognizant of the existential fears and the sense of isolation that affects not only so many in Israel but also so many Jews in the Diaspora;
- to continue to seek to make the concerns and perspectives of Palestinians heard in a public sphere where they have often been invisible or visibly caricatured;
- to oppose and seek to disarm the politics in our land that villainize and isolate Jews or Arabs or Muslims;

- to continue to reach out to agencies and leaders of the Jewish community and communicate forthrightly but with humility the passions and griefs we bear for the victims of Israel and Palestine;
- to recognize that in a conflict so fueled by legitimate passions and defined from such divergent perspectives we shall not be able to fulfill the strategy’s ideals perfectly or be immune to perceptions of bias, naïveté, or hostility, and yet we must persevere in the attempt; and
- to continue to seek to educate and equip members, congregations, synods, personnel and affiliated agencies of the ELCA for advocacy on behalf of all parties to the conflict who seek peace.

## **5. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2008 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has committed itself to peacemaking through the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine,” adopted at the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, which assumes that ELCA action will, among other things (§II.A.):

- provide clear and reliable information to ELCA members,
- be balanced in terms of its care for all parties in the conflict,
- be shaped by a commitment to listen and learn from companions and from both those with whom participants agree and those with whom they disagree,
- take responsibility for careful consideration of the political and humanitarian implications of its theology, and
- reflect . . . zero tolerance for anti-Jewish and/or anti-Muslim sentiments or actions; and

WHEREAS, the strategy seeks among its outcomes (§II.B):

- a better understanding among ELCA leaders and members, along with their legislators, about the situation in Israel and Palestine,
- a deepening of mutual understanding between Jews and Lutherans and Muslims and Lutherans through dialogue and shared action,
- the enrichment of ELCA strategy for engagement in the Holy Land through these relationships, and
- increased cooperation and collaboration between the ELCA and Jewish groups in the U.S.—and with groups within Israel—that seek peace with justice in Israel and Palestine; and

WHEREAS, the church’s calling to cultivate a culture of peace involves a process of informed moral deliberation that seeks “the powerful vision of difference in unity . . . , call[ing] us to engage differences, not to ignore or fear them . . . [and] to strengthen [our] own particular communities in ways that promote respect and appreciation for people in other communities” (ELCA Social Statement on Peace, §5A); and

WHEREAS, the war of words in the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict includes both intentional and negligent misrepresentations of the history of the region and of Arab, Israeli, and Palestinian actions and policies; and

WHEREAS, moral deliberation must take adequate account of a region with a long, complex history, for which different parties have widely disparate narratives and interpretations, and with multiple conflicts, including those between the Israelis and Palestinians, between different Palestinian factions, and between nations in the region; and

WHEREAS, the quest for peace between Palestinians and Israelis recently has been complicated by the increasing regional influence of Iran, which has avowed a strategic goal of annihilating Israel and has supported militias with the same intent; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has been and remains committed to accompanying its Palestinian Lutheran brothers and sisters in their suffering and in their striving for Palestinian political autonomy and recognition in a viable, contiguous state; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its 1994 Declaration to the Jewish People expressed the “urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people,” whose corporate identity and self-expression is intimately tied to the State of Israel; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm this church's commitment to peace-making in the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict through implementation of its Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine to the fullest extent possible, and in so doing to:

- embody a multilateral solidarity with the State of Israel and the Palestinian people as the primary communities involved and with all those with whom we find common cause for peace, justice, and dignity; and
- acknowledge the State of Israel as a legitimate political self-expression of the Jewish people, as well as the urgency of national sovereignty as a political self-expression of the Palestinian people; and educate and equip members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies of the ELCA for advocacy on behalf of all parties to the conflict who seek peace;
- resist preferential identification with any party in the conflict that may inhibit its members' roles as witnesses for peace and facilitators of reconciliation; and
- renounce the use of language and materials that caricature or over-simplify the conflict, dehumanize Arabs, Israelis, or Palestinians, or challenge the political legitimacy of their respective national movements, and counsel this church's strategy partners against such use; and
- encourage and empower ELCA members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies to become more familiar with and engaged with both Israeli and Palestinian schools, humanitarian organizations, and co-existence projects.

## **6. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has committed itself to peacemaking through the "Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine," adopted at the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, which assumes that ELCA action will, among other things (§II.A.):

- provide clear and reliable information to ELCA members,
- be balanced in terms of its care for all parties in the conflict,
- be shaped by a commitment to listen and learn from companions and from both those with whom participants agree and those with whom they disagree,
- take responsibility for careful consideration of the political and humanitarian implications of its theology, and
- reflect . . . zero tolerance for anti-Jewish and/or anti-Muslim sentiments or actions; and

WHEREAS, the strategy seeks among its outcomes (§II.B):

- a better understanding among ELCA leaders and members, along with their legislators, about the situation in Israel and Palestine,
- a deepening of mutual understanding between Jews and Lutherans and Muslims and Lutherans through dialogue and shared action,
- the enrichment of ELCA strategy for engagement in the Holy Land through these relationships, and
- increased cooperation and collaboration between the ELCA and Jewish groups in the U.S.—and with groups within Israel—that seek peace with justice in Israel and Palestine; and

WHEREAS, this church's calling to cultivate a culture of peace involves a process of informed moral deliberation that seeks "the powerful vision of difference in unity . . . , call[ing] us to engage differences, not to ignore or fear them . . . [and] to strengthen [our] own particular communities in ways that promote respect and appreciation for people in other communities" (ELCA Social Statement on Peace, §5A); and

WHEREAS, the war of words in the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict includes both intentional and negligent misrepresentations of the history of the region and of Arab, Israeli, and Palestinian actions and policies; and

WHEREAS, moral deliberation must take adequate account of a region with a long, complex history, for which different parties have widely disparate narratives and interpretations, and with multiple conflicts,

including those between the Israelis and Palestinians, between different Palestinian factions, and between nations in the region; and

WHEREAS, the quest for peace between Palestinians and Israelis recently has been complicated by the increasing regional influence of Iran, which has avowed a strategic goal of annihilating Israel and has supported militias with the same intent; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has been and remains committed to accompanying its Palestinian Lutheran brothers and sisters in their suffering and in their striving for Palestinian political autonomy and recognition in a viable, contiguous state; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA in its 1994 Declaration to the Jewish People expressed the “urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people,” whose corporate identity and self-expression is intimately tied to the State of Israel; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to reaffirm this church’s commitment to peace-making in the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict through implementation of its Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine to the fullest extent possible, and in so doing to:

- re-affirm this church’s renunciation of violence; and
- embody a multilateral solidarity with the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples, as the primary communities involved, and with all those with whom we find common cause for peace, justice, and dignity; and
- acknowledge the State of Israel as a legitimate political self-expression of the Jewish people, as well as the urgency of national sovereignty as a political self-expression of the Palestinian people; and
- educate and equip members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies of the ELCA for advocacy on behalf of all parties to the conflict who seek peace;
- resist preferential identification with any party in the conflict that may inhibit members’ roles as witnesses for peace and facilitators of reconciliation, even as we continue this church’s unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land; and
- renounce the use of language and materials that caricature or over-simplify the conflict, dehumanize Arabs, Israelis, Palestinians, or Arabs, or challenge the political legitimacy of their respective national movements, and counsel this church’s strategy partners against such use; and
- encourage and empower ELCA members, congregations, synods, personnel, and affiliated agencies to become more familiar with and engaged with both Israeli and Palestinian schools, humanitarian organizations, and co-existence projects; and
- position this church’s witness more strongly to challenge any injustice in the region.

## **7. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) continues to stand firm in its commitment to seek peace, justice, and security for all Israelis and Palestinians through its strategy of engagement, Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land; and

WHEREAS, the Academy for Bishops of the ELCA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) completed a trip to the Holy Land in January 2009, as a witness for peace with justice for all people and as an expression of accompaniment with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) and ministries of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF); and

WHEREAS, clergy and lay leaders of the ELCJHL have continually urged the ELCA to remember them in their prayers and in their support of the vital ministries of Word and Sacrament, inclusive education, ecumenical and interfaith understanding and humanitarian assistance that the ELCJHL provides; and

WHEREAS, Gaza has been under a nearly total blockade of all goods and commodities for almost two years, and the tragic loss of life and the continuing loss of liberty in Gaza—both before, during, and following the tragic conflict of December 2008 and January 2009—flow directly from the continuing exercise of control the government of Israel exerts over Palestinian life in Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC), responding to the continuing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, has called on all churches to even greater engagement in joint efforts for peace\*; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod of the ELCA has strengthened its own efforts in awareness-building as well as its commitment to the Peace Not Walls strategy for engagement for peace with justice in the Holy Land through its March 29, 2009, symposium, “Lutheran Witness in Palestine: Grace Under Pressure”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly commend the bishops of the ELCA and the ELCIC for their courageous witness and their stand for justice and peacemaking in the Holy Land; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly encourage the congregations of this synod to pray for the people of the ELCJHL and all the people in Israel and Palestine; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, meeting in Minneapolis, August 17-23, 2009, to encourage all synods and congregations to renew and strengthen their efforts toward building awareness of the daily injustice and insecurity faced by Palestinians and Israelis and to advocate for a viable and just path toward true peace and security in the Holy Land; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to encourage each ELCA synod to sponsor and implement at least one event on its territory to present the ELCA strategy, Peace Not Walls, to educate congregations and individuals as to the present circumstances in Israel and Palestine; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly that the ELCA continue to partner with other organizations and agencies to help alleviate the suffering of the people of Gaza and Israel, to work with people of faith and good will throughout the world to bring about the just creation of two interdependent, secure states for Palestinians and Israelis, and, by so doing, to work to prevent such calamity from ever occurring again in that land.

\* World Council of Churches Executive Committee Statement on the Gaza War, Feb. 17–20, 2009, Bossey, Switzerland

### *Background*

A “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine” was adopted by the Church Council in April 2005. The ninth Churchwide Assembly, meeting subsequently 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. . . .” The tenth Churchwide Assembly in 2007:

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.

The strategy is now in its fourth year of implementation through the Peace Not Walls 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 2007 Churchwide Assembly and can provide the basis for more activities in the coming months. Perhaps the most widely known event was the ELCA Conference of Bishops' Academy held in the Holy Land in January 2009. Forty-five bishops from the ELCA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada participated in a week-long visit that included worship experiences and meetings in Jordan (for a portion of the group), Jerusalem, Israel, and the West Bank. The bishops initially shared their experiences via a blog and then prepared a statement at the end of the visit. Many of them have prepared separate reports and have shared with their synods and local communities what they saw and heard. A number of bishops who were unable to travel in January are planning a visit in late November.

In the area of awareness-building, Peace Not Walls has distributed more than 5,000 map cards, which outline the loss of Palestinian lands since 1948; has established Web pages with a variety of resources, such as handouts, videos, presentations, worship materials, and statements; has planned for a presence at the 2009 Lutheran Youth Gathering and Lutheran Youth Organization convention; and supported the development of a feature article on Christian Zionism in *The Lutheran* magazine. The 2008 video, "Peace Not Walls: Making a Difference in the Holy Land," has been 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. Six ELCA members have been selected for service with the ELCJHL as part of the Young Adults in Global Mission program. Three ELCA members have served with the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel and another is serving as its U.S. coordinator. To enhance companions' economic well-being, the Peace Not Walls Web site facilitates 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. Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson has become more widely recognized for his leadership on Middle East issues through his involvement in NILI, hosting a Christian-Muslim conversation with King Abdullah II of Jordan in April 2009, joining a meeting of Christian leaders with former President Jimmy Carter to encourage President Obama's efforts for a two-state solution, being appointed to the White House Task Force on inter-religious dialogue and cooperation, and being an organizer of an ecumenical letter to the president in June 2009 on the importance of Israeli-Palestinian peace following the President's address in Cairo, Egypt.

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 churchwide strategy calls for accompaniment of the ELCJHL, The Lutheran World Federation, and ecumenical and other partners as well as 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, including exclusivist religious claims that are ethnic in scope.

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 strategy 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.

#### *Cost estimate*

The implementation of this activity currently is carried out using existing and specially designated funds. While this recommendation would not necessarily require additional funds, supplementary funding would be required for more work to be done.

#### *Churchwide Assembly Action*

On behalf of the Memorials Committee, Pr. Richter moved the recommendation concerning the strategy for engagement in Israel and Palestine as printed on p. 24, Section VI of the *Pre-Assembly Report*.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

To receive the memorials of the Eastern Washington-Idaho, Southwestern Texas, Indiana-Kentucky, New England, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synods related to the ELCA strategy, Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land;

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, especially in Gaza;
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 and for the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

The Rev. Terri K. Stagner-Collier [Southeastern Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege. She serves as pastor of Christus Victor Lutheran Church, Ocean Springs, Miss. She reminded the assembly that there were still some 900 families in FEMA trailers in that area. She expressed appreciation for the work of the volunteers of LDR. The assembly responded with applause.

The Rev. Jennifer L. Czarnota [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved to amend the rules of the assembly.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” by addition:*

During discussions for which amendments were required to be submitted in advance of discussion, this assembly will not take any action that would have the effect of terminating debate on the main motion until all authors of properly submitted amendments have the opportunity to move their amendment, should they choose to do so.

The chair ruled the motion out of order at the present time but accepted Pr. Czarnota’s speaking as notice of a motion to be made later.

The Rev. Richard G. Mahan [West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod] spoke against the memorial as an Arab pastor. He argued that the recommendation represented a faulty understanding of this church’s concern for the Israeli-Palestinian context as a fundamentally political concern. He declared the existing ELCA strategy to be a good one; furthermore, he agreed with the need for this church to have a concern for the issue. However, he pointed out, there was no mention of Israeli occupation of Palestine in the recommendation. He acknowledged his belief that Israel is a legitimate expression of the Jewish people. He also

pointed out that, through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, this church has an identification with the Palestinians.

The Rev. Bruce H. Burnside, bishop of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, spoke in favor of the response to the memorial. He stated that the ELCA had built its strategy around advocacy, awareness, and accompaniment. He argued that the strategy encourages inter-faith dialogue and is a strong one.

The Rev. Robert J. Giese [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the resolution. He related to the assembly the experience that he and his son had of passing through the wall between Jerusalem and Bethlehem while on a pilgrimage in April 2009. He stated that Christians were fleeing Palestine at an astonishing rate.

Mr. Albert H. Quie [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke in opposition, noting what he considered to be a bias toward the Palestinian side.

The Rev. Rani R. Abdulmasih [Southeast Michigan Synod] spoke in favor of the resolution. He expressed appreciation for the memorials. As someone born and raised in Jerusalem, he personally had experienced the persecution of Christians in Israel. He urged this church to listen to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL).

The Rev. Herbert C. Spomer [Lower Susquehanna Synod] commented on the fact that advocacy was mentioned in the first numbered point but not elsewhere. He asserted that there is no culture of peace in the Middle East and that justice there is based on the use of conventional weapons. He declared that this church should be dedicated to working for peace.

The Rev. Duane C. Pederson, bishop of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, stated his opposition to identifying Israel as a Jewish state. He was opposed to what he saw as muting this church's ability to challenge violence and injustice.

The Rev. Richard B. Geib [Lower Susquehanna Synod] gave notice of a proposed amendment.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called for the orders of the day. He announced that Pr. Geib's amendment would be considered first when the Memorial Committee reported again.

## **Introduction of Invited Guests: Seminary Presidents**

The presiding bishop introduced to the assembly the presidents of the eight seminaries of the ELCA. First were those from the Eastern Cluster: the Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg; the Rev. Philip D. W. Krey, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; and the Rev. Marcus J. Miller, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. From the Covenant Cluster came the following: the Rev. James K. Echols, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago; the Rev. Mark R. Ramseth, Trinity Lutheran Seminary; and the Rev. Duane H. Larson, Wartburg Theological Seminary. The Western Cluster was represented by the following: the Rev. Richard H. Bliese, Luther Seminary; and the Rev. Phyllis B. Anderson, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. The assembly greeted the seminary presidents with applause.

## **Announcements**

Secretary David D. Swartling provided evening announcements. He stated that the Reference and Counsel Committee would meet as soon as possible following recess in Room 209. He reminded voting members that the deadline for turning in the common ballot was 6:45 P.M. and the deadline for proposing amendments to the biennial budget was Friday, August 21, at 8:30 A.M. He also called the assembly's attention to the various receptions to be held that evening.

## **Recess**

The presiding bishop called on Mr. Gary L. Wipperman, member of the Church Council from Waverly, Iowa, to lead the assembly in a closing hymn and prayer. Those present joined in singing “In Christ Called to Baptize.”

The seventh plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 6:29 P.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Eight

Friday, August 21, 2009

8:00 A.M.–11:15 A.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), lit a candle and rang a bell, and he then called to order Plenary Session Eight of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly at 8:00 A.M. CDT in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minn.

He called on Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, member of the Church Council from Duluth, Minn., to lead the assembly in song and prayer. Ms. Niedringhaus invited the assembly to join in singing “The God of Abraham Praise.” She then read a passage from Deuteronomy and offered prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson greeted the assembly and related that he had heard expressions of great appreciation for the previous evening’s receptions hosted by the seminary presidents and Lutheran Men in Mission and for the concert given by the National Lutheran Choir at Central Lutheran Church of Minneapolis. He then proceeded to outline the order of business for the session, including the viewing of additional entries in the ELCA’s “God’s work. Our hands.” video contest; deliberation on additional procedural motions; and consideration of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

## Video Contest: “God’s Work. Our Hands.”

The presiding bishop turned the assembly’s attention to the video screens to view two entries in the ELCA’s “God’s work. Our hands.” video contest. The first was from Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Culver City, Calif. The second video was from Trinity Lutheran Church, Rockford, Ill. Presiding Bishop Hanson reminded voting members that the winners of the video contest would be announced on Saturday, August 24.

## Parliamentary Matters

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 5–21.

Before moving to the regular business of the session, Presiding Bishop Hanson recognized the Rev. John D. Schleicher, bishop of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, for a point of personal privilege. Bp. Schleicher asked for the assembly’s prayers for a voting member from his synod who had to leave the assembly to attend to her sister, who had been seriously injured in a car accident in North Carolina. Bp. Schleicher thanked assembly staff and the Rev. Leonard H. Bolick, bishop of the North Carolina Synod, for assisting in travel arrangements for the voting member.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on the Rev. Jennifer L. Czarnota [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin], who earlier had given notice that she wished to offer a motion to amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure.” Pr. Czarnota moved her amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” by addition:*

During discussion for which amendments were required to be submitted in advance of discussion, this assembly will not take any action that would have the effect of terminating debate on the main motion until all authors of properly submitted amendments have the opportunity to move their amendment, should they choose to do so.

Speaking to her amendment, Pr. Czarnota stated that she had been blessed to hear opposing sides of issues, and she appreciated people who put forth conscientious efforts to improve the assembly. She argued that the assembly should honor its commitment to those who had properly submitted motions before the deadline by hearing their motions for amendment. She stated her belief that hearing all voices around the table was vital.

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against the amendment, noting that the point of a motion to close debate was to test the will of the assembly. He urged voting members not to remove this flexibility and asserted that the amendment's passage would guarantee lengthy debate.

The Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, spoke in favor of the motion, contending that it would serve as a witness to the world that the discussion had been patient, kind, loving, and caring. He expressed his opinion that the rule change would lift up the assembly's commitment to respect bound conscience and give space for those who disagree, while giving all an opportunity to listen.

Ms. Kim M. Winchell [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] spoke against the motion, noting that the *ad hoc* committee had recommended adoption of none of the amendments that had been submitted. She stated her hope that voting members would agree not to consider them.

The Rev. Paul R. Messner [Upstate New York Synod] spoke in favor of the motion. He recalled that during the previous day's session, there had been no debate on the implementing resolutions because a motion had been passed to call the question on all matters before the house. By voting without debate, he reasoned, the bound consciences of those who wanted to speak had not been respected. He believed that to have debate in a serious way, the assembly should take all the time necessary.

The Rev. William E. Baum [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-868; NO-98**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, Presiding Bishop Hanson called for a vote on Pr. Czarnota's proposed amendment to the rules.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-372; NO-598**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" by addition:*

During discussion for which amendments were required to be submitted in advance of discussion, this assembly will not take any action that would have the effect of terminating debate on the main motion until all authors of properly submitted amendments have the opportunity to move their amendment, should they choose to do so.

The chair announced that the motion to amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” was not adopted.

### **Recommendation on Ministry Policies (continued)**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 41–42; Section V, pages 85–93, 95–97, 99–101, 103–122.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that the assembly would consider the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] offered a motion to change the order in which the assembly would consider the recommendation’s four resolutions.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

That the resolutions related to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies be considered and voted on separately in the following order: Resolution Three, Resolution One, Resolution Two, Resolution Four.

Speaking to his motion, Pr. Davidson explained that it was offered in response to the breakfast table conversations held earlier in the week. He said he had wondered what it meant to commit the assembly to a process regardless of whether or not members knew what the outcome would be. Whatever the outcome, he proposed, members of this church would work to keep this church together and respect bound conscience.

The Rev. Kay S. Richter [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the change in the order. She observed that she and a friend disagreed on many things. Prior to the assembly, they had talked about Scripture and bound conscience. She and her friend had prayed with each other and for each other with respect. Pr. Richter reported that they already had become partners in bearing each other’s burdens, regardless of the outcome. She believed that undertaking the commitment in Resolution Three to love and respect one another in the Lord’s name would be a helpful preliminary to any of the other votes.

The Rev. Richard A. Fitzer [Eastern North Dakota Synod] also spoke in favor of the motion. He affirmed his belief that the commitments in Resolution Three always should be the first step in anything that this church does. His hope and prayer was that this church’s deepest passions and firmest convictions would always be for one another in the ELCA, for the body of Christ, and for the whole world. He wondered aloud why God might have called this church together with such different points of view and whether God would continue to call this church together. Pr. Fitzer expressed his appreciation for Pr. Czarnota, who had proposed the amendment, because she had convinced him that he needed to think about her point of view differently.

Ms. Diane M. Yeager [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] spoke in favor of the motion. She told voting members that she had been a member of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality and that the issue of the sequence of the resolutions was discussed by the task force. She stated that she had been on the prevailing side within the task force, which had argued for the sequence proposed in the recommendation. After having listened to discussion all week, however, she now believed that Resolution Three should be considered first.

Mr. Stephen M. Converse [New England Synod] rose to ask whether the resolutions would be considered in a “stair-step” fashion, with approval of one being required before the next could be considered.

The chair replied that the recommendation had come from the Church Council as four separate resolutions and that the motion on the floor concerned only a change in the sequence of consideration.



The Rev. Judith A. McKee [Lower Susquehanna Synod], speaking against the motion, stated that the issue was not about loving her neighbor, which she did, but about understanding and obeying Holy Scripture.

Mr. Larry D. Struve [Sierra Pacific Synod] spoke in favor of the motion, noting that he had submitted a similar one. He pointed out that, if the assembly passed the motion, it would need to make editorial changes to Resolution Three. Among the voting members of his synod, he reported, there had been discussion about what they were going to say when they returned to their congregations. He stated his belief that the key recommendation was Resolution Three and that, whatever the assembly did, it needed to respect the bound conscience of all.

The chair explained to the assembly that he had taken Mr. Davidson’s motion first because it had been submitted before Mr. Struve’s motion.

Ms. Joyce A. Partyka [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] asked whether a member of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality could explain to the assembly the task force’s rationale for sequencing the resolutions as it had.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit, replied that the resolutions had been put forward in what had been described as a “stair-step” fashion—that is, each resolution would be considered only if the resolution that preceded it had been adopted. As the task force had viewed the matter, if the assembly were to decide in favor of Resolutions One and Two, which were questions of principle, it then would consider whether it wished to commit in Resolution Three to bear one another’s burdens and respect bound conscience, before addressing the details of Resolution Four.

The Rev. Karen R. Grandall [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** The previous question.

Mr. Paul A. Rosin [Rocky Mountain Synod] rose to a point of order to ask whether the pending motion was a restructuring of the recommendation.

The chair explained that it was not a restructuring but rather a reordering of the consideration of the resolutions.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:** The previous question.

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-918; NO-61**

Presiding Bishop Hanson directed the assembly’s attention to the matter pending before it, which was Pr. Davidson’s motion to change the order in which the four resolutions of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies would be considered.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION**

**CA09.05.22**

**That the resolutions related to the Recommendation on Ministry Policies be considered and voted on separately in the following order: Resolution Three, Resolution One, Resolution Two, Resolution Four.**

**YES-717; NO-27**

The chair declared that the motion was adopted.

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited voting members to gather in groups of three or four to pray for the work of the day. He then called upon the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee, to give its report.

Pr. Loy noted that voting members should have received a copy of the “*Ad Hoc* Committee Report: Recommendations on Ministry Policies.” He directed the assembly’s attention to the middle of page 2, item b, in which the committee recommended that the proposed amendments not be adopted. The committee acknowledged with gratitude all those who had submitted these amendments. The committee affirmed those proposed amendments that spoke to the concept of respecting bound conscience, though it was not recommending them because of problems in their language. Pr. Loy invited voting members to study the rationale of the committee so they could understand why the committee had made its decisions.

The chair requested that Secretary David D. Swartling place the first resolution on the floor, which had been numbered Resolution Three.

**MOVED:** RESOLVED, that in the implementation of these resolutions, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another’s burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all.

No second was necessary because the recommendation had come from the Church Council. Presiding Bishop Hanson alerted Mr. Struve to the fact that, if he wished to amend this resolution as he had indicated in his earlier comment, he should get in line at one of the microphones.

The Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, speaking to Pr. Loy’s explanation of the reasoning of the *ad hoc* committee, wondered how the assembly could know what changes in language would have caused the committee to recommend consideration of an amendment.

The chair responded that the question would need to be addressed by the *ad hoc* committee.

Mr. Albert H. Quie [Minneapolis Area Synod] offered a motion to amend by substitution.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend by substitution the four resolutions of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies and insert in lieu thereof the following:*

“Rostered leadership of this church who are homosexual in their self understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relations and practicing homosexual persons are precluded from the rostered leadership of this church.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson reminded voting members that they were perfecting the main motion before the assembly. He invited Mr. Quie to speak to his motion.

Mr. Quie asserted that the institutional church existed to maintain standards for rostered leaders of this church. He said that his main reason for offering his motion was to provide those who opposed the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* a moral position they could support. He stated that he was concerned about educational materials that would be developed based on the new social statement.

The Rev. Corinne R. Johnson [Northern Great Lakes Synod] rose to speak against the recommendations of the *ad hoc* committee. She was ruled out of order by the chair after clarifying that she was responding to the work of the *ad hoc* committee, rather than to Mr. Quie's motion. The chair explained that, although Pr. Johnson had logged in at a microphone, she did not have the right to interrupt debate because she was not making a privileged motion.

The Rev. Joseph G. Crippen [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke in opposition to Mr. Quie's motion. He expressed his hope that the assembly would be able to witness to "a grace-filled way to read the Scripture." He argued that the substitute motion would completely remove from consideration the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. Considering the resolutions as they had been presented would give voting members the chance to continue to test to see what direction the Holy Spirit wanted this church to go.

Mr. Scott L. Essing [Western Iowa Synod] asked the assembly to test the resolutions to see whether they were biblical or cultural.

Mr. Timothy J. Mumm [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] urged the assembly to defeat the substitute motion. He observed that the work of the Holy Spirit is "powerful, gentle, and messy." If the Spirit forced God's will upon this church, he said, there would be no mess, but the Spirit does not do that. Mr. Mumm argued that the substitute motion would take this church back to following the letter of the law, the very thing, he declared, that Jesus' ministry opposed. He encouraged voting members to be people who followed the work of Jesus and lived in the Spirit.

The Rev. David L. Balch, professor of New Testament, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, at a resource microphone, observed that references to the Bible had been made in several speeches. He offered a commentary on Romans 1 that he believed would clarify matters. He related that in 1993, when the first proposed social statement on human sexuality had been presented, a group of Lutheran New Testament scholars had assembled for a conference. The most important paper in that conference, he stated, was by Mr. David E. Frederickson of Luther Seminary.

The Rev. Katrina D. Foster [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke against the motion. She observed that this church ordains women, allowing them to be pastors and bishops. This church also allows divorced and remarried pastors to become bishops, despite scriptural prohibitions. She urged that this church learn to define itself not only by what it is against but by what it is for. She noted that the Holy Spirit was able to guide the assembly, and the assembly could test the four policies to see if they were scriptural.

Mr. Carroll S. Shaddock [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] complained that resource people were making "partisan comments." He inquired whether there was a rule mandating that resource speakers' comments be balanced.

The chair responded that a resource person had voice but not vote in the assembly and was allowed to respond to questions raised in the debate. However, the same microphone could be used by anyone who, by the rules, had voice but not vote, as long as she or he logged into the queue.

The Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod, asked for a procedural clarification. He noted that the assembly was perfecting the main motion and substitute motion at the same time and inquired whether he could speak to the main motion.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied in the affirmative.

Regarding the main motion, Bp. Rogness stated that he intended to support all the proposed resolutions. He explained that he supported the policy recommendations because he saw gifted

pastors and congregations already moving in this direction and ready to bear one another's burdens.

The Rev. Gladys G. Moore [New England Synod] inquired whether the assembly could see both the substitute and original motions on the projection screen.

The chair replied that it was possible and clarified that what was before the assembly as the main motion was what had been Resolution Three.

Ms. Kim M. Winchell [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] spoke against the substitution. She argued that it would have the effect of throwing out the four resolutions and ending debate, and she wanted to be able to speak to the four resolutions.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called upon Ms. Melba J. Bangert of the Central States Synod to lead the assembly in prayer.

Mr. Quie inquired whether he could move to suspend the rules and vote on the substitution.

The chair informed Mr. Quie that to make that motion, he would need to get in line at a microphone. The chair then asked if there were any members who wished to speak in favor of Mr. Quie's motion that already was on the floor.

The Rev. Timothy J. Housholder [Saint Paul Area Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute amendment by stating that he stood with the following: the one-third of voting members who had opposed the social statement on human sexuality; the majority of the ELCA who would reject the action the assembly had taken that day; homosexual pastors living a celibate lifestyle; 2,000 years of biblical interpretation; the millions of Lutherans who had not confused grace with sensuality; all the bishops who had taken a stand on God's word in spite of pressure; Roman Catholic brothers and sisters; and all "biblical denominations" that believed that this church was making a mistake.

The Rev. Susan F. Sprawls [Southeast Michigan Synod] noted that she serves both as a campus pastor and as pastor of one of the first Reconciling in Christ congregations. She told of a friend who was not there to speak for himself, a gay man, "Lutheran to the core," who for decades had sought full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people in the life of this church. This man told Pr. Sprawls that he hoped the proposed social statement on human sexuality and the Recommendation on Ministry Policies would be approved, but he also expressed his concern for the people who opposed them and his fear that they would begin to feel marginalized.

The Rev. Robert P. Rognlien Jr. [Southwest California Synod] spoke in favor of the substitution. He said he opposed the way the term "bound conscience" was being used. He believed it was a compromise being imposed on those for whom this issue was a matter of conscience and about which they could not compromise. He expressed his opinion that to use the concept of bound conscience was disingenuous and was not in accordance with Scripture and tradition.

The Rev. Carl D. Shankweiler [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor of the resolution. He saw the words as essential and hoped all of the voting members could embrace them. Noting that he had voted against the social statement on human sexuality, he related his experiences as pastor of a United Church of Christ congregation and the conflict he observed in that church body when it affirmed marriage between homosexual people. After that happened, his congregation lost members, but it did not leave the United Church of Christ. He stated that the ELCA needs to stand united and understand that differences are acceptable.

Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**  
**SECONDED;**  
**CARRIED:**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**  
**YES-856; NO-148**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, Presiding Bishop Hanson called for a vote on Mr. Quie's motion.

**MOVED;**  
**SECONDED;**  
**DEFEATED:**

**YES-344; NO-670**

*To amend by substitution the four resolutions of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies and insert in lieu thereof the following:*

“Rostered leadership of this church who are homosexual in their self understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relations and practicing homosexual persons are precluded from the rostered leadership of this church.”

The chair announced to the assembly that the motion to amend by substitution was defeated, and the main motion was now before it.

Mr. Larry D. Struve [Sierra Pacific Synod] proposed an amendment.

**MOVED;**  
**SECONDED:**

*To amend by deletion and substitution:*

**RESOLVED**, that in the implementation of any these resolutions on ministry policies, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all.

Mr. Struve noted that in small-group discussions participants had considered how they were going to explain to their congregations and synods the work of the assembly. He stated his belief that this particular resolution was central to the discussion and that the changes he proposed would make it clear that it applied to whatever policies the assembly might adopt.

Presiding Bishop Hanson recognized Pr. Loy, speaking for the *ad hoc* committee. Pr. Loy reported that the committee saw the amendment as editorial, adding that, had it been before them, committee members would have recommended its adoption.

Seeing no one speaking to Mr. Struve's amendment, the chair called for a vote.

**MOVED;**  
**SECONDED;**  
**CARRIED:**

**YES-888; NO-65**

*To amend by deletion and substitution:*

**RESOLVED**, that in the implementation of any these resolutions on ministry policies, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all.

The chair stated that the amendment was adopted. The resolution as amended was now before the assembly.

The Rev. David S. Witkop [Nebraska Synod] spoke against the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. He apologized to gay and lesbian people for past hurts and confessed his wrong in preaching about homosexuality as “Sin” with a capital “S.” He asked forgiveness for “misguided pastors” who had not offered pastoral care to gay and lesbian people, but instead offered judgment and condemnation. He observed that there was much disagreement in the psychological and spiritual community on the issue of homosexuality. He expressed his concern for support for the marginalized community of those who, in their words, experienced “freedom from unwanted same-sex attraction.” He argued that this community would feel betrayed by an affirmative decision on the recommendation.

The Rev. Stephen G. Marsh, bishop-elect of the Southeast Michigan Synod, spoke in favor of the resolution. He commented that he was speaking from his perspective as an African American, a perspective that he said was rarely heard in this church. He stipulated, however, that he did not speak for all African Americans. He stated that he was baptized into the Lutheran Church at age seven. He had learned about racism, paternalism, and what he termed the exclusionary policies of this church. He tried to leave the church in college, but the Holy Spirit was quite clear that he should stay. He had learned more and more about Jesus and the way that Jesus reached out beyond scriptural traditions and brought people into the faith community. He now stood before the assembly as the ELCA’s newest bishop. He said that he now understood even more about bearing burdens and that the members of this church must continue to bear one another’s burdens.

Mr. Curtis A. Sorbo [Eastern North Dakota Synod] spoke against Resolution One as amended. He asserted that the idea of “bound conscience” was being used to look past Scripture and sin in order to accept and embrace unrepentant sin.

Ms. Constance M. Kilmark [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] urged support for Resolution One. She noted that her congregation disagrees on many things, but it continues to have bonds of genuine affection that allowed members to love one another through their differences, a gift that only the kingdom of God could permit. She observed that, in society, people tend to hear only from those with whom they agree. She asked those who disagreed with her to trust her sincerity, diligence, and faithfulness and to have faith that she wants to share her neighbor’s burdens.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on Ms. Judith Anne Bunker, member of the Church Council from Miami, Fla., to lead the assembly in prayer.

The Rev. Steven R. Frock [Western Iowa Synod] explained that he had become convinced that there was only one question and that was the question of sin and the way that this church would respond to the sinner. He observed that the assembly on Wednesday, August 19, had expressed its conviction that homosexual sexual relations did not constitute a sin. He asked voting members to consider whether those relations were not sinful and to ask “before they placed themselves and this church at spiritual risk” if they were willing to place their immortal souls at risk. “Did they want the millstone tied around their necks?” he queried. If members had any doubt in their minds about the rightness of homosexual sexual relations and the way God felt about them, Pr. Frock suggested that they not “step off the precipice.”

Mr. Alan R. Wold [Northern Illinois Synod] spoke in favor of Resolution One and noted that during the quasi committee of the whole on this topic he had observed continuing tension between Law and Gospel. He had heard arguments that the assembly should not adopt the recommendations because they were not fully supported by Scripture. He indicated that, if by voting for the passage of these resolutions, he was going to be in error, he would prefer to err on the side of mercy, grace, justice, love of neighbor, and the Gospel.

The Rev. M. Suzanne Morelli [Allegheny Synod] noted that it was difficult for her to decide at which microphone she should stand. While she had great respect for gay and lesbian people in the ELCA and for their commitment and work, she was stirred by the message of Scripture. She believed that sexuality had more to do with God's identity than with human identity. She asked that this church continue with the Book of Faith initiative to embrace what it needed, and she asked for the Holy Spirit's guidance. She hoped that the ELCA could continue to trust in God's revelation and to embrace all in that love with which Christ embraced this church.

Mr. Edward C. Cool [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor of Resolution One. He urged that voting members be certain that they were committed to what it said: being loving neighbors and bearing their neighbor's burdens, no matter how they voted on this resolution.

Ms. Jenny M. Wu [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] spoke in opposition to the resolution, saying that she was speaking on behalf of 35 Chinese congregations. She noted that, as a part of the ELCA, these congregations were impacted by any decision that the assembly might make. Chinese congregations, she stated, uphold the Bible as the Word of God and hold their pastors and rostered leaders to a high standard of conduct. She expressed her fear that if the resolution passed, it would mean that anyone could do whatever he or she wanted in the name of bound conscience. She observed that people's consciences could change depending on the environment, but God never changes. She urged the assembly not to vote for change in the ministry policies.

Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez [Rocky Mountain Synod] thanked the assembly for "being Lutheran." He related that he was born a Roman Catholic but could not have been a priest because he could not have remained celibate. He observed that all in this church had become Lutheran through grace, following the teachings of Martin Luther and Paul. He said that this church has allowed him to preach in its churches, and, as he looked around the assembly, he saw the faces of those he would see in heaven. He voiced his support of Resolution One.

The Rev. Jeffrey C. Ruby [Grand Canyon Synod] asked that someone from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality speak to the concept of "respect for bound conscience."

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that Pr. Ruby had the right to ask the question, but he needed to get into the microphone queue because it was not a privileged request.

Pr. Ruby appealed the chair's ruling.

Presiding Bishop Hanson consulted with the parliamentarian and then reported that his ruling was in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*, which states that a point of information can interrupt debate. The chair questioned whether Pr. Ruby's request constituted a valid point of information.

Presiding Bishop Hanson suggested that the matter be put before the assembly. He explained that the question to be voted on was whether or not a point of information posed to the *ad hoc* committee or to resource people should be regarded as a privileged motion.

The assembly voted, with 181 members voting "yes" and 253 voting "no." The challenge was not upheld. The chair commented on the low total of votes and inquired whether any members would like to report voting machine difficulties. There being no response, the chair returned the assembly to the question on the floor. He urged Pr. Ruby to wait in line to ask his question, should he still wish to ask it.

Mr. R. Guy Irwin [Southwest California Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-872; NO-101**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Murray D. Finck, bishop of the Pacifica Synod, to lead the assembly in prayer. He then called for a vote on Resolution One as amended.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-771; NO-230**

**CA09.05.23**

**RESOLVED, that in the implementation of any resolutions on ministry policies, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the resolution had been adopted. He then invited the assembly to sing "Children of the Heavenly Father." After the hymn, he called on Secretary David D. Swartling to place the next resolution before voting members. Secretary Swartling moved the next resolution of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, which formerly had been Resolution One.

**MOVED:**

**RESOLVED, that the ELCA 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.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson reminded the assembly that the *ad hoc* committee had not recommended any of the proposed amendments to this recommendation. The chair indicated that makers of those amendments had the right to move them before the assembly. If anyone wished to move an amendment that had not been submitted before the deadline, the assembly by its rules would first have to approve its consideration by a majority vote.

Ms. Kirsten M. Nelson Roenfeldt [Rocky Mountain Synod] asked about the differences between the information on the projection screen and that which had been distributed in print to voting members before the plenary began. The material she was looking at made reference to synods as well as to congregations.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit and member of the *ad hoc* committee, to respond.

Pr. Olson stated that the printed information to which Ms. Nelson Roenfeldt referred was a copy of the Report and Recommendation of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality, while the information on the projection screen was the language of the recommendation as forwarded from the Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly.

The chair emphasized that the text as it appeared on the screen was the text before the assembly.

Ms. Sara M. Gross [Oregon Synod] spoke in favor of Resolution Two, quoting the text of the hymn "All Are Welcome." She commented on the fear she had heard expressed that this church would lose members if the recommendations were adopted. While it was possible that this church would lose members, she believed that a vote to reject Resolution Two would send a message to the world that not all were welcome in this church. She noted that she represented a six percent minority [of young people] in the assembly and in this church, and stated that there was a reason that youth were such a minority. She urged this church to be a voice that stood up and said "yes."



Mr. Edward A. Kirst [Northeastern Ohio Synod] moved to amend the “Rules of Organization and Procedure.”

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** To amend the rules to require a two-thirds vote to adopt any remaining resolutions regarding ministry policies.

After conferring with the parliamentarian concerning reconsideration of something previously acted upon by the assembly, Presiding Bishop Hanson invited Mr. Kirst to speak to his motion.

Mr. Kirst stated his belief that the remaining resolutions would have a greater impact on this church than the social statement of human sexuality, which had required a two-thirds vote for passage, so they should require a two-thirds vote as well.

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against Mr. Kirst’s motion. He argued that the same issue had been debated in the first plenary session and that to require a two-thirds vote to pass the remaining resolutions was as much out of order currently as it had been in the previous debate. He asserted that the assembly had never required a super-majority to adopt other policies and that it would not be right to require one now. He suggested that the amendment implied a predicted outcome of the assembly’s deliberations and argued that this church could not be bound by fears. He urged members to vote against the motion and to continue to uphold the simple majority standard.

The Rev. Michael J. Toomey [Eastern North Dakota Synod] rose to speak in favor of the motion to change the rules. He contended that because “past poor leadership” had not required a super-majority for policy change, this assembly did not need to follow suit. He argued that, to change policies, this church would require momentum, which would be demonstrated by a super-majority. He asserted that it should not be possible for a body of such small size, in comparison to some congregations and to the ELCA as a whole, to change policies with “such a small number” as a majority would represent.

The Rev. Katrina D. Foster [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke against the amendment. She expressed her opinion that complete uniformity in this church is not required and that a minority of this church “should not be allowed to hold hostage the remainder.” She conjectured that even if the assembly were to adopt the resolutions by a super-majority, there would still be those who would contend that the result was illegitimate. She urged the assembly to remain true to what she argued was the tradition of its polity.

Ms. Susan D. Ruggles [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate on the proposed rule change.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-870; NO-87**

The chair then called for the vote on the proposed amendment to the rules.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**DEFEATED;**

To amend the rules to require a two-thirds vote to adopt any remaining resolutions regarding ministry policies.

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-407; NO-576**

The chair announced that the motion was defeated.

Ms. Susan M. Dill [Delaware-Maryland Synod] rose to a point of information, stating that she had heard there were bishops who were keeping people who were not of like mind out of their synods. She asked how that practice could be reconciled with respecting each other's bound consciences. She continued by asking how a congregation in a synod such as she had described would be able to call someone outside of their synod. She wondered how the concept of "bound conscience" could work if bishops already were not honoring the bound conscience of pastors.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked if there were anyone on the stage who wished to speak to those questions.

The Rev. Timothy J. Wengert, member of the task force, turned the assembly's attention to the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section V, p. 112, lines 398 and following. He related that, as he understood the resolution that had just been passed, bishops and candidacy committees would be obligated to respect pastors and congregations who were in disagreement with them.

Pr. Olson also noted that, for any call, a bishop must be consulted and give guidance. If the assembly were to adopt the resolution, those procedures would remain in place.

The Rev. Richard G. Mahan [West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod] spoke against the resolution. He observed that the ELCA had lost 490,000 members in eight years and predicted that passing the resolutions would cause even greater losses in members and finances. He noted that he served the largest and fastest-growing congregation in his synod, one that believes, preaches, and teaches that the Bible is the divinely inspired, inerrant Word of God. He could not understand how this church could condone what he believes God condemns. Nowhere in the Word of God, he argued, did it say that homosexual sexual expression and marriage were acceptable to God. The majority of the members of his congregation would vote to leave the ELCA if this resolution passed, he warned. He implored voting members in the name of Jesus to vote against the resolution.

Mr. Timothy J. Mumm [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] rose in support of the resolution. He pointed out that Jesus had no scriptural foundation for healing on the Sabbath and that the world lived today with an understanding of homosexuality that did not exist in Jesus' time. He contended that voting members were responding to something that writers of Scripture could not have understood. He suggested that for him, as a gay man, to marry a woman would be wrong and sinful. He was not convinced that God had gifted him with celibacy, yet he could not believe God had put him and others in a no-win situation. He requested that this church be like Jesus and minister to the needs of the people in front of it.

The Rev. Ryan D. Mills [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] spoke in opposition to the resolution, noting that Martin Luther had stated that Scripture did not have a "wax nose" and it could not be twisted into saying anything that someone wanted it to say. He likened the assembly's consideration of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies to the "twisting of a wax nose."

The Rev. David Brauer-Rieke, bishop of the Oregon Synod, asserted that the resolution asked that those who were called into relationship as gay and lesbian people be given the privilege and love of the community to support and hold them accountable in a relationship. He argued that this resolution respected the bound consciences of those who did not wish to participate in such a ceremony because it would leave to pastors, couples, and congregations decisions about how they would shape such recognition. He asked the assembly to provide room in this church for those who feel called and for those who give support to those whom they serve in Jesus' name.

Mr. David M. Keck [Southern Ohio Synod] noted that, since the formation of the ELCA, there had been a focus on the three expressions of this church. Opposing the resolution, he stated his belief that the policies being considered would communicate the message that it was this church's policy that same-gender unions or marriage were equal to the biblically based unions between a man and woman. He argued further that approval of these unions would contradict the social statement's disapproval of cohabitation agreements outside of marriage.

Mr. Wayne E. Olsen [New Jersey Synod] spoke in favor. He compared three situations: that of a married couple in his congregation who were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary; that of their former pastor, who had been in a loving, monogamous, committed, faith-filled, same-gender relationship for 25 years; and that of his congregation's own pastor, who was single and celibate and who was required by this church's policies to live his life alone and to die alone. He observed that the church in Rome had declared that this single, celibate lifestyle was strongly supported by its interpretation of Scripture and was the only holy life for a servant of God. However, 500 years ago, Martin Luther had said "no" to this interpretation of Scripture and practice. Mr. Olsen urged voting members to support the resolution on behalf of this church's pastors, who in his experience have not pointed at others or to agendas but have always pointed him to Christ.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called upon the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, member of the Church Council from Wilmington, N.C., to lead the assembly in prayer. He then returned the assembly to further speaking to the resolution.

The Rev. Paul C. Koch [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke against the resolution. He said that, while he had known gay and lesbian people all his life and was friends with them and while he recognized them as people welcomed by Christ, the Bible spoke against homosexual sexual relations. He stated that the Bible told this church to welcome sinners and outcasts, but he also believed that this resolution asked this church to ignore God's word about homosexual sexual relations. He reasoned that if there were a resolution asking this church to ignore God's word on welcoming outcasts, the assembly would be bound to defeat such a resolution. He reminded the assembly that Christians are called both to welcome sinners and to urge them to repentance.

Mr. Renato A. Rodriguez [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] rose to a point of information to ask where in the ELCA governing documents the term "bound conscience" was defined.

Pr. Wengert responded that the term was not in the governing documents. He noted, however, that there was a discussion of the concept in the social statement that had just been adopted and that it was a concept similar to Paul's concern for the weak. He added that the concern for conscience was found in the discussion on fasting in an article of the Augsburg Confession. Martin Luther also used a variety of terms for "conscience," he noted. There are also a number of places in the Lutheran Confessions where people in the majority were concerned for the convictions of those in the minority.

Ms. Allison A. Guttu [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke in favor of the resolution and urged voting members to approve it. She stated that, even though concern had been expressed about people and churches leaving the ELCA, she had seen welcoming congregations grow. She noted that the resolution was about people in this church following their consciences. She commented that some thought the resolution committed the whole ELCA to certain actions; she asserted that this interpretation was not true. She argued that the resolution said that congregations would be allowed to, if they desired, publicly affirm lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.

The Rev. Paul R. Messner [Upstate New York Synod] asserted that the debate illustrated a deep structural flaw in the ELCA. He stated that this church has had unrepresentative assemblies. Voting members were told that they represented this whole church, he stated, but if people in the pews were voting, this issue already would have been settled. He proposed that the responses to the “Journey Together Faithfully” study had already indicated the will of this church. He implored the assembly to listen to all the voices in the ELCA.

The Rev. Serena S. Sellers [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor of the resolution. She related that Luther talked about marriage and family as a place where people learn about faith. When a person made a lifetime commitment to another person and was surrounded by a community, this church was obligated to take that relationship seriously. She observed that there already were people in homosexual relationships in the congregations of this church. Some of them lived in ways that are recognized and supported, and others did not because of fear, she said. Because those relationships were not open and truthful, they could not be held accountable, she reasoned, nor did they have support. She expressed her belief that it was important for the moral authority of this church that it support truthfulness and that it give all people the opportunity to be held accountable for promises they have made. She urged adoption of the resolution.

The Rev. Steven J. Nelson [Montana Synod] spoke against the resolution. He reported that he was engaged in conversation with congregation members and had considered, listened, and prayed with openness. He had an appreciation of the arguments couched in the language of justice, he said. Yet he had found himself strengthened in his own convictions of traditional marriage. He said that he believed the resolutions would weaken the foundation of the biblical standards of this church, and he called on voting members to hold to traditional understandings.

Mr. John F. England Jr. [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved to close debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** The previous question.

The Rev. Zachary N. Thompson [Saint Paul Area Synod] rose to comment that, during the week, many of the same speakers had come to the microphone so much that he felt he knew them as friends, while others had been unable to speak. He encouraged the assembly to show deference to those who had not had a chance to speak.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that the assembly could not officially do that because each matter that came before the house was a new matter that required a new queue of speakers, but he observed that Pr. Thompson had spoken eloquently to the problem, and he hoped that the other voting members would take it as a word of counsel. He then called for the vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:** The previous question.

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-775; NO-239**

Debate being closed, the presiding bishop called on the Rev. Stephen G. Marsh, bishop-elect of the Southeast Michigan Synod, to lead the assembly in prayer. The chair then directed the assembly to vote on the resolution, and he urged members and visitors to respond to the outcome of the vote quietly.

## **ASSEMBLY**

### **ACTION:**

**YES-619; NO-402**

**CA09.05.24**

**RESOLVED, that the ELCA 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.**

The chair declared that the resolution had been adopted. Presiding Bishop Hanson then asked the members of the assembly to pray alone or with a neighbor while he consulted with the secretary and staff about the remaining agenda items. He asked voting members for permission to extend the current plenary to 11:15 A.M. Seeing no opposition, the chair ordered the session extended. He called upon Secretary Swartling to move the next resolution on behalf of the Church Council.

### **MOVED:**

**RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.**

Mr. John F. England Jr. [Rocky Mountain Synod] urged adoption of the resolution. He related a story about a congregation in South Carolina, Gethsemane Lutheran Church, which he considers to be a “little bright light.” Gethsemane had been racially integrated in 1974 and now welcomed all members. It is an all-inclusive church, and demonstrated for Mr. England the greatest gift Paul mentioned, which is love. He contended that the current policies amounted to “separate but not equal,” while the Recommendation on Ministry Policies remedied the problem.

The Rev. Catherine A. Ammlung [Delaware-Maryland Synod] spoke in opposition to the resolution. She noted that, until this week, the teachings of the church into which she was ordained had given her solid footing. Until now this church would have supported her in teaching that sex should be expressed in the marriage covenant of a man and woman. At the same time, it had allowed her to welcome to this church and to advocate for justice in society for those who do not match that description. She believed that this solid footing had eroded and would be eroded further with this resolution.

The Rev. Lee M. Miller II [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] affirmed the resolution. He said that people were justified not by works of the Law but by faith, and he declared that he lived by faith in the Son of God. He spoke of a friend who had committed suicide in 1989 because he could not reconcile his life with the word that he heard from this church. Pr. Miller said that he stood in favor of the resolution on the shoulders of gay and straight people who had proclaimed the Gospel. He stated that he was not saved because he is a heterosexual but because of what God had done for him.

The Rev. Erik T. R. Samuelson [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] spoke against the resolution, citing his interaction with another voting member. He had come to understand the pain of one who, after assembly consideration of the social statement on human sexuality and Recommendation on Ministry Polices, would be heartbroken because he would find himself in a church he no longer recognized and his ministry setting would become more challenging.

The Rev. Paul R. Beck [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor, saying he believed that as evangelical Christians, the ELCA had had its language “ripped out from under

it” by people who were not evangelical and who defined Christianity in a way he did not understand. He wondered if this church was losing a fight to the so-called Christian evangelicals among the Lutherans because it could not distinguish between the so-called predominant Christian culture and the Lutheran faith that this church has held dear.

The Rev. Terri K. Stagner-Collier [Southeastern Synod] spoke in opposition to the resolution, commenting that she had heard much about compassion and mercy for those who have been disenfranchised. She wished to lift up those who were currently being disenfranchised. She mentioned several examples of people who would be disenfranchised by these decisions, including her sister, brother, and father, who because of these decisions would no longer commune at her side in an ELCA congregation. She urged voting members “not to do this to all of those people in the pew” and in her family.

The Rev. Wayne N. Miller, bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, supported the resolution. He observed that in working and praying through these matters, he had discovered that the covenant concept provided the best way forward. He proposed that a covenant would provide a structure of promise and accountability, a structure central to the witness of both Old and New Testaments, and a structure that embraced both Law and Gospel. Bp. Miller said he saw “covenant” as a canon from within the Scriptures that allowed this church to understand and read the Scriptures more clearly. He concluded that it was a present lack of opportunity to form a covenant that stood between partnered same-gender people and their service to this church. He asserted that the council had offered a resolution that would allow this church to move forward to a place of clarity.

Mr. Stanley W. Sommer [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] spoke against the resolution. He stated that he had listened closely to all speakers and respected their opinions. His dilemma was whether as Christian witnesses this church supported sin or discouraged it. He asked whether this church, in supporting people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church, would be supporting sin, according to Scripture.

Ms. Susan E. Hernandez [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-632; NO-381**

**DEFEATED:**

The previous question.

The chair called for continuation of debate on the resolution.

The Rev. Jean K. Larson [Montana Synod] spoke in favor, reminding the assembly that the Church has sometimes been surprised by the action of the Spirit. She stated that this was such a time of surprise, which she likened to the inclusion of the Gentiles in the exclusively Jewish community of Christ. Today, she said, gay and lesbian people were the Gentiles. The Spirit of Christ has been in the process of opening minds, hearts, and souls to this time of full inclusion of gay and lesbian people in the life of this church, including its leadership. The Spirit is surprising this church again, she contended.

Mr. Matthew M. Riak [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] opposed the resolution, stating that he was feeling defeated. However, he knew that God was not and would never be defeated. He reported that he represented the African national ministries of the ELCA. He believed that the time had come to make a decision regarding the life of this church. He observed that if voting members approved this resolution, it would mean that this church did not need the African immigrant. He reported that African national congregations might leave this church because of

the votes. He believed that this church cared more for its homosexual brothers and sisters than for the congregations that might leave. He implored voting members to vote against the resolution.

The Rev. Margaret G. Payne, bishop of the New England Synod, agreed with the resolution, noting that pastors and congregations in her synod were divided on these issues. She pointed out that in the spirit of bearing one another's burdens, there was no "litmus test" in the New England Synod for pastors. The question it asked of pastors was whether they were able to listen carefully and support the bound conscience of their colleagues and of the members of their congregations. The New England Synod's only agenda was the Holy Spirit, she said. She noted that five of the six states in her synod now recognized some form of civil union for homosexual people. She observed that many outsiders think that in the New England Synod anything goes, but just the opposite is true. Bound conscience is not an excuse, she maintained, but it is a deeply held theological position.

The chair called for the orders of the day.

## **Announcements**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson noted that the assembly had been working thoughtfully and prayerfully and stated that at such a time as this—perhaps more than at any other time—the assembly needed to gather in worship, as it was about to do. He called upon Secretary David D. Swartling for announcements.

Among other announcements, Secretary Swartling indicated that the afternoon plenary would begin at 2:00 P.M. with a Bible study. The afternoon session would include elections. There would be a second common ballot, following the report of the first common ballot, as well as a third ballot for the election of the vice president.

Presiding Bishop Hanson then called on the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, member of the Church Council, to lead the assembly in prayer.

## **Recess**

The eighth plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 11:15 A.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Nine

Friday, August 21, 2009

2:00 P.M.—6:30 P.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), called Plenary Session Nine of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 2:01 P.M. CDT on Friday, August 21, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

## Opening Remarks

Presiding Bishop Hanson reported that \$6,349.72 had been received at the morning's worship. He added that the offerings for the week totaled \$57,378.86. He called assembly participants "generous stewards."

Bishop Hanson informed members that there had been over 76,000 unique views from 148 countries of the assembly's Web pages.

He thanked the day's worship leaders: the Rev. Christine A. Timm, Sylvania, Ohio, preacher; the Rev. Rani R. Abdulmasih, Dearborn, Mich., presiding minister; Mr. William B. Horne II, Clearwater, Fla., assisting minister; and the Rev. Patricia A. Davenport, Philadelphia, Pa., lector.

Before turning to the afternoon's agenda, Presiding Bishop Hanson reminded all those present of the assembly's rules of decorum.

## Video Contest: "God's Work. Our Hands."

Presiding Bishop Hanson introduced another entry in the "God's work. Our hands." video contest. The assembly viewed the video from Advent Lutheran Church in Madison, Wis.

## Bible Study

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Ronald T. Glusenkamp, pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church in Cherry Hills Village, Colo., and Mr. Peter Mayer, an ELCA member, professional musician and lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffett, to lead the afternoon Bible study. Presiding Bishop Hanson reported that Mr. Mayer had led the house band for the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, and he noted that Mr. Mayer and his group would give a concert that evening to benefit the HIV and AIDS Strategy and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative.

Pr. Glusenkamp and Mr. Mayer had authored one of the Book of Faith resources, a study guide on the book of Proverbs. Pr. Glusenkamp presented themes from three sessions of that study: "What is our standard (unit of measure) of living?" (Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23); "Are we singing the standard (familiar song) of wisdom?" (Proverbs 1); and "Are we raising God's standard (flag)?" (Proverbs 31). Mr. Mayer presented and taught the members of the assembly songs to accompany the study, including "More than Silver or Gold" (based on Proverbs 22) and "Listen Up" (based on Proverbs 1).

Pr. Glusenkamp called Proverbs the "Twitter" of the Bible and noted that Proverbs calls believers to live according to the "God standard" rather than the "gold standard." He said that in Proverbs God counsels how best to invest one's whole self in ways that make for a blessed



future. He contrasted the gold standard for worldly wealth with the God standard for the good life, saying that the God standard praises a good name and celebrates those who are generous.

Pr. Gluskamp concluded the study by inviting members to mark their neighbors with the sign of the cross, a sign he called the “best designer label ever.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked the presenters and reminded the assembly of the evening concert by the Peter Mayer Group.

## **Evangelical Outreach Testimony**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. Larry T. Thiele [Eastern North Dakota Synod], a synodically authorized minister, to share his testimony about a congregation growing in evangelical witness. Mr. Thiele greeted the assembly in the Lakota language and said that he serves an American Indian congregation in the Spirit Lake Nation. He described an ecumenical group of Spirit Lake ministry leaders who have agreed that their ministry is not to individual congregations but with the community. He said the group is attempting to overcome the myth, held especially by teens and young adults, that they are not good enough and need to become perfect in order to come to Christ. They believe they need to quit swearing, smoking, drinking, partying, and rebelling—whatever it is they think keeps them out of God’s reach and care. This belief, he said, is the result of over a century of conditioning by churches, pastors, and missionaries.

“The message that we are putting out is this: God loves us, me and you, everyone, just as we are, where we are. The forgiveness offered us through Jesus Christ is for each one of us. Jesus went to the cross for each of us. God is calling to each of us and has a plan for each of us, a plan that gives hope in hopelessness. Each one of us has sinned and fallen short of his glory, and not one of us is perfect. We cannot be perfected by ourselves, but through God we can begin the process. Whatever it is that is in our life that we need to put behind us, to let go of or change, God will show this to us, will help us to get through it, will help us change our behaviors. God wants none of us to perish but for everyone to come to salvation, to enter into relationship with him.”

Mr. Thiele concluded in Lakota, “Thank you, my relatives.”

## **Elections: Report on the First Common Ballot**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 13–16; Section VII, pages 1–88.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. Phillip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, to give a report on the results of the first common ballot for positions on the Church Council, committees, and boards. Mr. Harris reported elections on 65 of the 69 tickets.

### **ASSEMBLY**

#### **ACTION:**

**CA09.05.25      To declare elected all persons who received on the first ballot greater than a majority of votes for Church Council, committees, and boards:**

#### ***Church Council***

**Pr. Michael J. Schmidt, Sioux City, Iowa (5E)**

**Pr. Raymond A. Miller, Quakertown, Pa. (7F)**

**Pr. Kathryn A. Tiede, Lino Lakes, Minn. (3H)**

**Pr. Amsalu T. Geleta, Springfield, Va. (8G)**

Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson, Cumberland, Wis. (5H)  
Ms. Susan W. McArver, Columbia, S.C. (9C)  
Ms. Louise A. Hemstead, Cashton, Wis. (5L)  
Ms. Judith E. Barlow-Roberts, Windsor, Conn. (7B)  
Mr. Ivan A. Perez, Chicago, Ill. (5A)  
Mr. Blaire P. Smith, Erie, Pa. (8A)  
Mr. William B. Horne II, Clearwater, Fla. (9E)

*Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission*

Pr. Erik T. R. Samuelson, Spokane, Wash. (1D)  
Ms. Janet A. Peters, Flemington, N.J. (7A)  
Mr. Paul H. Lewellan, Davenport, Iowa (5D)  
Mr. Emried D. Cole, Baltimore, Md. (8F)

*Global Mission*

Pr. Lisa A. Smith, Anchorage, Alaska (1A)  
Ms. Martha R. Norat, Dorado, Puerto Rico (9F)  
Mr. R. Timothy Muth, Brookfield, Wis. (5J)  
Pr. Douglas S. Cox, Excelsior, Minn. (3G)

*Vocation and Education*

Pr. John I. Rollefson, Los Angeles, Calif. (2B)  
Ms. Alicia R. Anderson, Boalsburg, Pa. (8C)  
Mr. David M. Blomquist, Iron Mountain, Mich. (5G)  
Pr. Lamont A. Wells, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F)  
Ms. Kari A. Lipke, St. Peter, Minn. (3F)

*Church in Society*

Pr. William S. Maxon, Emmaus, Pa. (7E)  
Ms. Siri J. Fiebiger, Moorhead, Minn. (3D)  
Ms. Angela Ellis, Baltimore, Md. (8F)  
Pr. Khader N. El-Yateem, Brooklyn, N.Y. (7C)

*Multicultural Ministries*

Pr. Susan L. Gamelin, High Point, N.C. (9B)  
Mr. Jonathan G. Gomez, Phoenix, Ariz. (2D)  
Pr. Herbert G. Wounded Head III, Brookings, S.D. (3C)  
Ms. Rose Oundjian, Las Vegas, Nev. (2D)  
Mr. Nathaniel P. Viets-VanLear, Chicago, Ill. (5A)

### *Publishing House*

- Pr. Winston D. Persaud, Dubuque, Iowa (4B)
- Ms. Rosemary R. Ohles, Lincoln, Neb. (4A)
- Mr. Brilsford “Bril” B. Flint, Austin, Texas (4E)
- Mr. Timothy I. Maudlin, Edina, Minn. (3G)
- Pr. Brian C. King, Iowa Falls, Iowa (5F)

### *Mission Investment Fund*

- Pr. Lorenz “Larry” W. Lutey, Naperville, Ill. (5J)
- Ms. Kendra D. Brodin, Fridley, Minn. (3G)
- Ms. Judy L. Conklin, Crystal Lake, Ill. (5B)
- Mr. Daniel M. Bringman, Gettysburg, Pa. (8D)

### *Board of Pensions*

- Pr. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, Walnut Creek, Calif. (2A)
- Ms. Jill A. Schumann, Gettysburg, Pa. (8D)
- Ms. Lisa Ann Kro, Plymouth, Minn. (3G)
- Ms. Kathleen K. Mooney, Cold Spring, Minn. (3F)
- Mr. Kevin D. Anderson, Gaithersburg, Md. (8G)

### *Nominating Committee*

- Pr. Herbert E. Anderson, Berkeley, Calif. (2A)
- Pr. Kathie Bender Schwich, Park Ridge, Ill. (5A)
- Ms. Kathy J. Magnus, Edina, Minn. (3G)
- Ms. Judith A. Tutt-Starr, Los Angeles, Calif. (2B)
- Mr. Ken F. Aicher, Tampa, Fla. (9E)
- Mr. Brandon W. Huston, Hamilton, Ohio (6F)

### *Committee on Discipline*

- Pr. Michel D. Clark, Knoxville, Ill. (5B)
- Pr. Joyce L. Piper, Willmar, Minn. (3F)
- Pr. Andrea L. Walker, Summit, N.J. (7A)
- Ms. Kathryn L. Baerwald, Washington, D.C. (8G)
- Ms. Joanne Chadwick, San Francisco, Calif. (2A)
- Ms. Janice M. Quirl, Austin, Texas (4E)
- Mr. Arthur E. Murphy, Bellaire, Texas (4F)
- Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez, El Paso, Texas (2E)

### *Committee on Appeals*

- Pr. Philip L. Hougen, West Branch, Iowa (5D)
- Pr. Matthew L. Riegel, Morgantown, W.Va. (8H)
- Ms. Madelyn H Busse, Denver, Colo. (2E)
- Mr. George C. Watson, Port Huron, Mich. (6A)

## **Elections: Question-and-Answer Forum for Nominees for Vice President**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15–16, 18–20; Section IV, page 1.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that the next item of business would be a question-and-answer period with the eight people who had received the highest number of votes on the second ballot for vice president. Three questions had been prepared by the Executive Committee of the Church Council and had been given to the candidates in advance.

The participants were Mr. Robert D. Benne, Mr. Yau T. Chiu, Ms. Nannette C. Dahlke, Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, Mr. James Martin, Mr. Carlos E. Peña, Mr. Ryan M. Schwarz, and Mr. Thomas T. Taylor.

The Rev. Susan Langhauser and Mr. Gary L. Wipperman, members of the Executive Committee, asked the questions. Mr. Wipperman began: “What Bible passage has guided your life, and how does it shape your leadership?”

Mr. Martin identified Galatians 2:20. He said he has known times when the light of Christ shines brightly in him and times when a bushel basket has fallen over him. “These are the times I need the reassurance of Christ’s love, grace, and forgiveness. These are the things that have helped me grow in my understanding of Christ’s love.”

Ms. Hirsch chose Matthew 28:18–20. She spoke of a dying patient under her care who dismissed her with this verse each time she visited him. The last time she could barely hear the words, but she could hear his belief.

Mr. Schwartz named Isaiah 6:3–8. He said he identified with the calling to be a humble servant and has felt the imperative to serve God in the vocation of daily life.

Mr. Taylor recalled the words in Ecclesiastes 3, “for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” He noted that he used to assume that “a time to weep, a time to laugh, a time to mourn, a time to dance” would apply to all people at the same time, but he had noticed at this assembly that some mourn and others dance.

Mr. Benne referred to Romans 12:2 as a passage influential in his vocation as a professor. He described himself as a Lutheran scholar and teacher who is passionately committed to a robust engagement of the Christian intellectual and moral tradition with the claims of secular learning.

Mr. Peña commented that Psalm 23 offered him comfort in the promise that God would always be with him and protect him in times of danger.

Mr. Chiu chose Matthew 22:34. He identified himself as an immigrant who came to the United States 47 years ago and experienced discrimination. He said he was not born a Christian, but he kept going with the knowledge of God’s love and the command to love others.

Ms. Dahlke selected Romans 8:38–39. She identified herself as vice president of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod for eight years. She stated her strong belief that to be elected vice president of a synod of this church is to be called into a ministry to proclaim that “nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.”

Pr. Langhauser asked the second question: “What is the most significant challenge that the vice president of this church will face, and how will you address it?”

Mr. Peña noted that the challenge is to remain faithful to God’s mission: “Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.” He said that by remaining true to God’s mission, this church would not be defined by issues that are not at the core of what this church believes. He added that with challenge also comes opportunity, and he spoke of his amazement at this church’s capacity to build mission. He cited this church’s response to disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina and the Asian tsunami, as well as the participation at the 2009 Youth Gathering.

Mr. Benne declared that he had forgotten to withdraw from consideration. He said he is too old and has neither the administrative skills nor the motivation for the office. However, he noted that, if he were elected, he and the top leadership would be forced to model the bound conscience principle because he was in profound disagreement with the direction of the ELCA. He mused that his election might shorten his life as well as that of the presiding bishop and secretary of the ELCA, and he concluded by saying that it would not be a good idea to vote for him.

Mr. Chiu identified declining membership as the strongest challenge to this church, a challenge not unique to the ELCA. He felt that members have become blasé about themselves and about evangelism. He would use his personal experience to enhance evangelism and a sense of welcome.

Mr. Martin said the most significant challenge might be choosing a significant challenge. He suggested that trying to see where God is in the actions of the assembly would be significant. He added that, as an ambassador of this church, the vice president will play a major role in sorting things out, cautioning people to pray for guidance, and providing reassurance that Christ will lead this church.

Ms. Dahlke quoted from the ELCA mission statement that we are “. . . claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.” She said the challenge for the vice president in this time is to be the “chief gatherer.” She noted that, although this church is diverse and seeks to become more so, its members are one in gathering around the means of grace and confessing that Jesus is Lord.

Mr. Taylor referred to 1 Corinthians 13, noting that “now we see through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face.” As a historian, he maintained that this age of change is difficult. He said the issue of bound conscience would be a significant challenge in the short term. He added that the long-term fundamental challenges for this church would be maintaining faithfulness and growing.

Ms. Hirsch observed that the most significant challenge for the vice president will be that of healing, a challenge she felt particularly called to, having been in the ministry of healing all her adult life. She described healing as bi-directional, impacting both the healer and the one who needs healing. It requires time, patience, commitment, intentional listening, and at times silence. She said she would seek to be a healing presence through regular communication, transparency, trust-building, and intentional listening.

Mr. Schwartz stated the most significant challenge for the vice president and all the leadership of this church would be the immediate, deep, and, for many, profoundly negative reaction of many of the laity to the decisions of the assembly. He said the challenge of the ELCA will be to protect people, such as himself, who disagree with those decisions and to honor their dissent.

Mr. Wiperman posed the final question: “One of the strategic directions in the ELCA Plan for Mission is to ‘step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created.’ How can the ELCA more effectively act to achieve this objective?”

Mr. Chiu asserted that ELCA members do well with talking and reading the Bible but not with getting their hands dirty. He said some members go to help with disasters like Katrina and staff soup kitchens, but the ELCA largely is a talking church. Mr. Chiu proposed rolling up sleeves and getting hands dirty in witness to Christ. He concluded his remarks by asking if members had invited their neighbors to church.

Mr. Taylor stated that the tradition of conversation between theologians and scientists goes back to the time of Luther and Melancthon. He advised the assembly to follow the guidance of young people as that tradition continues. He urged the assembly to utilize the resources of seminaries and colleges as well as younger generations on topics such as the environment. Mr.

Taylor called on members to pray; he said the issues of this church are serious, and they are not going away.

Ms. Dahlke recalled the children's rhyme, "Here's the Church." She used the refrain of the rhyme to remind the assembly that the church is made up of the homeless, those who have lost their jobs, and families struggling under mortgages. She said the way to be a public church is to live out faith in daily life.

Mr. Peña referred to Mark 12:31 as he recalled Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves and to serve their needs. He identified the neighbor as the oppressed, the marginalized, the hungry, the undocumented worker, even the corporate executive. He said ministry to the neighbor has been exemplified by the bishops' journey to the Holy Land to walk in solidarity with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, as well as the assembly's support for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative and the HIV and AIDS Strategy.

Mr. Schwartz quoted the mission statement of his congregation in McLean, Va., to "share Christ's love with the greatest number of people." He said that means proclaiming the redemptive and transforming Gospel of Christ and sharing Christ in deeds both monumental and trivial. He called for this church to keep the main thing the main thing.

Ms. Hirsch identified youth as a resource for being a public church. She observed that young people took the lead at the Youth Gathering in New Orleans and in donations to hunger. She suggested empowering young people in their ministries and making a place for youth in future assemblies. She added that learning to tell this church's story and share its life with its neighbors would present the ELCA's public face to the world.

Mr. Benne expressed his disagreement with how the ELCA understands itself as a public church. He suggested a change from a direct to an indirect strategy. Rather than advocacy centers or social statements, he said, this church should persuade through the public callings of the laity. He proposed that members of this church might critically engage issues from a Christian perspective, come to their conclusions, and bear witness in their own public callings. He concluded with the observation, "One well-formed senator is worth 10,000 social statements."

Mr. Martin predicted that the future public face of the church would involve the Internet and electronic media. He said the priority is for each member to be an evangelist. He commended the example of the Dudoma Diocese in Tanzania where all people regularly share their faith with their Masai neighbors. He called members to get out of the traditional Lutheran comfort zone.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the assembly to thank the nominees for responding to its questions and then to sing "Now Thank We All Our God."

## **Report: Credentials Committee**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9 and 40.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. David A. Ullrich, vice chair of the Credentials Committee, to bring its report. Mr. Ullrich reported 1,043 voting members were registered.

## **Elections: Third Ballot for Vice President**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15-16, 18-20; Section IV, page 1.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced the next item on the agenda was the third ballot for vice president. Election on this ballot would require a two-thirds vote. Before instructing the members to vote, he provided time for silent prayerful reflection and the review of the published biographical information. At the conclusion of that time, Presiding Bishop Hanson instructed the voting members in the electronic voting process. He offered a prayer and then called for the vote.

## Video Contest: “God’s Work. Our Hands.”

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson introduced the video from Christ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Temple Terrace, Fla., which the assembly then viewed.

## Elections Report: Third Ballot for Vice President

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15–16, 18–20; Section IV, page 1.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. Phillip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, for the report on the third ballot for vice president. Mr. Harris announced that 1,015 votes had been cast, and he reported the following results:

1. Carlos E. Peña	371	36.55%
2. Norma J. Hirsch	123	12.12%
3. Ryan M. Schwarz	221	21.77%
4. Nanette C. Dahlke	109	10.74%
5. Robert D. Benne	48	4.73%
6. Thomas T. Taylor	54	5.32%
7. Yao T. Chiu	76	7.49%
8. James Martin	13	1.28%

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that there had been no election. The following names would appear on the next ballot:

1. Carlos E. Peña
2. Ryan M. Schwartz
3. Norma J. Hirsch

He announced that the next phase of the election process would take place Saturday morning. At that time the assembly would hear brief presentations from each of the three nominees, followed by the fourth ballot for vice president.

## Consideration: Recommendation on Ministry Policies (continued)

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 41–42; Section V, pages 85–93, 95–97, 99–101, 103–122.

As the assembly returned to consideration of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson invited members to pray with one another. He thanked those watching on the Web for their prayers as well.

The assembly resumed deliberation on the following resolution of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies:

RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.

The Rev. Marshall E. Hahn [Northeastern Iowa Synod] recalled his ordination vows to teach according to the Scriptures, Lutheran Confessions, and creeds. He expressed concern that the actions of the assembly were at odds with his ordination commitments. He cautioned the assembly, “It is one thing to be in error; it is worse to act on that error.”

Ms. Solveig M. Carlson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke of her children, two of whom were heterosexual and one homosexual. She said that members were called to love, not to be gatekeepers. She gave an example of grace in her own family, the acceptance of the partner of her gay son. She concluded, “I urge the passage of this welcoming embrace for all children of the heavenly Father.”

Mr. Karl E. Moyer [Lower Susquehanna Synod] expressed love and affection for all in the room. He noted the contradictory positions on homosexuality in the social statement. He asserted, “If we are not informed in common on these things, we should not be taking votes on them. To say one thing and do another costs integrity and credibility.”

The Rev. Leslie K. Williamson [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] asked about the nature of the sin named in this discussion. She supported the resolution, observing that committed same-gender relationships do not create sin but function in the same way as heterosexual relationships.

The Rev. Michael E. Johnson [Western North Dakota Synod] asked the assembly why members do not trust Scripture in matters of human sexuality as in matters of Christ. He felt the assembly was not trusting in God above all things. He opposed the resolution, calling it an “abuse of Christian freedom.”

Ms. Cheryl A. Walker [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] urged passage of the resolution. She said that God promised in the book of Genesis that human beings would not be alone but would have loving and trusted partners to accompany them on their journey.

Mr. Frederick H. Heintz [Northwestern Ohio Synod] commented that the social statement recognized this church’s struggle to reach a definitive position, and he asserted that Scripture could not be overthrown without clear direction. He urged the assembly to wait for certainty on the issue.

Mr. Larry A. Christensen [Southeastern Iowa Synod] said the current policy calls members to hold the stone and point the finger. In contrast, Jesus would have us “apply the law ruthlessly to ourselves and graciously to the other.” He supported the resolution.

Mr. John M. Karriker [North Carolina Synod] pointed out that the proposed policy resolution could not be enforced because most states do not legally recognize same-gender relationships. He claimed it would splinter this church.

The Rev. Carla R. Thompson Powell [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] reminded the assembly of the greeting from the Lutheran Youth Organization, which had expressed the desire for a more inclusive and open church body. She referred to 1 Timothy 4:12 and urged the assembly to listen closely to the youth and vote “yes” on the resolution.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, member of the Church Council from Oak Harbor, Ohio, to lead the assembly in prayer.

Mr. Timothy L. Deal [North Carolina Synod] declared that the proposed resolutions were flawed and illogical and should be rejected.

Mr. R. Guy Erwin [Southwest California Synod] moved to end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-640; NO-360**

**DEFEATED:**

The previous question.

The chair declared that the motion to end debate had failed, and debate would continue.

Mr. Thomas B. Martin-Erickson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] recalled his hard-working pastor and the many demands on those who serve the Church. He referred to Mark 6 and Luke 10, saying Jesus sent the disciples out with partners. He added, “The respect, support, and affection of a spouse or partner can be a great blessing and opportunity for all rostered leaders.”



Mr. Craig R. Johnson [Eastern North Dakota Synod] said that his instinct told him this resolution was wrong and should not be condoned. He observed, “When we meet in 2017, I hope we do not lament with [the] song ‘Where have all the Lutherans gone?’”

The Rev. Gary M. Wollersheim, bishop of the Northern Illinois Synod, reported on an annual Illinois summer leadership retreat for Lutheran high school and college youth. He said that 99 percent of those in attendance affirmed that the ELCA should ordain qualified people in same-gender relationships. He concluded, “I agree with them. It’s a matter of justice, it’s a matter of hospitality, and I believe it’s what Jesus would have us do.”

Pr. Cary G. Larson [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] was concerned that, if the resolution were to be adopted, this church would become a federation of synods and a loose federation of congregations. He asked where the accountability would lie.

The Rev. Kay S. Richter [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] gave thanks for all those standing in line to address the assembly and for those faithfully reading their Bibles. She cited several biblical prohibitions that she has violated while still being able to serve as a pastor. She suggested that this church’s current policy represented an arbitrary application of biblical prohibitions.

The Rev. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe, bishop of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, wondered how this church will live into these decisions. He expressed hope that one day members would arrive at a consensus understanding of the Bible, a consensus that currently is lacking.

The Rev. John K. Stendahl [New England Synod] pointed out that many people understand passages of Scripture differently. He hoped for greater understanding and for greater sensitivity in how members express themselves concerning these differences. He supported the resolution.

Mr. Wayne A. Jacobson [Northeastern Iowa Synod] said his voice represented tens of thousands of those not present at the assembly. He indicated that he has lived with the Bible, and its words have meant life to him and his family. He expressed his conviction that the decisions of the assembly have damaged this church’s witness to the truth of Scripture. He added that an assembly vote cannot change the Word of God.

Mr. Robert S. Nicol [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] noted he is guilty of any number of sins, especially the sin of omission. He spoke of ignoring the homeless and wondered if he should be excommunicated for doing so. He said that failing to treat our neighbors as ourselves is clearly a sin and that it is time to recognize our own sin. He urged support of the resolution.

Mr. John L. Seng [Northeastern Ohio Synod] stated that there would be problems in establishing uniform rules, and he felt this decision would split this church. “I would request that everyone, come Thanksgiving, . . . measure the impact on our church.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson, member of the Church Council from Garretson, S.D., to lead the assembly in prayer.

Ms. Brittani A. Lamb [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] identified herself as a speaker for the youth. She said, “If this resolution fails, not only will we lose many great pastoral leaders, but the church would lose the trust of many of its younger generation.”

Ms. Meredith L. Nelson [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] opposed the resolution, saying that it would result in a double standard for homosexual and heterosexual clergy. She added that, for the sake of future generations, pastors must be held to high standards.

The Rev. Paul A. Tidemann [Saint Paul Area Synod] said he did not believe any decline in membership would be the outcome of this decision. He pointed out that, as his congregation became more inclusive, it increased in spirit and numbers. The year after the congregation decided to call and ordain Anita Hill, it grew by 100 members.

The Rev. Henry E. Zorn [Southern Ohio Synod] acknowledged that he was conflicted and commented that the only word from the Spirit was that there was no clarity. He stated that he

had heard compelling arguments on both sides. He supported the first resolution but felt more time was needed to work with global partners on the issues in the resolution under discussion.

Ms. Jamie L. Hovland [Southwest California Synod] recounted the ministry of a gay pastor to her family. She observed, "I pray that you now lift up the work to which [gay and lesbian people] have been called. God's work. Our hands."

Mr. Roger G. Thompson [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] asserted the authority of Scripture. He expressed concern that the interpretation of bound conscience would impinge upon that authority.

The Rev. Larry V. Smoose [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-763; NO-236**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called the assembly to silent prayer and then asked Ms. Judith Anne Bunker, member of the Church Council from Pinellas Park, Fla., to offer spoken prayer. He then called for the vote.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-559; NO-451**

**CA09.05.26**

**RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the resolution was adopted, and he then asked the assembly to sing "If You But Trust in God to Guide You."

The presiding bishop called on Secretary David D. Swartling to present Resolution Four of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

**MOVED:**

**RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members to commit themselves to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree regarding decisions on the call and rostering of individuals in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, in this church and with churches ecumenically and globally; and be it further**

**RESOLVED, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further**

**RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to eliminate the prohibition of rostered service by**

members who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization could hold people publicly accountable in their relationships who are in or contemplate being in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and who seek to be on the rosters of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee on Appeals be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to “Definition and Guidelines for Discipline” and the Vocation and Education program unit be directed to draft, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council is directed to approve, appropriate amendments to the “Vision and Expectations” documents and the Candidacy Manual to accomplish the intent of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that additional policies be developed, as necessary, so that those whom this church holds responsible for making decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a particular specific ELCA ministry may discern, and have guidance in discerning, the fitness for ministry of a member living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this church continue to trust its established processes and those to whom it has given the responsibility to discern who should and should not be rostered or called to public ministry in this church.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the *ad hoc* committee, reported that there were no amendments that were recommended by the committee.

The chair opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. Katherine E. Baardseth [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] supported the resolution, saying it did not force any congregation to call any particular pastor.

The Rev. Jeffrey J. Blain [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] asked whether at some point the chair would share his thoughts. He hoped that there would be some way for those who were disturbed by the outcomes of the assembly to spend time together before it adjourned.

Mr. Lowell E. Wickman [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved that members of the assembly recognize August 23 as a day of fasting. The chair ruled the motion out of order at that time but said that Mr. Wickman’s comment would be taken as notice of intent.

The Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, moved to amend Resolution Four.

**MOVED:**

**SECONDED:** *To amend Resolution Four by addition after line 92 the following:*

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church cannot call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship;

Pr. Loy commented that he believed that had this amendment come before the *ad hoc* committee, the committee might have recommended it. He stressed, however, that the committee had not met to discuss it.

Presiding Bishop Hanson said that, under the rules, the assembly would have to vote to consider the amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-684; NO-219**

**CARRIED: To consider the amendment.**

In speaking to the amendment, Bp. Kusserow said that Resolution Four is a carefully balanced document. The “Whereas” paragraphs speak often about convictions, as do the “Resolved” paragraphs. He said that while Line 87 provided clear space for some, this amendment would provide clear space for others.

Mr. David L. Lillehaug [Minneapolis Area Synod] opposed the amendment as too vague. He objected to the *ad hoc* committee’s having considered this amendment informally but not having made a recommendation.

Mr. Carroll S. Shaddock [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] stated that he had prepared a similar amendment. He added that his concern was addressed in this amendment, which provided a way for conscience-bound views of those in opposition to find expression. He wondered if such expression would best be handled by the formation of a non-geographical synod with its own assembly.

The Rev. Jay M. McDivitt [Rocky Mountain Synod] asked what the resource members thought “make provision for” would mean. He wondered if making provision for the expression of conscience-bound opposition would mean that in some synods persons in same-gender relationships would not receive calls.

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, commented that with or without the amendment the ministry policy resolutions call for ways to respect bound conscience. “It is my understanding that . . . we have uniform policies across the church, but candidacy committees, congregational call committees, and congregations are responsible for making individual decisions.”

The Rev. Leslie K. Williamson [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] moved an amendment to the amendment:

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

*To amend the amendment by striking out and inserting:*

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church ~~cannot~~ should not call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship;

There being no discussion, Presiding Bishop Hanson called for the vote.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-752; NO-173**

**CARRIED: To amend the amendment by striking out and inserting:**

**RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church ~~cannot~~ should not call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship;**

The discussion continued on the amended amendment.

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] said that the original text had been widely reviewed and he believed the amendment to be redundant. He argued in favor of keeping the language as it had been seen and discussed.

The Rev. Kenneth M.C. Miller [Western North Dakota Synod] endorsed the amendment as a way to recognize the needs of those with conscientious objections.

Mr. Albert H. Quie [Minneapolis Area Synod] objected to trying to satisfy through this amendment the concerns of those, like himself, who opposed the resolution. He said the amendment would “muddy the waters.”

Mr. Joshua R. Toufar [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] indicated that he saw the amendment as comfort for the disheartened. He commented that its inclusion would influence his support for the full resolution.

The Rev. William E. Baum [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to close debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-842; NO-126**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

The chair then called for a vote on the amendment, as amended.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-650; NO-328**

**CARRIED:**

***To amend Resolution Four by addition after line 92 the following:***

**RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church should not call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship;**

The chair declared that the amendment was adopted. Debate continued on the resolution as amended.

The Rev. James R. Hale [Pacifica Synod] identified himself as the original pastor of a congregation that had grown. He predicted that the decisions of the assembly would reduce the size of his congregation. He called on leaders to lead, and he encouraged those he identified as conservative pastors to remain in the ELCA. He said he was considering resolutions for his congregation: one to stay in the ELCA and another to have dual membership in the ELCA and Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.

The Rev. Christopher D. Berry [Northwest Washington Synod] referred to the ELCA tagline, “God’s work. Our hands.” saying that his hands type sermons, baptize, and work. He observed that other hands are prevented from that ministry. He called upon the assembly to enable the work of the hands of gay and lesbian pastors.

The Rev. Corinne R. Johnson [Northern Great Lakes Synod] identified herself as a member of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality. She moved an amendment, which was labeled B-MP-7 in the “*Ad Hoc* Committee Report.”

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend Resolution Four by striking out and inserting:*

RESOLVED, that this church because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to ~~allow incorporate~~ structured flexibility in decision-making into its policies and procedures so that synods, bishops, congregations, candidacy, committees, and others involved in the candidacy process and in the process of extending calls will be free to act according to their convictions regarding both the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publically accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;

Speaking to the amendment, Pr. Johnson voiced concern that bound conscience be respected and that those participating in the candidacy and call process be named. She said, “I know many of you disagree with this . . . but some synods, bishops, congregations, candidacy committee members, and others believe that homosexual behavior that is not repented places the person in grave danger of unrepented sin.”

The Rev. Susan Candea [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved to close debate on all matters before the assembly.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-621; NO-323**

**DEFEATED:** To end debate on all matters before the assembly.

Presiding Bishop Hanson requested the consent of the assembly to extend the agenda to continue debate. No objection was heard.

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] encouraged the defeat of the amendment because it was redundant.

The Rev Michael E. Johnson [Western North Dakota Synod] supported the amendment, saying it would enable this church to respect the bound consciences of people who disagree with recently passed policies.

Pr. Loy described the process of developing policies as like walking a tightrope: on the one hand, respecting the bound conscience of ELCA members and, on the other hand, avoiding a structure that would result in the exercise of “local option.”

Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved to end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-851; NO-101**

**CARRIED:** **The previous question.**

Debate being closed, Presiding Bishop Hanson asked Ms. Karin L. Graddy, member of the Church Council from DeKalb, Ill., to lead the assembly in prayer. He then called for a vote on the proposed amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-402; NO-558**

**DEFEATED:**

*To amend Resolution Four by striking out and inserting:*

RESOLVED, that this church because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to ~~allow incorporate~~ structured flexibility in decision-making into its policies and procedures so that synods, bishops, congregations, candidacy committees, and others involved in the candidacy process and in the process of extending calls will be free to act according to their convictions regarding both the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publically accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship;

The chair announced that the motion to amend was not adopted.

The Rev. William E. Rindy, bishop of the Eastern North Dakota Synod, called for the orders of the day. Presiding Bishop Hanson said that debate had been extended by common consent, but he would ask the assembly if it wanted to move on to other business.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-273; NO-705**

**DEFEATED:**

*To move on to other business.*

The Rev. Jon V. Anderson, bishop of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, described the day as one of suffering. He said that his synod had voted not to approve the resolutions and expressed his wish for a clearer roadmap.

Pr. Olson responded that he regretted that he could not speak with certainty as to the way forward. He said the task force had decided not to write detailed descriptions given the constraints of time.

The Rev. Laurie A. Larson Caesar [Oregon Synod] spoke of her ministry in partnership with a Roman Catholic congregation. She said many in that context expressed amazement at the transparency and inclusion, as well as the involvement of laity, women, and men in the Lutheran church. She added that Lutherans are seen as leaders in including all who are gifted and called. Pr. Larson Ceasar concluded, "Let us not dim the light we are shining on the ecumenical world."

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved to end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-829; NO-126**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the Rev. Marie C. Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, to lead the assembly in prayer. He then called for a vote on Resolution Four, as amended.

**RESOLVED**, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members to commit themselves to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree regarding decisions on the call and rostering of individuals in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, in this church and with churches ecumenically and globally; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to eliminate the prohibition of rostered service by members who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church should not call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization could hold people publicly accountable in their relationships who are in or contemplate being in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and who seek to be on the rosters of this church; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Appeals be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to “Definition and Guidelines for Discipline” and the Vocation and Education program unit be directed to draft, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council is directed to approve, appropriate amendments to the “Vision and



**Expectations” documents and the Candidacy Manual to accomplish the intent of this resolution; and be it further**

**RESOLVED, that additional policies be developed, as necessary, so that those whom this church holds responsible for making decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a particular specific ELCA ministry may discern, and have guidance in discerning, the fitness for ministry of a member living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it finally**

**RESOLVED, that this church continue to trust its established processes and those to whom it has given the responsibility to discern who should and should not be rostered or called to public ministry in this church.**

The chair declared that Resolution Four was adopted.

The Rev. Richard B. Geib [Lower Susquehanna Synod] requested that liturgical materials be prepared to say good-bye to those who might leave the ELCA in response to its actions. Presiding Bishop Hanson ruled the request out of order at the time.

Presiding Bishop Hanson offered his thoughts and prayer on the assembly’s actions:

“I want to share some words. As one you have called to serve as pastor of this church, I have been standing here thinking about my 23 years as a parish pastor and how differently I would go into various contexts.

“Gathering with a family or a group of people who had just experienced loss, or who perhaps were wondering if they still belonged, or in fact felt deeply that ones to whom they belong had been severed from them, I would probably turn to words such as Romans 8:

Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? . . . For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:34–35, 38–39).

“But then I thought, what if I were going into a family, a group, or a community that had always wondered if they belonged, and suddenly now had received a clear affirmation that they belonged? All of the wondering about the dividing walls and feelings of separation seem to have dropped away. That would be a very different conversation. I would probably read to them out of Ephesians:

But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh, he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. . . . In him, the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God (Ephesians 2:13–14, 21–22).

“But then I thought, what if those two groups were together, but also in their midst were those who had neither experienced loss nor the feeling of the dividing wall of separation coming down, but were worried whether all that had occurred might sever the unity that is ours in Christ,

and might be wondering if their actions might have contributed to reconciliation or separation? If all those people were together in a room, I would read from Colossians:

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (Colossians 3:12-17).

"That passage gives invitation and expectation that those deeply disappointed today will have the expectation and the freedom to continue to admonish and to teach in this church. And so, too, those who have experienced reconciliation today are called to humility. You are called to clothe yourselves with love. But we are all called to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, remembering again and again that we are called in the one body. I will invite you tomorrow afternoon into important, thoughtful, prayerful conversations about what all of this means for our life together. But what is absolutely important for me is that we have the conversation together.

"I ended my oral report with these words: 'We finally meet one another not in our agreements or our disagreements, but at the foot of the cross, where God is faithful, where Christ is present with us, and where, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are one in Christ.'

"Let us pray. Oh, God, gracious and holy, mysterious and merciful, we meet this day at the foot of the cross, and there we kneel in gratitude and awe that you have loved us so much that you would give the life of your Son so that we might have life in his name. Send your Spirit this night, the Spirit of the risen Christ that has been breathed into us. May it calm us. May your Spirit unite us. May it continue to gather us. In Jesus' name, Amen."

The Rev. David N. Glesne [Minneapolis Area Synod], rising to a point of personal privilege, stated his thoughts in opposition to the actions of the day.

Mr. Thomas D. Pearson [Southwestern Texas Synod] offered a motion that the ELCA undertake a study on the concept of "bound conscience." The presiding bishop said that, because the time for the plenary had expired, the motion could not be entertained at that time.

## **Recess**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Secretary David D. Swartling for some brief announcements. He then asked the Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson, member of the Church Council from Garretson, S.D., to lead the assembly in a closing hymn and prayer. The assembly sang "The Day You Gave Us, Lord, Has Ended." Pr. Sorenson then led the assembly in prayer.

The ninth plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 6:21 P.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Ten

Saturday, August 22, 2009

8:00 A.M.–11:20 A.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), lit a candle and rang a bell, and he then called Plenary Session Ten of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 8:04 A.M. CDT on Saturday, August 22, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

Mr. Baron Blanchard, member of the Church Council from Bismarck, N.D., invited the assembly to sing “Come, We That Love the Lord.” From 1 Kings, he read the account of Elijah, the widow from Zerahath, and her son. Mr. Blanchard then led the assembly in prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Mr. Blanchard and stated that, unless there were objections, he recommended extending the morning session by 15 minutes in order to accommodate the Bible study. He said that two of the anticipated items for the morning would be postponed until the afternoon: the fourth ballot for vice president and the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee. No objections were offered.

Presiding Bishop Hanson went on to stress the importance of assembly members’ staying engaged, no matter how weary they might be feeling. He said that an afternoon committee of the whole discussion would focus on the question: “What does all we have done this week mean for our work in witness as we go home?” He added that, as the previous day’s plenary concluded, Mr. Thomas D. Pearson gave notice of a motion, which had been referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee and would be considered in the afternoon.

## Bible Study

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked the assembly to join him in welcoming the Rev. John A. Nunes, president and chief executive officer of Lutheran World Relief (LWR), to lead the Bible study.

Pr. Nunes began by telling about an LWR project in Santiago, Chile. He said a group of 200 women gather regularly to create extraordinary handcrafts out of scraps of cloth. He then invited members of the assembly to think of something they create for the sake of their community. He read Ecclesiastes 9:10a (NIV): “What your hands find to do, do it with all your might.”

Pr. Nunes also told of a village in the high hills of Kenya, whose people pleaded, “Just help us get water. We’ll do the work, and God will give the growth.” He said the LWR country program manager in Kenya was named Anastasia, which in Greek means “resurrection,” and indicated that her hands represented the hands of ELCA members as well as those of Christ. He announced that LWR recently had dedicated a water system in that village.

Pr. Nunes quoted the late theologian Arthur Carl Piepkorn, who said that Jesus is the pivotal one, whose death, life, resurrection, and promised return make sense of the terrifying absurdities experienced by millions on this planet. He commented that Anastasia understood her ministry as bringing common sense solutions within the terrifying absurdities of poverty in a world of plenty. Pr. Nunes said that the development story goes beyond what appears to be a solution to a local water crisis. Building community and the continued involvement of LWR is the story behind the well. He asked assembly members to compare their own needs with those of Kenya.

Pr. Nunes described a church in Finland as a “photographic dictionary definition of ‘A Mighty Fortress is Our God,’” in which he saw a crucifix without arms and hands. He asked, “Where are the hands of the body of Christ?” He answered, “We are, and, through the craft of our hands, God’s work is done on earth.” He quoted St. Teresa of Avila: “Christ has no body here on earth now but yours.” He commended the ELCA for using the word “hand,” a single body part, to describe the church’s calling and mission in the world.

Pr. Nunes stated that he was honored to serve in that part of the body of Christ called Lutheran World Relief, where the Holy Spirit helps stretch what is meant by “our” hands. He noted that the “our” question is one of the most critical questions of our time: “Whom do we mean when we say ‘We’? Who is the ‘Our’?” He described LWR as a partnership with the ELCA, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and a diverse cadre of Lutheran churches in 35 countries. “The energy,” he said, “is God’s; the synergy is our partnership; and the power comes ultimately from the Holy Spirit.”

Referring to Martin Luther, Pr. Nunes spoke of the connection between the Word of God, faith, love, and good works. Building on a quote from poet Derek Wolcott, who reflected on the legacy of slavery and the way it eliminated the freedom of Africans to work freely with their hands, Pr. Nunes said that people are born makers, created by God to use their hands to create.

Pr. Nunes offered what he called a “characteristically controverted and over-complicated summarizing Lutheran sentence: God does amazing things! When ordinary human hands [are] connected to hearts, filled with extraordinary love, born in Word-inspired faith, interacted in, with, and under surprisingly simple things like water, God does amazing things.” To illustrate, he lifted up water connections in each of the first seven chapters of John’s Gospel.

Pr. Nunes concluded that God still does amazing work through ordinary water, wine, women, and men: “Yours are the hands of Christ.”

## **Consideration: 2010–2011 Budget Proposal**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 6, 10, 16–17; Section IV, pages 55–86.*

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited the following people to present the budget recommendations: Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the ELCA; Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, chair of the Church Council’s Budget and Finance Committee; and the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop. He directed voting members to the appropriate place in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report* for the recommendation of the Church Council on the budget.

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on Secretary David D. Swartling to present the budget proposals:

### **MOVED:**      *2010 Budget Proposal*

To approve a 2010 current fund income proposal of \$76,692,000; and  
To approve a 2010 World Hunger income proposal of \$18,700,000.

### *2011 Budget Proposal*

To approve a 2011 current fund income proposal of \$76,778,000;  
To approve a 2011 World Hunger income proposal of \$19,000,000; and  
To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization  
after periodic review of revised income estimates.

The chair then opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. Frederick C. Ohsiek [Southeastern Synod] described his congregation as being average in size but above average in its mission support, giving 15 percent of its offerings to the ministries of the ELCA. He said that if everyone would be above average in tithing to the wider church that which is given to congregations, the Church Council would have to figure out what to do with all the extra money. He stated his support for the proposed budget and suggested that congregations be asked to tithe to support the important ministries of the ELCA—ministries “that feed people, that build congregations, and that help us live together as the people of God.”

The Rev. Paul A. Tidemann [Saint Paul Area Synod] supported adoption of the budget but expressed distress over the amount of cutting that has had to be done, particularly in the area of global mission.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] stated that he was objecting to the budget proposals because of the curtailing of campus ministry funds. He described campus ministry as one of the most important domestic missions because it served non-Christians, people becoming Christian, and people who are becoming leaders in this church. He said that he is opposed to the proposed budget because it is not enough. He added that learning to give from abundance, sacrificially, and proportionately is a spiritual issue.

Mr. Michael V. Johnson [Southeast Michigan Synod] commented that his soul was grieved by the level of giving in this church, less than two percent of what God has given to each member. He encouraged the teaching of tithing and said that he and his family tithed even as they went through personal bankruptcy. He described tithing in the midst of that storm as one of the most incredible growth experiences in his family’s spiritual life. He advocated teaching about stewardship in the home.

The Rev. Richard A. Fitzer [Eastern North Dakota Synod] spoke of a skewed view of abundance and wealth in this country compared with the rest of the world and urged a reframing of that view. He indicated that the new bishop of the Eastern North Dakota Synod, who had inherited a budget shortfall of a quarter million dollars, explained the problem to the synod, and told it what to do. The result was a 10 percent growth in giving to mission support.

Mr. Joseph S. Roberts [Minneapolis Area Synod], who informed the assembly that he came from the war-torn country of Liberia, thanked all those who have given in the past because he and his family have been recipients of their good gifts. He said that, as they found refuge in another country, he became involved with Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and saw how gifts that passed through LWR’s budget helped his people back home. He asked the assembly to support the budget so it can help other families in the same way that it helped his family.

The Rev. James R. Hale [Pacifica Synod] admitted that if decisions about benevolence were left to his congregation, the money would not go to the ELCA. Therefore, congregations need strong leaders on the issue. His congregation already had prepared a motion that will tell those conscience-bound people who want to give to the ELCA that they can, and tell those who are conscience-bound and cannot support the ELCA that their benevolence will be apportioned in a different way. He said that, because of the many wonderful things going on in this church that need to be supported financially, he would vote “Yes” on the budget proposal.

Mr. Timothy J. Mumm [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] said that during this difficult economic time, when students are moving from private colleges to state colleges, it is more critical than ever to focus on campus ministry. He thanked the ELCA for the support campus ministry has received in the past.

The Rev. Paul R. Beck [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] commented that his stewardship sermon every year was based on his favorite parable of Jesus. He then read Luke 6:37–38.

The Rev. Michael J. Toomey [Eastern North Dakota Synod] reminded the assembly that money always follows mission, suggesting it was time to re-evaluate what the ELCA is doing

or how the ELCA is doing it and put “our nose to the grindstone, our hearts to God, our hands to our neighbors, and get busy with the mission of God. The money will come if we are mission-minded and mission-focused.”

The Rev. Carl B. Shankweiler [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate on the budget recommendations.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-835; NO-72**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Murray D. Finck, bishop of the Pacifica Synod, to lead the assembly in prayer.

## **ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-863; NO-71**

### **CA09.06.28 2010 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2010 current fund income proposal of \$76,692,000; and**

**To approve a 2010 World Hunger income proposal of \$18,700,000.**

### **2011 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2011 current fund income proposal of \$76,778,000;**

**To approve a 2011 World Hunger income proposal of \$19,000,000; and**

**To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.**

The chair announced that the budget proposals had been approved.

## **Video Contest: “God’s Work. Our Hands.”**

Presiding Bishop Hanson introduced two video entries and reminded the assembly that the winners would be announced during the afternoon plenary. The first video was submitted by St. Matthew Lutheran Church, North Hollywood, Calif., and the second by St. Paul Lutheran Church, Medford, Wis.

## **Other Matters**

Presiding Bishop Hanson recognized the Rev. Paul R. Messner [Upstate New York Synod], who rose to a point of personal privilege. Pr. Messner said that he believed it was his right as a voting member to register his dissent from actions of the assembly publicly and in writing.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked whether he could respond after the nominees for vice president had spoken.

Mr. Y. T. Chiu [Northeastern Ohio Synod], rising to a point of personal privilege, asked if Presiding Bishop Hanson's remarks following yesterday's vote on the Recommendation on Ministry Policies would be printed so he could take them home.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that his remarks had been posted on the assembly Web site and a printed copy was in preparation.

Ms. Kim M. Winchell [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege to express deep appreciation for Presiding Bishop Hanson's remarks. She asked members of the assembly to commit to praying for the presiding bishop in the coming months. Presiding Bishop Hanson expressed his gratitude.

## **Elections: Addresses by the Three Nominees for Vice President**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15–16, 18–20; Section IV, page 1.*

Presiding Bishop Hanson introduced the three nominees for vice president, who had received the highest number of votes on the third ballot: Mr. Carlos E. Peña, Mr. Ryan M. Schwarz, and Ms. Norma J. Hirsch.

Mr. Peña spoke first, saying that it had been an honor to serve as vice president for the past six years. He observed that the constitutional role of the vice president is to chair the Church Council in a fair and unbiased manner and stated that one of his gifts is the ability to do so. He also said that he serves as a representative of this whole church, recognizes its diversity, and brings a global perspective to the position. He indicated that he wanted to remind the assembly that the love of God is the tie that binds, a thought he described as truer now than ever, given the implications of the major decisions made by the assembly. Finally, he spoke of the ELCA's relationship with other churches and said it was time to show the world what the ELCA can do by working together in the mission to which God has called it.

Ms. Hirsch spoke of how a good physician makes an assessment of a patient's condition by taking a medical history, giving a physical examination, and then making a prognosis. In the case of the ELCA, she said, the assessment is "condition critical," calling for intensive care. But, she stated, the prognosis is good, with no need to consult hospice. She suggested asking better, different questions—not "How will we survive?" but "How will we care and support each other?" She noted that the ELCA must grow leaner and more cost-effective by reassessing how it does ministry and grow more efficient by embracing technologies that improve communication and decrease costs while being more earth-friendly. She pointed out that a good physician creates a plan and that a plan for the ELCA must embrace healing–listening intentionally, building community, rebuilding trust where trust has been broken, admitting past mistakes, and, where appropriate, seeking reconciliation. She added that ELCA members must discern how to live in the midst of disagreements, and she urged assembly members not to leave Minneapolis without committing to stay connected, to communicate with each other, and to pray for each other and for this church together.

Mr. Schwarz said that he believed the ELCA must wrestle with two questions. The first is the "relative priority" of the Great Commission in the life of this church. He said that while he applauded the focus on mission-mindedness raised at the assembly, he pointed out that since the ELCA was formed 21 years ago, the number of annual new mission starts has declined by 50 percent while the number of missionaries in the field has declined by more than 60 percent. He stated that the ELCA's public church activities have grown to eclipse this church's primary mission. He commented, "It appears that the peripheral has become central, and the central has become peripheral," and urged that this church reexamine its priorities. Second, he said, he thinks this church is deeply divided not only on matters of sexuality but on the way to read and interpret Scripture; the proper role of human experience, reason, and the tradition of the church

in the interpretation of Scripture; and the meaning of the “authority of Scripture.” He concluded by saying that he believes that this church seriously erred in the decisions made this week and that he grieved those decisions and the potential consequences for this church.

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited the assembly to express its gratitude to all three servants of God. He added that the fourth ballot for vice president would be taken during the afternoon plenary.

## **Evangelical Outreach Testimony**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez and Ms. Susan E. Hernandez of New Hope Lutheran Church, El Paso, Texas, to tell about another congregation growing in evangelical mission. Alternating their speaking, Mr. and Ms. Hernandez described the diversity of their congregation. They said, “We bring a new hope because we are united in Jesus Christ. The chasms that divide us and the borders we stand by melt away.” They concluded with the words of a song with which every New Hope worship service ends: “Brothers, sisters all are we, part of God’s great family. As we go from this place, may God keep us in his grace.”

## **Report: World Hunger Appeal and Program**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section II, pages 27–28, 31, 42; Section III, Part 1, page 20; Section IV, pages 55, 62–63, 67, 70, 73, 80, 84, 86.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson described the World Hunger appeal as one of the strongest aspects of this church’s shared ministry and called on Ms. Nancy D. Arnison, director for the World Hunger program, and the Rev. Daniel Rift, the new director for the World Hunger appeal, for their report.

Ms. Arnison spoke of how this church has heard the cries of people in Sudan and Haiti and the cries of parents in the United States who are not able to feed their children. She reported that in the past year the global financial and food crises have pushed 100 million more people into poverty so that hunger threatens one billion people. But, she added, “While we weep with them, we act and live in hope, in the fullness of God’s abundant creation, rich with resources to feed all people and carry out God’s command to love the neighbor.”

Ms. Arnison described living and acting at the intersection of hunger and hope and thanked the people of the ELCA for their gifts. She said that, for multiple years, this church has broken records in giving to the ELCA Hunger Appeal. It reached a new record of \$22 million in 2008, a significant portion of which came from bequests. She reported that approximately 75 percent of World Hunger dollars go to international work, and she presented a video about how the ELCA World Hunger appeal and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe responded to the severe drought and political and economic crises in that country.

In the United States, she reported, the ELCA World Hunger program has provided more than 400 grants for work in relief, community development, organizing, education, and advocacy.

Ms. Arnison also described the ELCA’s work in response to natural and human-caused disasters. In 2008, this church responded to international disasters in 17 countries and to new domestic disasters in 14 states. It also continued to respond to previous disasters in seven states. She shared a video illustrating response to the 2007 flood in Rushford, Minn., pointing out that both the need and the help continue. She identified Ms. Cindy Johnson, who coordinated volunteers in Rushford, and noted that in 2008 more than 17,000 volunteers donated more than 500,000 hours in response to domestic disasters.

Ms. Arnison described new hunger program resources and invited members to explore the Hunger Tool Kit and new Web-based resources. She said that prayers, advocacy, and gifts are needed now more than ever.



Ms. Arnison introduced the new director for the World Hunger appeal, the Rev. Daniel Rift. Pr. Rift encouraged congregations to stand at the crossroads of hunger and hope and to continue to support the World Hunger appeal. He told the assembly members they are making a difference.

### **Granting of Privilege**

Presiding Bishop Hanson turned to the matter of registering the votes of voting members. He reported that according to *Robert's Rules of Order*, unless there is a roll call vote, it is not appropriate for members to register their vote, absent a rule or a vote of the assembly. He said the assembly would have to give permission to voting members to register their votes.

The Rev. Paul R. Messner [Upstate New York Synod] said that he wanted to register his dissent relative to votes on Resolutions Two and Three of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies and moved to do so.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** To allow voting members to register in writing with the secretary of this church their votes on Resolutions Two and Three of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] asked if this was a change in the rules that would require a two-thirds vote.

Presiding Bishop Hanson said that he had asked the parliamentarian the same question and ruled it was not a change in the rules, but the granting of a privilege.

Mr. Lowell E. Wickman [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved to end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-735; NO-98**

**CARRIED:** The previous question.

The assembly then voted on the main motion.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION**

**YES-473; NO-399**

**CA09.06.29 To allow voting members to register in writing with the secretary of this church their votes on Resolutions Two and Three of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the motion had passed, and he asked those who wished to register their votes to do so at the beginning and end of plenaries in order to be less disruptive to the business of the assembly.

The Rev. Corrine R. Johnson [Northern Great Lakes Synod] moved to grant the same privilege for those who wished to register their vote on Resolution Four of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** To allow voting members to register in writing with the secretary of this church their votes on Resolution Four of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

The Rev. Steven P. A. Woyen [Northeastern Ohio Synod] asked if voting members would be required to register their votes. Presiding Bishop Hanson responded in the negative, saying that this action would grant permission to those who desired to do so.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION**

**YES-520; NO-359**

**CA09.06.30**

**To allow voting members to register in writing with the secretary of this church their votes on Resolution Four of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the motion had passed.

The Rev. Heidi W. Punt [Central/South Illinois Synod] suggested members could register their dissent with their local bishops, which would create less chaos.

Presiding Bishop Hanson responded that, while she had the right to make such a motion, the secretary's deputy was prepared to handle the registration of votes. He added that if registration became overwhelming, he could return to her suggestion.

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited the assembly to join in singing "In Christ There is No East or West."

### **Greeting: Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson declared that the witness of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has been so powerful that even Hollywood had noticed. To illustrate, he showed a video clip from the movie "Gran Torino" that contained a conversation between Walt Kowalski (Clint Eastwood) and his Hmong neighbor, Thao, concerning Thao's resettlement by LIRS.

Presiding Bishop Hanson commented that Mr. Ralston H. Deffenbaugh, retiring president of LIRS, has been called the "moral compass" in the debate on immigration. Noting that Mr. Deffenbaugh had spoken at every Churchwide Assembly, Bishop Hanson invited him to bring a greeting to the current assembly on behalf of LIRS.

Mr. Deffenbaugh thanked the presiding bishop for his inspiring leadership. He reported that LIRS, a cooperative ministry of the ELCA and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, has resettled more than 100,000 refugees in the United States, revived America's system for providing loving foster care for unaccompanied refugee children, changed the way America treats unaccompanied children who cross into this country and are apprehended by the U.S. Border Patrol, worked closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to revive the worldwide use of resettlement for refugees and set up a system for identifying and caring for unaccompanied and separated children, and provided leadership in this nation's debate over immigration. Lutherans, he said, are a strong voice for family unity, the fair treatment and dignity of immigrants, a process of legalization for those without documents, and an end to unnecessary imprisonment of migrants who are neither criminals nor dangerous.

Mr. Deffenbaugh observed that the refugee resettlement system of the United States is severely strained financially and its immigration system is badly broken. He reported that the number of refugees in the world is about the same as 20 years ago, 14 million to 15 million, and that more than half of these refugees are warehoused in refugee camps for more than 10 years. He pointed out that there are 12 million people in the United States without proper documentation and four million U.S. citizen children who have at least one undocumented parent and that one of every 25 people in this country is without legal immigration status. Referring to Matthew 25, he commented that welcoming the stranger is number three on Jesus's list of ways God is served through serving the neighbor. Welcoming the stranger, he said, is one way to allow ourselves to be transformed and to grow closer to God.

Mr. Deffenbaugh indicated that in the writing of their book, *They Are Us*, the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman and he discovered that to be Lutheran in the United States is to be pro-immigrant: it is part of who Lutherans are. He said the vision he and Pr. Bouman have is that newcomers to the United States will see the name "Lutheran" and say, "That's a safe place. That's a welcoming place. I want to be with them."

Mr. Deffenbaugh concluded by saying that it has been a tremendous privilege to lead LIRS for the past 18 years.

The presiding bishop called on Secretary David D. Swartling to read the Church Council citation in honor of Mr. Deffenbaugh.

Secretary Swartling read the following citation:

*WHEREAS, in response to God's love in Christ, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has since its beginnings in 1939 provided a Lutheran presence in the United States and through global partnerships to welcome the stranger, bringing new hope and new life through ministries of service and justice; and*

*WHEREAS, through its collaboration with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America deepens and extends its ministry with refugees and migrants by building welcoming communities; and*

*WHEREAS, Ralston H. Deffenbaugh Jr., president of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, has provided exemplary leadership since being appointed LIRS's fifth president in 1991; and*

*WHEREAS, over the past 18 years under the leadership of Ralston Deffenbaugh, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has:*

- resettled more than 100,000 refugees through 25 affiliates across the United States;*
- advocated for increased U.S. resettlement of refugees from Africa (including the so-called "Lost Boys" from Sudan), the Balkans, Burma, and Bhutan;*
- revived the U.S. system for resettlement and foster care for unaccompanied refugee children;*
- advocated for and currently administers federally funded child-friendly non-detention care for undocumented unaccompanied children in federal custody;*
- advocated for federally funded "Know Your Rights" presentations in immigration detention facilities and for increased availability of legal representation for persons held in immigration detention;*
- advocated for federally funded alternatives to detention programs for asylum seekers and others in immigration proceedings;*
- advocated for and currently administers federally funded programs of assistance for victims of torture being held in immigration detention;*
- advocated for and currently administers the availability of refugee resettlement assistance for asylees;*

- worked closely with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to revive the full use of resettlement as a durable solution for refugees;
- collaborated with UNHCR to identify and apply Best Interests Determinations for unaccompanied and separated refugee children;
- solidified the reputation of LIRS as a “partner of choice” because of its commitment to mutually supportive relationships;
- provided strong and visible leadership in this decade’s contentious debates over immigration reform;
- strengthened the commitment of U.S. Lutherans to welcome and accompany immigrants and refugees;
- tripled the programs and staff of LIRS, expanding its capacity to a \$25 million annual budget with more than 100 staff; and

*WHEREAS, Ralston Deffenbaugh has been called the “moral compass” of response to refugees in the United States because of his unwavering commitment to treat all people with dignity, compassion, and respect; and*

*WHEREAS, Ralston Deffenbaugh will complete his service with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service on August 31, 2009; therefore, be it*

*RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, acting on behalf of all expressions of this church, express its deepest appreciation to Ralston H. Deffenbaugh Jr. for his exemplary service and leadership as president of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service; and be it further*

*RESOLVED, that the Church Council request that Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson convey this heartfelt expression of thanks to Ralston Deffenbaugh for his leadership of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, along with this church’s belief that his rich gifts and experience will continue to contribute to a world that is marked by hospitality, grace, and love for the neighbor.*

The assembly responded with a standing ovation. Presiding Bishop Hanson invited the assembly to sing one verse of “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty.”

## **Points of Personal Privilege**

Mr. Y. T. Chiu [Northeastern Ohio Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege. He spoke about the terrible flooding and the destruction of an entire village in Taiwan, adding that he would be traveling to Taiwan in September. He hoped the ELCA would be there and would pray for the people affected by the flooding.

Presiding Bishop Hanson assured him that he would have the prayers of the assembly. He said he hoped Mr. Chiu would have a chance to meet with staff members before he leaves to hear how the ELCA is responding to the flooding.

Ms. Margaret H. Fielding [Metropolitan New York Synod] asked if the registration of ministry policies votes is only for negative votes.

Presiding Bishop Hanson said that the provision to register any vote is a personal choice.

## **Consideration: Proposed Social Statement on Justice for Women**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 43–44.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson reminded the assembly that, in addition to approving social statements of this church, the Churchwide Assembly has the responsibility to approve topics and timelines for future social statements. He pointed out that the recommendation for a social statement on justice for women has come from the Church Council. He welcomed Ms.

Kristin E. Kvam, chair of the consulting committee on justice for women; the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit; and Ms. Mary J. Streufert, director for justice for women. He then called on Secretary Swartling to read the recommended action.

**MOVED:** To request that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America develop a social statement on the topic of justice for women in church and society to be received by the Churchwide Assembly for approval in 2015.

The chair then opened the floor for discussion.

Ms. Stacey L. Siebrasse [Montana Synod] said she rose to speak on behalf of young women and women in candidacy for ministry in the ELCA. She said that she hoped this church would vote to create a social statement on justice for women that would set an example for the world, where millions of women have not been able to let their gifts and talents shine.

The Rev. Susan Candea [Rocky Mountain Synod] commented that this church has failed to see its social statements as tools of evangelism, bringing the “God question” not only to ELCA members but to society. She urged support of the development of this social statement as an opportunity to be evangelists, bringing the good news of God’s kingdom for all people.

The Rev. Christine C. Thompson [Greater Milwaukee Synod] observed that she embodies an incredible history that says: “We have come a long way, baby.” She referred to her experience as an African-American female pastor and said that, because some people would continue to look at the color of her skin rather than her skills and gifts before calling her as a pastor, there is still a long way to go. She indicated her support for the recommendation.

Mr. Michael V. Johnson [Southeast Michigan Synod] declared that this church ought to be in the business of justice and advocacy for all people and for women in particular. He suggested that White women in this church ought to listen to women of color, who have had to “endure the trifecta of sexism, race, and class in this society.” He spoke in favor of the recommendation.

The Rev. Ann M. Tiemeyer [Metropolitan New York Synod] stated that she could begin by listing overwhelming social statistics about why such a social statement is necessary, but she wanted to begin by stating the need for a clear, theologically articulated document to help with discussion and teaching about justice for women. She noted that such a statement can be a witness to the ELCA, the ecumenical movement, and the world as a whole. She said she delighted in the opportunity to vote yes.

Ms. Joanne Chadwick [Sierra Pacific Synod] asked the assembly to support a social statement that will be a teaching document for this whole church. She said she looks for this social statement to be the next benchmark, after the ordination of women, in getting rid of the scandalous reality of sexism.

Ms. Susan K. Moehring [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] inquired why development of a social statement takes six years.

Pr. Larson explained that the ELCA already has two social statements in process: one on genetics, due to be presented to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, and another on criminal justice, scheduled for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. In addition, the process of study, dissemination of information, drafting, and reception of feedback from members of this church requires considerable time.

Ms. Meredith L. Nelson [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] identified herself as a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and a professional percussionist. She pointed out that accomplishments are not based on gender or skin color but on skill level. She expressed concern that money spent on developing social statements could be used instead for campus ministry,

new congregations, mission, outreach, and hunger. She said, “We need to keep the main thing the main thing” and not be focused primarily on social justice.

The Rev. Gladys G. Moore [New England Synod] expressed concern that social statements are approved but then “put on a shelf.” If that is the case, she said, then resources are not being used wisely. She felt this recommendation would demand a “deeply convicted theological response that would engage this church in study and reflection, particularly on the theological connection between justification and justice in the realm of what it means to be female and male within God’s creation.” She said she hoped that the ELCA would take this recommendation seriously enough to do what Lutherans do so well: study, reflect, and engage congregations in the process.

The Rev. Jay M. McDivitt [Rocky Mountain Synod] urged the assembly to pass this recommendation, saying that he prays this church will continue to wrestle with how his new daughter will be lifted up and honored in church and society. He spoke about the rich experience of working through the social statement on human sexuality, stating that those who participated in the process are better Lutherans for it. They know more about who they are, what they believe, how they do what they do, and how they understand the intersection of church and society. He encouraged the assembly to take the process seriously, asserting that they would be better Lutherans even if they did not agree with the outcome.

Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of Women of the ELCA, told the assembly that the women’s organizations of the predecessor bodies were founded in part to combat the sexism that denied women a full role in the church. She reported that, since the formation of the ELCA, Women of the ELCA has made grants of over \$3 million to address the exclusionary forms of sexism working against women and girls in the United States and around the globe. She said that one of the purposes of Women of the ELCA is to bring about healing and wholeness in church, society, and the world, and she believes that this social statement can work toward that end.

The Rev. Carla Thompson Powell [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] asked if Pr. Larson could speak to how congregations would participate in the development of the social statement.

Pr. Larson explained the process, describing a multiple-year process with three cycles of opportunity for congregations, synods, individuals, and groups to be involved in developing a proposed social statement to be considered by the Churchwide Assembly.

The Rev. Keith M.C. Miller [Western North Dakota Synod] moved to end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-872; NO-34**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, member of the Church Council from Wilmington, N.C., to lead the assembly in prayer. He then called for the vote.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION**

**YES-754; NO-176**

**CA09.06.31**

**To request that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America develop a social statement on the topic of justice for women in church and society to be received by the Churchwide Assembly for approval in 2015.**

The chair announced that the proposal was adopted.

## **Greeting: The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod**

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited the assembly to welcome the Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, president of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Pr. Kieschnick said that 2 Corinthians 5:19–21 has become increasingly meaningful to him, calling it a “humbling privilege and responsibility to know that God is making his appeal through people like you and me.”

Pr. Kieschnick brought greetings on behalf of the LCMS at what he said was a difficult time in the world and church. He commented that Lutherans were no strangers to discord and divisiveness, but, as expressed in the Formula of Concord, “discord can become concord when Christian individuals and Christian church bodies are faithful to the Holy Scriptures.”

Pr. Kieschnick noted that doctrinal differences separate the ELCA and LCMS. Speaking his next words “in deep humility, with a heavy heart and no desire whatsoever to offend,” he said that the decisions of this assembly on same-gender relationships will not only cause additional stress and disharmony within the ELCA but also negatively affect the relationship of the two church bodies. He stated that this “grieves my heart and the hearts of [other Lutherans and Christians] who do not see these decisions as compatible with the Word of God.” He spoke of differences between the two churches in understanding the authority and interpretation of Scripture.

Pr. Kieschnick concluded by saying it was his prayer that God would grant “each of us sensitivity, humility, boldness, courage, faithfulness, and forgiveness as we continue to strive toward God-pleasing harmony and concord in what we believe, teach, and confess.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Pr. Kieschnick and expressed, in the same spirit of humility and clarity, his deep commitment that “the Confessions that hold us together as Lutherans will be strong enough for us to continue to be in conversation and to respond together to the cries of the world through Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Disaster Response, and chaplaincy services.” He added that he hoped that Pr. Kieschnick would convey the ELCA’s honest commitment to be in conversation with the LCMS and to work together to proclaim Christ through deeds of service.

## **Greeting: Lutheran World Federation**

Presiding Bishop Hanson welcomed the Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and invited him to bring a greeting to the assembly.

Pr. Noko greeted the assembly on behalf of the LWF, saying that he brought a special greeting from Kazakhstan, where he had recently visited an LWF-member church. He said the history of that church could best be described not in words, but in tears. When he asked members what they wanted him to report to the ELCA, they responded, “Tell them we survived and . . . that we uphold them in our prayers.”

Pr. Noko added his thanks for the ELCA’s support of the LWF, statements about malaria and HIV and AIDS, work with refugees, and the hunger program that has touched the lives of his own people in Zimbabwe. He also expressed thanks for ELCA members who work in the LWF.

Pr. Noko noted that the Lutheran World Federation Third Assembly was held in Minneapolis 52 years earlier. He said that the theme of that assembly, “Christ Frees and Unites,” was a theme that spoke directly to the global situation of the time. He told of Bishop Ordush from the Lutheran Church in Hungary, who had been released from prison to attend the

assembly with the understanding that he would return to jail following the assembly. Bp. Ordush's sermon on the Sunday of the assembly proclaimed Christ as the hope of the world in the midst of the turmoil and aftermath of World War II.

Today, Pr. Noko said, "you are gathered in the same place to share the same faith and hope." He said it was a hope that had shone in the midst of doubts, vulnerabilities, hesitations, and all kinds of fear. He commented that, 52 years ago, relationships between LWF member churches were marked by suspicion, yet they rediscovered that true unity "is a gift rooted in the proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of the sacraments." He said our forebears decided the most sensible thing to do was to stay together. The legacy from that Minneapolis assembly was the understanding that the Church is the body of Christ and "is not ours to dismember."

Over the years, Pr. Noko said, the yearning for unity has transformed the life of the LWF from a federation to a communion. Not a communion of uniformity, he said, but one that has allowed member churches to grow in respect for one another, to speak and act on behalf of the majority of world Lutherans in areas of international *diakonia* and advocacy, and has edged world Lutherans toward deeper relationships with other Christians. He noted especially the landmark *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* and said he hoped the 2010 LWF General Assembly in Stuttgart, Germany, would take another step and ask forgiveness for the legacy of violent persecution of Anabaptist Christians beginning in the sixteenth century.

Pr. Noko said that "we cannot choose the challenges presented to us," but the LWF will look to the future with "hope that we will continue to grow in communion with one another and in the unity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ." He added that the "whole Christian Church will be served well if Lutherans can provide an example of living in love, speaking the truth, confessing the faith, and sharing one another's joys, challenges, and conflicts." He noted that the LWF has begun a five-year process in which members churches are invited to consult with one another in an open and respectful way on the ethical issues of marriage, family, and sexuality.

Pr. Noko commented on having watched the Churchwide Assembly deal with the issue of sexuality in a serious way and emphasized "even the expression of disagreements are signs of the indivisibility of the Church of Jesus Christ." He commended the assembly's manner of deliberating with respect and dignity, which brought honor to this church. He said the commitment to "bear one another's burdens" is a mark of the Christian community in contrast to a world in which each person bears his or her own burdens.

Pr. Noko said his presence at the assembly was a sign of care, an embodiment of prayer, and a mark of lives tied together in ways that cannot be explained. He encouraged the members of the assembly to pray for one another and to speak about the assembly "in ways that will build up the body of Christ. The history of Lutherans meeting in this city 52 years ago invites you to that role. The Gospel calls you to it. Christ frees and Christ unites." The call of ELCA members, he concluded, is to be servants of freedom and unity.

Pr. Noko offered personal thanks to Presiding Bishop Hanson and his wife, Ione, for their friendship. He said he had been well received by Lutherans in the ELCA and added that if he were to go to heaven that night and be asked about the ELCA, he would respond that ELCA Lutherans love their church, generously share what they have with people beyond their borders, and volunteer for everything. He also would add: "Send the Holy Spirit to keep them together."

Finally, Pr. Noko thanked Presiding Bishop Hanson for his leadership of the LWF and thanked the ELCA for providing Presiding Bishop Hanson the time to do so. Pr. Noko closed with the words of Ruth to her mother-in-law: "Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people; your God shall be my God."



The assembly responded with a standing ovation. Presiding Bishop Hanson asked Secretary David D. Swartling to read the tribute to Pr. Noko approved by the Church Council.

Secretary Swartling read the following citation:

*WHEREAS, the Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko has dedicated his life to the work of the Lutheran global community; and*

*WHEREAS, in his exemplary leadership of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) as general secretary since 1994, Ishmael Noko has been a passionate advocate for the empowerment of LWF member churches; and*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Noko's theological wisdom has contributed significantly to the growth of the Lutheran World Federation's self-understanding as a communion of churches; and*

*WHEREAS, under his leadership, the Lutheran World Federation has developed an understanding of and commitment to prophetic diakonia, keeping service inseparable from justice-seeking and peace-making;*

*WHEREAS, Ishmael Noko, a son of Africa rooted in the Pan-African experience, is the first person from the global South to serve as general secretary; and*

*WHEREAS, Ishmael Noko has played an active role as an ambassador to other Christian churches on behalf of the Lutheran World Federation; and*

*WHEREAS, Ishmael Noko's exceptional skills as a negotiator have reduced tensions, mediated agreements, and reconciled divisions within and between churches and in civil society; and*

*WHEREAS, in his support of theological understanding and ecumenical conversations with a wide range of Christian churches, and in his encouragement of cooperative and caring ministries with Christians throughout the world, Ishmael Noko has been a masterful diplomat and a skillful theologian; and*

*WHEREAS, Ishmael Noko's commitment to building interfaith cooperation led him to be instrumental in convening the creation of Interfaith Action for Peace in Africa, a council of the largest religions in Africa;*

*WHEREAS, as general secretary, he has been a model of ecumenism and has provided dynamic leadership for the reception of ecumenical dialogues, including the historic Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification;*

*WHEREAS, Ishmael Noko has been a trusted partner, wise colleague, patient mentor, and beloved friend to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and*

*WHEREAS, Ishmael Noko will complete his service as general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation on October 31, 2010; therefore, be it*

*RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), acting on behalf of all expressions of this church, express its deepest appreciation to Ishmael Noko for his exemplary service and leadership as general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation; and be it*

*RESOLVED, that the Church Council request that Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson convey this heartfelt expression of thanks to Ishmael Noko for his leadership of the Lutheran World Federation along with the ELCA's conviction that Lutherans will continue to build upon the strong foundation of his leadership and to draw from it courage, vision, and hope for the future.*

Presiding Bishop Hanson presented Pr. Noko with the "Savior of the World" cross, made of woods from 24 different countries, as a symbol of Pr. Noko's leadership and expressed the wish that it would be a reminder of the profound gratitude of the ELCA for his service.

## **Recess**

Presiding Bishop Hanson called on Secretary Swartling for announcements, and he reminded the assembly of the importance of the day's worship at Central Lutheran Church. Secretary Swartling made several brief announcements. The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, member of the Church Council from Oak Harbor, Ohio, offered the closing prayer.

The tenth plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 11:22 A.M. CDT.

# Plenary Session Eleven

Saturday, August 22, 2009

2:00 P.M.—6:30 P.M.

## Call to Order

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), called Plenary Session Eleven of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly to order at 2:02 P.M. CDT on Saturday, August 22, 2009, in Exhibition Hall E of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

The members of the assembly joined together in singing “We Eat the Bread of Teaching.”

Presiding Bishop Hanson reviewed the agenda for the afternoon’s plenary. He called attention to the 125th anniversary for the Deaconess Community of this church, and he invited those deaconesses present in the plenary hall to stand and be recognized.

## Greeting: Lutheran Services in America

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson informed the assembly that, for generations, this church, its predecessors, and its people have responded to human suffering in remarkably tangible and effective ways. He called on Ms. Jill A. Schumann, president and chief executive officer for Lutheran Services in America (LSA), to bring greetings. He added that LSA has become a strong “umbrella” organization for the social ministry of this church and that of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, touching the lives of one in 50 U.S. citizens.

Ms. Schumann began by asking the assembly to consider what people “out in the world” know about Lutherans. She shared several examples, concluding that many people recognize Lutherans by the social services they provide. From retirement communities to adoption agencies to immigration and refugee agencies, many people recognize Lutherans through what they see out in the world. Ms. Schumann stated that Lutheran health and human service organizations serve in diverse settings in all 50 states and the Carribean. She concluded that Lutherans are people who believe that God loves them, act in gratitude, and love and serve others. She thanked the assembly for all their contributions to these social ministries. The assembly responded with applause.

## Service of the Word at Central Lutheran Church

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson thanked the members of the assembly for their generous stewardship, announcing that the offering from the morning’s worship service totaled \$10,053.64. He also responded to Mr. Y. T. Chiu’s previously expressed concern about the devastation in Taiwan. He stated that while the Lutheran church there sustained no damage, the ELCA was in the process of sending \$25,000 so that the church could assist in rebuilding the surrounding communities.

The Rev. Linda O. Norman, Chicago, Ill., had preached during worship at Central Lutheran Church. The Rev. Sylvia A. De La Garza, San Juan, Texas, presided.

## Report: Credentials Committee

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA, for the report of the Credentials Committee. Secretary Swartling announced that as of 1:35 P.M., there were 1,041 voting members present. He shared a breakdown of that number: 640 or 61.48

percent were lay (331 female; 309 male); 401 were clergy (150 female; 251 male); 125 or 12.01 percent were persons of color or persons whose primary language was other than English; 12 voting members were 18 years of age or younger; 63 voting members were between ages 18 and 30; the total percentage of voting members under age 30 was 7.2 percent.

## **Elections: Fourth Ballot for Vice President**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 10, 15-16, 18-20; Section IV, page 1.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson moved the assembly to the fourth ballot for vice president. He advised the members that a nominee must receive 60 percent of the votes cast to be elected on the fourth ballot. The vote would be taken using the electronic voting machines. He asked that the names of the nominees appear on the screen, noting that they were listed in descending vote order based on the results of the third ballot.

Before the vote, the presiding bishop led the assembly in prayer. The voting members cast their ballots. Then the fourth ballot for vice president was closed.

The presiding bishop invited the assembly to sing a few stanzas of “For the Beauty of the Earth” while the results were being tallied. After the hymn, the chair declared that the previous ballot was invalid because the number of voting machines that malfunctioned could have affected the outcome.

The presiding bishop led the assembly in prayer and called once again for the nominees’ names to appear on the screen. The voting members cast their ballots, after which the fourth ballot for vice president was closed. No voting machines were reported as having malfunctioned.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called upon Mr. Phillip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, to give the results of the fourth ballot for vice president.

Mr. Harris presented the results. He reported that 954 ballots were cast, and 573 votes, or 60 percent, were needed for election on the fourth ballot.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson declared Mr. Carlos E. Peña re-elected to a six-year term as vice president of the ELCA. The vote totals were as follows:

Mr. Carlos E. Peña, 580 votes (60.80 percent);

Mr. Ryan Schwarz, 264 votes (27.67 percent); and

Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, 110 votes (11.53 percent).

## **ASSEMBLY**

**SIXTY PERCENT VOTE REQUIRED**

### **ACTION:**

**CA09.06.32 To elect Carlos E. Peña to a six-year term, commencing November 1, 2009, as vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared Carlos E. Peña elected vice president.

Vice President Peña responded with a few words of gratitude. He invited his wife, Ms. Diane M. Peña, to join him at the podium. He expressed what a blessing his call to serve as vice president of the ELCA has been for him. He thanked his family for its ongoing support, his business family for the opportunity to get involved in this church, and all the voting members for their brotherhood and sisterhood. He called on them for their help, support, and prayers as together they carry out the mission of being claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.

Presiding Bishop Hanson requested that the assembly also express its gratitude to Ms. Norma J. Hirsch and Mr. Ryan Schwarz for participating in the election process.

## **Greeting: Lutheran Men in Mission**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. Norman L. Smith, member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Overland Park, Kan., and president of Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM).

Mr. Smith shared LMM's vision that every man have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through effective men's ministry in every congregation. He acknowledged that achieving this vision is a challenge because the number of men in mainline congregations continues to decrease at a rate faster than that of any other group. He shared that LMM has experienced many changes over the past year, including moving from being an ELCA-funded organization to a separate 501(c)(3) corporation.

Mr. Smith thanked women for encouraging their husbands and sons to take an interest in their faith. He also thanked men for their roles in mentoring, and he encouraged them to identify a young man in their lives they might begin mentoring. He emphasized also the impact of LMM retreats on the lives of participants, as well as their families, congregations, and communities. Finally, he stressed the need for leadership training among men in the ELCA.

## **Greeting: Women of the ELCA**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Ms. Beth G. Wrenn, member of Kure Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kure Beach, N.C., and president of Women of the ELCA, to bring a greeting.

Ms. Wrenn shared her experience of traveling to El Salvador with 14 other women from Women of the ELCA for a study tour. She expressed her deep pride in being a member of this church, a church that understands what it means to be doing God's work with our hands. She acknowledged the 7,000 congregational units of Women of the ELCA, which regularly come together to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Ms. Wrenn stated that it is through the mission of Women of the ELCA that its purpose is carried out: to create a community of women who recognize they are created in the image of God and called to discipleship by Jesus Christ. These women have supported one another in their callings through the awarding of 25 scholarships to Lutheran women, totaling more than \$22,000. She added that Ms. Mary E. Howe, a voting member from Northern Illinois Synod, was one of those recipients.

Ms. Wrenn stated further that grants totaling \$79,000 were awarded to 39 non-profit organizations for programs that raise up healthy women and girls. She pointed out Women of the ELCA's partnership with Lutheran World Relief in "covering the world" with quilts, health kits, school kits, and layettes. She referenced new resources, including *Café*, an award-winning, online magazine for women who want to build community, participate in advocacy, strengthen their faith, and strive for enlightenment, and the DVD *Created in the Image of God: A Community of Women*.

Ms. Wrenn concluded by thanking the assembly for its prayers and support of the work and mission of Women of the ELCA as it continues to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

## **Video Contest: Announcement of Winners**

After 20 videos in the contest on the theme "God's work. Our hands." had been shown to the assembly over the course of the week, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson remarked that it was now time to announce the two winners. The winner in the congregation category was Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, LaCrescent, Minn. The assembly watched the video and responded with applause. The winner in the individual entrant category was Eric Mennel, Largo, Fla. The assembly viewed the video and applauded it.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson shared a few of the comments made by the judges of the video contest on the passion and empowering effect of the videos on this church. He called for the assembly to sing “Many and Great, O God.”

### **Evangelical Outreach Testimony**

The Rev. Deborah S. Stehlin [Saint Paul Area Synod] shared the story of Light of the World Lutheran Church in Farmington, Minn., a congregation that is growing in evangelical mission. She shared the image of God as a father waiting for the prodigal son to return home. Five churches in her neighborhood have started several new mission churches that are providing an open door to the unchurched. Pr. Stehlin challenged the assembly participants to determine the number of unchurched in their local communities and to meet with nearby churches to dream up ways in which they might create a more welcoming environment for the unchurched.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson thanked all those who, during the assembly, gave testimonies from congregations growing in evangelical mission.

### **Acknowledgments: Former Bishops and Current Bishops**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson acknowledged the deep commitment and leadership of the synodical bishops of this church. He also recognized the service of a number of bishops who, since the last assembly, have retired, resigned, or completed—or soon will complete—their terms in office. The following were asked to stand, if they were in attendance, and be recognized: the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, former bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod; the Rev. Duane C. Danielson, former bishop of the Western North Dakota Synod; the Rev. David A. Donges, former bishop of the South Carolina Synod; the Rev. Richard J. Foss, former bishop of the Eastern North Dakota Synod; the Rev. Philip L. Hougen, former bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod; the Rev. H. Gerard Knoche, bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod; the Rev. David G. Mullen, former bishop of the Sierra Pacific Synod; the Rev. John H. Schreiber, former bishop of the Southeast Michigan Synod (who died August 16, 2008); the Rev. David R. Strobel, former bishop of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod; the Rev. E. Peter Strommen, former bishop of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod; the Rev. Paul W. Stumme-Diers, bishop of the Greater Milwaukee Synod; and the Rev. April Ullring Larson, former bishop of the La Crosse Area Synod. Presiding Bishop Hanson also thanked the Rev. Kenneth R. Olsen for his service as interim bishop of the Southeast Michigan Synod. The assembly responded with applause.

The presiding bishop continued by asking recently elected bishops to gather in front of the stage in order to be introduced. Those welcomed to the stage included the Rev. Thomas M. Aitken, bishop of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod; the Rev. James A. Arends, bishop of the La Crosse Area Synod; the Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod; the Rev. Mark W. Holmerud, bishop of the Sierra Pacific Synod; the Rev. Stephen G. Marsh, bishop of the Southeast Michigan Synod; the Rev. Mark E. Narum, bishop of the Western North Dakota Synod; the Rev. Robert A. Rimbo, bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod; the Rev. William E. Rindy, bishop of the Eastern North Dakota Synod; the Rev. Herman R. Yoos III, bishop of the South Carolina Synod; and the Rev. Samuel R. Zeiser, bishop of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. The assembly greeted these bishops with a standing ovation.

### **Elections Report: Second Common Ballot**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 13–16; Section VII, pages 1–88.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Mr. Phillip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, to give the report of the second common ballot.

Mr. Harris advised the voting members that there were four tickets on the second common ballot. He instructed the voting members that the electronic voting machines would be used. Each ticket would appear on the screen and be voted on separately.

The presiding bishop called on the voting members to cast their ballots.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**CA09.06.33** To declare elected all persons who received on the second ballot greater than a majority of votes for Church Council, committees, and boards:

*Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission*

**Pr. Lori Ann Strang, Toledo, Ohio (6D)**

*Global Mission*

**Ms. Amanda F. Tompkins, Tannersville, Pa. (7E)**

*Church in Society*

**Pr. Kevin R. Maly, Denver, Colo. (2E)**

*Mission Investment Fund*

**Mr. Warren W. Hanson, Minneapolis, Minn. (3G)**

**Quasi Committee of the Whole: Our Evangelical Mission**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section III, Part 1, pages 1-4; Section V, pages 5-12; 33-44.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Secretary David D. Swartling to read the motion to move into a quasi committee of the whole.

**MOVED:**

**SECONDED:**

To go into a quasi committee of the whole for a period of one hour to discuss the evangelical mission of this church and our witness going forward. During the quasi committee of the whole no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.

The chair called for a vote on the motion.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**CA09.06.34** To go into a quasi committee of the whole for a period of one hour to discuss the evangelical mission of this church and our witness going forward. During the quasi committee of the whole no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.

The chair invited the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) unit, to assist him in leading the assembly during the quasi committee of the whole. He informed the assembly that much of the process would involve talking with one another.

Pr. Bouman began by acknowledging that this church had once again discovered that it is not on the same page about everything, but he asked if mission might be a common connection. He posed the question of what might reconnect the members of the assembly to one another and their families, churches, and communities. He wondered whether a Jesus story might help convert the members of this church again to Jesus and the Great Commission.

The presiding bishop instructed the assembly to “Rise, take up your mat and walk.” He informed the assembly that together they would spend the next hour dwelling in God’s Word and discussing the possibilities for joining together on the road of God’s mission. He briefly summarized the story in Mark’s Gospel of the paralytic who was carried to a house and lowered into the room. Ms. Evelyn B. Soto, associate executive director of EOCM, read the story (Mark 2:1–11).

The presiding bishop compared the crowded room in Galilee in the Bible story to the crowded plenary hall of the assembly. He reiterated his remarks from the report he gave on Tuesday: “We meet at the foot of the cross and all that has happened this week will not alter that, for it is there we bring our experiences of this assembly.” He asked the members of the assembly what would be their witness about the assembly, and he invited Pr. Bouman to share the context of the Gospel text.

Pr. Bouman commented that the Gospel of Mark is arranged in three sections, each section including a seeing miracle. He remarked that in the first section, just prior to the first passion prediction, there is a seeing miracle that Jesus had to perform twice because the one being healed remarked, “Those people look like trees.” Pr. Bouman stated that there is more to be seen beyond this assembly. He continued with the second section of Mark’s Gospel, briefly describing Jesus moving toward Jerusalem and toward the cross. Pr. Bouman stated that the cross is the destination of the members of this assembly as together this church moves forward. He continued by outlining the Gospel’s third section, in which a centurion gives a testimony of faith at the foot of the cross. Pr. Bouman asked the members of the assembly what their witness would be after leaving Minneapolis and meeting at the foot of the cross.

The presiding bishop asked the assembly to arrange themselves in groups of three or four. The members of the assembly were invited to share their witness about the assembly: signs of hope and signs of paralysis.

Pr. Bouman then asked the assembly to consider the characters in the narrative. The presiding bishop invited the assembly to discuss the question: “As we leave this crowded room, which character represents how you feel as you leave to return home?”

Pr. Bouman continued by stating that all mission is local. He told the story of St. Michael Lutheran Church (Long Island), Amagansett, N.Y., a congregation that was dwindling in membership as the surrounding community changed. The presiding bishop posed the discussion question: “What are signs of paralysis in your life, congregation, and community?”

Presiding Bishop Hanson further discussed the significance of the healing in the narrative. He stated his belief that the still turning point of Lutheran theology is the forgiveness of sins. He invited the assembly to share in their small groups “an experience of forgiveness, either given or received.” The presiding bishop then instructed the members of the assembly to turn to one another, place their hands on the head of a neighbor, and repeat the words: “Sister, brother, your sins are forgiven.”



Pr. Bouman spoke of the passion and commitment of the friends of the paralytic. He emphasized that, when people are driven by passion, nothing else matters. He outlined three things that the disciples of Jesus did that were effective and that members of the assembly also could practice: listen to God together, listen to neighbors in the community, and listen to one another in congregations. He continued telling the story of St. Michael's in Amagansett, which got to know its community, reoriented its mission, welcomed migrant workers, and became a healing place for the entire community. The presiding bishop challenged the assembly: "If you could punch a hole in the roof of your congregation, who would you like to see come through it from your community to receive the healing power of Jesus?" He added for further discussion: "Who will walk with you as you take up your mat and walk?"

Pr. Bouman invited the assembly to lay hands on one another and say: "Sister, brother, rise, take up your mat, and walk."

The presiding bishop called upon Ms. Soto to read the words from Scripture once more, in both English and Spanish. He then called for the assembly to sing "Canticle of the Turning." After the hymn, he thanked the assembly for the lively discussion.

## **Consideration: Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions (continued)**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 17–18, 21; Section IV, pages 45–53.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson referred the assembly to page 51 of Section IV of the 2009 Pre-Assembly Report for consideration of the proposed amendments to the ELCA's *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* related to youth and young people. He called upon Secretary David D. Swartling to present the amendments.

Secretary Swartling stated that the proposed amendments related to the participation of youth and young adults in the governance of this church had been withdrawn from the *en bloc* resolution for separate consideration. He moved their adoption. No second was needed because the recommendation had come from the Church Council.

**MOVED:** To adopt the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, which had been removed from the *en bloc* action:

*To amend and add the following to allow for expanded roles for youth and young adults in the governance in all expressions of this church:*

*To amend:*

12.41.31. Members of the Church Council, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Likewise, program committee chairpersons and board chairpersons or their designees, and the president of the Lutheran Youth Organization or a designee, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. [with the rest unchanged]

*To add:*

6.02.A09. It is the goal of this church that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly, Church

Council, and churchwide boards and committees be youth and young adults. The Church Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

*To add:*

†S6.04.B09.

It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

*To amend:*

†S10.01.

The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10-24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.

*To amend:*

C12.01.

The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s)[, the officers of the congregation,] and [\_\_\_ members] [not more than \_\_\_ nor fewer than \_\_\_ members] of the congregation, at least one of whom shall be a youth and at least one of whom shall be a young adult. Any voting member . . . [the rest unchanged].

Secretary Swartling explained that the purpose of the amendments was to reiterate this church’s commitment to youth and young adults. He distinguished among amendments to the ELCA constitution, the *Constitution for Synods*, and the *Model Constitution for Congregations* and between required amendments and recommended amendments.

Mr. Dean P. Richards [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege regarding the ELCA’s communication with inner-city churches. The chair advised him his point was not in order because a constitutional amendment was on the floor.

The Rev. Judith B. Boggs [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] rose to make an amendment to resolution 6.02.A09.

The chair ruled her amendment out of order because she had not meet the deadline, but he invited her to give notice of her intent.

Pr. Boggs stated that the intent of her motion was to delete all references to youth in resolution 6.02.A09. She challenged the ruling of the chair.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] suggested that Pr. Boggs' proposed amendment be addressed as a separate resolution after the amendments already on the floor had been voted upon.

The ruling of the chair was not to consider the proposed amendment by Pr. Boggs because she had failed to meet the deadline. The chair called for a vote on the appeal of the decision of the chair. He advised the assembly that it would take a two-thirds vote in the negative to place Pr. Boggs' motion on the floor.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-595; NO-204**

**CARRIED:**

**To sustain the ruling of the chair.**

The chair declared that the appeal of the decision of the chair was not adopted and the ruling of the chair was sustained.

Mr. Joshua R. Toufar [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the amendments. He stated that young people often feel intimidated and as if they have no voice. He believed the passing of these resolutions would be a small step for this church's youth and a giant step for this church.

Ms. Heidi A. Buzzard [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke against the amendments, stating that some young people may not be ready and able to serve.

Ms. Nicolette Faison, president of the Lutheran Youth Organization, spoke to the assembly as a resource person. She stated that young people are present in the assembly and are listening, hearing, and embracing the conversations that are taking place. Ms. Faison added that she wished the entire assembly could hear the conversations young people were having because then they might be given more opportunity to be heard.

Pr. Carriker spoke against the amendments, stating that this church does not have any provisions for instituting the constitutional changes. He stated that the time slot for the assembly is not a good one and that it is inconvenient because many high schools and colleges already have begun classes for the academic year.

The Rev. Mark B. Lepper [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments, stating that a common lament in churches has been the absence of young people. He added that his life has been enriched because of his work with youth, who minister more to him than he to them.

Mr. Caleb L. Geleske [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] spoke against the amendments. He told the assembly that these amendments could be limiting and that, in his opinion, equality is not achieved through affirmative action.

Ms. Vanessa M. Unti [Northwest Washington Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments, saying that her church family has provided a safe place to ask difficult questions. She expressed her hope that this church is striving to bridge the current age gap that exists. She charged members of the assembly to talk with the youth and young adults in their congregations.

Ms. Clare A. Swenson [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] queried whether amendments to amendments can be proposed. She hoped to amend the current amendment on the floor.

The chair ruled that the amendment to the amendment was out of order because it had not met the deadline. He asked her to give notice of the intent of her amendment.

Ms. Swenson stated that she wished to add the words “to recommend as able” to the resolution.

Ms. Sara M. Gross [Oregon Synod] raised a point of clarification, noting that the amendment was not required, only recommended. The chair affirmed her understanding.

Ms. Swensen challenged the ruling of the chair, so the chair asked the assembly to decide if it wanted to consider Ms. Swensen’s amendment.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-654; NO-196**

**CARRIED:**

**To sustain the ruling of the chair.**

The chair announced that the ruling of the chair had been sustained and that the proposed amendment would not be considered.

Ms. Emily N. Wyman [Northeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments. She urged the assembly to look at the great things youth are doing as a part of this church. She emphasized that she does not want to be in a separate class and urged the assembly to approve the resolution to give voice to those who have not previously been heard.

Ms. Meredith L. Nelson [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] spoke against the amendments. She wanted to make a clear distinction between youth and young adults and argued that they should be able to run on the ballot as adults. She expressed concern about the ability of youth to make some of the difficult decisions. She believed they could serve as consultants in this church but not as voting members.

Ms. Rebecca E. Krentz-Wee [New England Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments, saying that she could count the number of youth and young adults present at her synod assembly on one hand. While she had hoped to be the first young person from her congregation to attend the synod assembly, older people ultimately were chosen. She emphasized that youth and young adults learn from those around them at synod assemblies.

The presiding bishop called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, member of the Church Council from Oak Harbor, Ohio, to lead the assembly in prayer. Pr. Hunsinger asked God to be present so that the assembly might prayerfully consider God’s will.

The Rev. Steven R. Frock [Western Iowa Synod] spoke in opposition to the amendments. He stated that diversity is not a worthy goal; the goal is to proclaim the kingdom of God. He argued that adding another quota into the ELCA constitution would move this church away from the kingdom of God.

Ms. Joyce A. Partyka [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments. She commented that she often is asked questions from the youth group she serves, and she wrestles with the same questions, which help her to grow in her faith. She stated that the decisions of the assembly are decisions that affect and will affect youth. She added that the Churchwide Assembly had been a great experience and an occasion to talk with bishops, pastors, and leaders throughout this church. She urged the assembly not to forget about youth but to give them a voice.

Mr. Roy L. Gibbs [Northwestern Ohio Synod] spoke against the amendments and told the assembly that he did not believe youth who were under the age of 18 were mature enough to make decisions in this church.

Ms. Sara M. Gross [Oregon Synod] shared that while she has served as a camp counselor, she can serve in other places in this church. She regards herself as a valued member of her congregation, and she called upon the assembly to seek out intentionally the gifts of youth and mentor them.

The Rev. David W. Brobston [Northwestern Ohio Synod] spoke against the amendments, focusing on the difficulties with the time of the assembly and the schedules of this church's youth. He added that in order to welcome youth and young adults, the assembly must take place at a time that is convenient for them.

Mr. Brandon L. McCall [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] expressed the opinion that youth and young adults should have more power, voice, and influence in this church. He stated that the goal of this church should be to surpass the 10-percent goal for youth and young adult involvement, and he urged the adoption of the amendments.

Ms. Amanda K. Marenchin [Northeastern Ohio Synod] rose in opposition. She admitted that, when she was elected, she was not sure what she was getting herself into. She added that while she has grown during the week of the Churchwide Assembly, many youth may not be able to make decisions effectively.

Ms. Molly J. Beck Dean [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] shared how the Youth Gathering in New Orleans demonstrated that many youth are willing to serve. She argued that without intentionality, youth do not make it to the table, and that when they do make it to the table, it is often without voice or vote. She urged the adoption of the amendments as a means for the fuller inclusion of youth and young adults.

The Rev. Mark W. Olsen [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments. He believed that far more wisdom stems from youth than this church imparts to them. He asked that there be greater intentionality to welcome those who are already part of the church.

Mr. Joshua A. Kelly [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] stated that his greatest frustration at the assembly was to see those current leaders who have no voice or vote but have gifts to share. He urged the assembly to adopt the amendments.

Mr. Garrett M. Baker [Upper Susquehanna Synod] urged the assembly to vote in favor of the amendments. He suggested that if the assembly does not approve the amendments, the number of youth and young adults might continue to decline because they might feel that they have no place in this church.

Ms. Sarah B. Comi [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments. She stated that while people have sometimes asked her opinion, her opinion is not taken into consideration when it comes to making a final decision. She told the assembly that the opinions of young people matter.

Ms. Allison A. Guttu [Metropolitan New York Synod] urged the assembly to vote in favor of the amendments. As the youngest voting member from her synod, she felt that having only one youth voting member per synod was appalling.

Mr. Jacob D. Chavara [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor of the amendments and shared his journey of service, moving from his congregation to his synod assembly and to the Churchwide Assembly. He affirmed his experience as a fantastic one that has encouraged growth in his spiritual devotion and knowledge of the larger church. He thanked the assembly for this experience.

Mr. William T. Ostrem [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the amendments, making reference to the Book of Faith initiative, which states that faith is formed through vibrant, caring relationships. He told the assembly to support this church's youth and to watch their joy, passion, and love for their faith.

Ms. Randi A. Phelps [Montana Synod] rose in favor of the amendments, citing her leadership experience at age 17. She argued that many other teenagers are just as qualified to have voice and vote as she.

The Rev. David W. Rossow [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] stated that he was not certain whether he was in favor of or opposed to the amendments. He stated that he has had youth on his congregational council, but that in order for youth to be good leaders, congregations and pastors must first be intentional about inviting qualified youth to serve. He added that a council or committee also must have a desire to listen to them.

The Rev. Carl D. Shankweiler [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate on all matters before the house.

The chair called for the vote on ending debate.

**MOVED;**  
**SECONDED;**  
**CARRIED:**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**  
**YES-858; NO-39**

**The previous question.**

Debate was closed. The main motion was now on the floor.

The presiding bishop called on Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, member of the Church Council from Des Moines, Iowa, to lead the assembly in prayer.

The chair called for the vote.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-714; NO-207**

**CA09.06.35**

**To adopt the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, which had been removed from the *en bloc* action:**

*To amend and add the following to allow for expanded roles for youth and young adults in the governance in all expressions of this church:*

*To amend:*

**12.41.31.**

**Members of the Church Council, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Likewise, program committee chairpersons and board chairpersons or their designees, and the president of the Lutheran Youth Organization or a designee, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. [with the rest unchanged]**

*To add:*

**6.02.A09.**

**It is the goal of this church that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, and churchwide boards and committees be youth and young adults.**

The Church Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

*To add:*

†S6.04.B09.

It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

*To amend:*

†S10.01.

The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10-24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.

*To amend:*

C12.01.

The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s)[, the officers of the congregation,] and [\_\_\_ members] [not more than \_\_\_ nor fewer than \_\_\_ members] of the congregation, at least one of whom shall be a youth and at least one of whom shall be a young adult. Any voting member . . . [the rest unchanged].

The chair declared that the motion was adopted.

The Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] rose to put a resolution on the floor, but the chair informed him that it would be out of order.

The Rev. Wendy K. Richter [West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege in light of the motion that had just been passed. She reminded the assembly that not all young adults are single. Since some are married with children, she asked that there be babysitting available at future assemblies.

Mr. Dean P. Richards [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege. He asked that resources be available at the next Churchwide Assembly for urban inner-city churches.

## **Report: Memorials Committee**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 6, 9, 12, 39; Section VI, pages 1-96.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson invited the Rev. John C. Richter and Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, co-chairs of the Memorials Committee to the stage. He summarized to the assembly where it was in the debate on memorial Category B4: Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine. Based on prior notice, the Rev. Richard B. Geib [Lower Susquehanna Synod] offered an amendment.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To amend by addition:*

To insert a new number 2 as follows, and renumber the remaining paragraphs:

2. Evaluate and refine its peace-making efforts to demonstrate as fully as possible the “balanced . . . care for all parties” expressed in the Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine (2005, section II.A), while continuing our unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL).

The chair called on Pr. Geib to speak to his amendment.

Pr. Geib stated that this amendment would be helpful in his ministry. He shared the diverse opinions on this matter in his synod and his desire to listen to the hurt and concerns of the people on both sides of the wall.

Mr. Albert S. Asfour [Southeast Michigan Synod] moved to end debate all matters before the house.

The chair called for the vote on ending debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:**

**The questions on all matters before the house.**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-614; NO-157**

The presiding bishop read the amendment. He then called for the vote.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:**

*To amend by addition:*

**YES-505; NO-299**



To insert a new number 2 as follows, and renumber the remaining paragraphs:

- 2. Evaluate and refine its peace-making efforts to demonstrate as fully as possible the “balanced . . . care for all parties” expressed in the Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine (2005, section II.A), while continuing our unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL).**

The chair declared that the motion to amend had passed, and the amended resolution was now on the floor. The chair called for the vote.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-690; NO-125**

**CA09.06.36**

To receive the memorials of the Eastern Washington-Idaho, Southwestern Texas, Indiana-Kentucky, New England, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods related to the ELCA strategy, Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land;

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. Evaluate and refine its peace-making efforts to demonstrate as fully as possible the “balanced . . . care for all parties” expressed in the Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine (2005, section II.A), while continuing our unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL);**
- 3. Learn more about the experiences of both Israelis and Palestinians and their mutual fears, aspirations, and hopes;**
- 4. Work to convey the concerns and perspectives of Palestinians and Israelis that dispel stereotypes and caricatures and promote better understanding;**
- 5. Life 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;**
- 6. Continue to help alleviate the humanitarian needs of all of those affected by the conflict, especially in Gaza;**
- 7. Support U.S. funding that promotes peace and cooperation for all parties to the conflict; and**
- 8. Continue to pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and for the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.**

The chair announced that the motion had been adopted, and he called on Ms. Wallace to direct the assembly to the next memorial on the floor.

## **Category B1: Proposed Social Statement on Human Disability**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 12–15.*

### **1. Alaska Synod (1A) [2008 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Alaska Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

### **2. Pacifica Synod (2C) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

### **3. Nebraska Synod (4A) [2008 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Nebraska Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Nebraska Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the task force charged with the formation of this social statement to pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

### **4. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [2008 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, there are persons who live with a disability who are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and that development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

## **5. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J) [2009 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

## **6. New Jersey Synod (7A) [2008 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

## **7. New England Synod (7B) [2009 Memorial]**

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face people with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

## **8. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2008 Memorial]**

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice,

and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

### *Background*

These memorials call for a social statement on human disability that pays “special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.”

Consistent with the inclusive ministry of Jesus, the ELCA from its inception has challenged itself to be a hospitable church for people living with disabilities and their family members. The ELCA constitution specifies that the Vocation and Education program unit will assist this church in inclusive ministry with and among people with disabilities (ELCA16.12.C06.d.10). This commitment is evident in the presence of a disability ministries program; support for Braille ministry and deaf ministry; the differently abled advisory committee that relates to youth ministry; and in other programs. In addition, several synods support particular ministries or provide special resources for those living with disabilities. Numerous social ministry organizations devote extensive resources to caring for those with disabilities and their families. The ELCA is on record saying, “Every person with a disability has a right to be a member of a congregation and to serve in some capacity” ([www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Disability-Ministries.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Disability-Ministries.aspx)), and many congregations have sought to live into this commitment.

Many congregations continue to struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome. Moreover, continued ignorance and fear result in stigmatization and discrimination for individuals with disabilities and their families, both in society and within the body of Christ. This suggests a need for greater understanding, renewed awareness, and action.

Although the ELCA does not have a social statement dedicated to human disabilities, several existing social statements address applicable themes or approach relevant issues, such as discrimination, human dignity, and employment. The social statement *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (2003), shows the greatest cognizance. This statement is grounded in the biblical insistence that all people, whatever individual variations of health may exist, are created as whole people in God’s image (Genesis 1:27). It speaks frankly about the reality of limitation in life while insisting that “being whole” does not mean being untouched by pain and suffering. Rather, being whole means that we participate in Christ’s own “greater love” (John 15:13) by giving ourselves for others and sharing their suffering. The social statement addresses issues that affect all people but may have particular significance for those with disabilities: health care delivery, accessibility, this church’s ministry to those who are especially vulnerable in society

(e.g., living with chronic conditions or mental illness), support for caregivers, stigma, the just obligations of society to those who often are marginalized, and self-determination.

These basic threads from existing social statements, as well as fundamental scriptural values and themes, when coupled with the apparent need for renewed awareness, deliberation, and action on this subject, suggest that a message on human disabilities that builds upon *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*, would be an appropriate commitment for the ELCA at this time.<sup>44</sup>

#### *Cost estimate*

A message costs approximately \$20,000, which includes holding a small consultation, research, drafting work, and printing and distribution following adoption by the Church Council. The staff time required for the development of a message is approximately five to six months.

#### *Churchwide Assembly Action*

Ms. Wallace moved the Memorials Committee's recommendation on Category B1: Proposed Social Statement on Human Disability.

#### **MOVED:**

To thank the Alaska, Pacifica, Nebraska, Metropolitan Chicago, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, New England, and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods for their call for strengthened awareness within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the particular challenges faced by people living with disability as well as this church's responsibility to address issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome;

To acknowledge with gratitude the many resources available through the churchwide organization, synods, social ministry organizations, and congregations and urge their use throughout this church in its ongoing commitment to address both the challenges of stigmatization and discrimination within church and society and the issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

To decline to authorize the development of a social statement on human disability but to request the Church in Society unit to consider development of a message on human disability, as financial and staff resources permit, that would aid awareness, deliberation, and action within this church, giving special attention to the unique issues (e.g., physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual) of the different types of disability.

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<sup>44</sup> Messages are normally brief communications that draw attention to a social issue and encourage action on it. They provide this church flexibility to respond on selected occasions with timely and perceptive counsel on new situations and pressing concerns.

Messages are communications that the Church Council adopts and are thus distinct from social statements, which are adopted only by the Churchwide Assembly. Messages are not the result of widespread deliberation in this church (as are social statements) but are intended primarily to encourage further discussion and action on specific current social issues among ELCA members. They are not new policy positions of the ELCA but build upon previously adopted social statements and social policy resolutions ("Policy and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns").

Messages address the contemporary situation in light of the prophetic and compassionate traditions of Scripture. They point to human suffering, grave injustice, pending danger, social perplexity, or hopeful developments and urge that evil be resisted, justice done, and commitment renewed.

Messages express the conviction of the leaders of this church who communicate them and who believe that their message should be heard in this church and beyond. They signal certain priority concerns that arise from this church's mission in the world. Messages are based upon and are consistent with this church's social statements and social policy resolutions.

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] moved to substitute the New Jersey Synod memorial for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee. He also asked that the original resolution be amended so that the year in which the social statement would be considered would be 2017, rather than 2013. Pr. Davidson pointed out that there already are social statements that are scheduled to be considered between now and 2017.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:** *To substitute the following for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:*

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2017 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

The chair stated that further discussion could become confusing since there was a substitute motion on the floor. He suggested that voting members wishing to speak to the substitute motion go to a green microphone and those wishing to speak in favor of the Memorials Committee recommendation should go to a red microphone.

The Rev. Craig E. Johnson, bishop of Minneapolis Area Synod, told the assembly he was in favor of the Memorials Committee recommendation. As a father of a daughter with a disability, he stated that this memorial would help congregations know how to include fully those with disabilities in the life of this church.

The Rev. Roger W. Spencer [New Jersey Synod] stated that he wants and needs a social statement because of his daughter with a learning disability, who gives and receives love, care, and service.

The Rev. Duane E. Miller [Southeastern Iowa Synod] spoke against the substitution, citing his belief that the needs of those with disabilities are addressed in other ELCA social statements. He raised questions about the likelihood of a Church Council message being developed, the relative costs of a message and a social statement, and the timeline of such a message.

The presiding bishop called upon the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit, to address the questions.

Pr. Larson stated that the development of a message usually requires a year to 18 months and costs approximately \$20,000. The length of time needed for developing a social statement is usually five years and costs approximately \$150,000. She added that the ELCA currently has two messages in preparation on the subjects of immigration and mental health.

Ms. Constance M. Kilmark [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] told the assembly that her daughter with autism has taught her far more than she has taught her daughter. She expressed her opinion that a social statement carries opportunities for evangelism that a message does not have.



The Rev. Susan Candea [Rocky Mountain Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee. She stated that she was in favor of a message and that it would be a rushed decision to develop a social statement at this time.

The Rev. Giselle Carvalho Coutinho [New Jersey Synod] rose in favor of the substitution, expressing her feelings that a vast number of people with disabilities do not have church homes. She added that resources need to be developed for use across this church.

The Rev. Reyna M. Purcell [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke against the substitution, cautioning the assembly against making decisions about social statements too far into the future.

The Rev. Cindy F. Breed [Southeastern Iowa Synod] told the assembly that many congregations only take Band-Aid measures to address those with disabilities. She commented that there is a real need for this church to reach out to people with disabilities.

The Rev. Carl D. Shankweiler [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate on all matters before the house.

The chair called for the vote on ending debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-777; NO-84**

**CARRIED:**

**The questions on all matters before the house.**

The presiding bishop called for a vote on whether to substitute the memorial from the New Jersey Synod for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-288; NO-585**

**DEFEATED:**

**RESOLVED**, that the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2017 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

The chair declared the substitute motion was defeated. The main motion was now on the floor. Presiding Bishop Hanson called for the vote.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-785; NO-88**

**CA09.06.37**

**To thank the Alaska, Pacifica, Nebraska, Metropolitan Chicago, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, New England, and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods for their call for strengthened awareness within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the particular challenges faced by people living with disability as well as this church's responsibility to address issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome;**

**To acknowledge with gratitude the many resources available through the churchwide organization, synods, social ministry organizations, and congregations and urge their use throughout this church in its ongoing commitment to address both the challenges of stigmatization and discrimination within church and society and the issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and**

**To decline to authorize the development of a social statement on human disability, but to request the Church in Society unit to consider development of a message on human disability, as financial and staff resources permit, that would aid awareness, deliberation, and action within this church, giving special attention to the unique issues (e.g., physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual) of the different types of disability.**

Presiding Bishop Hanson declared the motion was adopted, and he asked the assembly to thank the Rev. John C. Richter and Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, co-chairs of the Memorials Committee, and the rest of the committee. The assembly responded with applause.

## **Review of Agenda**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked the assembly for its permission to extend the plenary until 6:30 P.M. in order to complete its business. He added that extending the session beyond 6:30 P.M. would incur significant costs. There being no objection, the presiding bishop announced that the session would be extended until 6:30 P.M.

## **Report: Reference and Counsel Committee**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, pages 9, 11, 12–13, 17, 20, 21; Section VIII, pages 1–8.*

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked the co-chairs of the Reference and Counsel Committee, Mr. Mark S. Helmke and the Rev. Susan Langhauser, to come to the stage to guide the assembly through the remaining resolutions.

Pr. Langhauser directed the assembly to Motion B: Bylaw Amendment Regarding the Batak Special Interest Conference of North America (*2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 2*). She summarized the motion, stating that it supports the deletion of obsolete language that allowed for a relationship that is no longer required.

### **MOVED:**

RESOLVED, that 8.41.01 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* be amended by striking the language below:

8.41.01. Because of both official and informal international contacts with other churches, the ~~Batak Special Interest Conference of North America,~~ Danish Special Interest Conference, Finnish (Soumi) Special Interest Conference, German Lutheran Conference in North America, and Hungarian Special Interest Conference shall relate to this church under the authority of the presiding bishop of this church through an executive and designated unit as determined by the presiding bishop. Official contacts and relationships of the special

conferences with leaders and representatives of other churches shall be coordinated through the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

The Rev. Wm. Chris Boerger, bishop of Northwest Washington Synod, explained that not all Indonesians are of the Batak background.

Mr. Eric M. Peterson [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved the following:

**MOVED:**

**SECONDED:**

To adopt the Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee, and where a recommendation is not made, to adopt the resolution as presented in the report.

The chair asked Mr. Helmke to clarify which motions would be voted on, should Mr. Peterson's motion carry.

Mr. Helmke clarified that the assembly would be voting on Motion B, already on the floor; Motion C, on the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding; Motion D, on the electronic distribution of the *Pre-Assembly Report and Notice*; Motion E, on the use of wills and living trusts as a stewardship tool; Motion F on a proposed study on the concept of bound conscience; and Motions G–L on appreciation and gratitude to churchwide officers and staff who were involved in preparing and planning the Churchwide Assembly.

Mr. Peterson spoke to his motion, stating that due to the costs of the assembly the business before the assembly needed to be expedited. He said that his motion would trust the processes of the committees that had prepared the various recommendations and implementing resolutions.

The chair explained that Motion B required a two-thirds vote, so it could not be adopted by a majority vote on his motion.

Mr. Peterson respectfully stated that he would hold his motion until consideration of Motion B was completed.

The chair returned the assembly to its work on Motion B. He also informed the assembly that he had not been trying to manipulate debate in any way but rather wanted to keep the assembly informed as to the cost and time of the plenary with regard to the work that had yet to be completed.

Mr. Alan R. Wold [Northern Illinois Synod] moved to end debate on Motion B.

The chair called for the vote on ending debate.

**MOVED:**

**SECONDED:**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-834; NO-32**

The presiding bishop called for a vote on Motion B, the Bylaw Amendment Regarding the Batak Special Interest Conference of North America. A two-thirds vote was required because it was a recommended change to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**CA09.06.38**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-845; NO-15**

**RESOLVED**, that 8.41.01 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* be amended by striking the language below:

**8.41.01.**Because of both official and informal international contacts with other churches, the ~~Batak Special Interest Conference of North America~~, Danish Special Interest Conference, Finnish (Soumi) Special Interest Conference, German Lutheran Conference in North America, and Hungarian Special Interest Conference shall relate to this church under the authority of the presiding bishop of this church through an executive and designated unit as determined by the presiding bishop. Official contacts and relationships of the special conferences with leaders and representatives of other churches shall be coordinated through the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

The presiding bishop declared Motion B adopted, and he returned to Mr. Peterson's motion, clarifying that Motion D also involved an amendment to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* and therefore also would require a two-thirds vote.

Mr. Peterson made his motion, excluding Motion D, to adopt all resolutions before the house, including Motions C and E-L.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED:**

To move the balance of the Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee, exclusive of Motion D, and where recommendations are not provided, approve the resolution as presented.

The Rev. Bret L. Reedy [Northern Illinois Synod] asked for clarification.

The chair stated that the effect of adopting the motion would be to approve the recommendations of the Reference and Counsel Committee where they made them. For those resolutions where the committee had not made recommendations, the assembly would be approving the motions themselves.

Mr. David M. Keck [Southern Ohio Synod] moved to end debate.

The chair called for the vote on ending debate.

**MOVED;**

**SECONDED;**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**YES-825; NO-48**

The chair asked Mr. Helmke to name the motions that would next be voted upon.

Mr. Helmke stated that the assembly would be voting on Motions C and E-L.

The chair called for a vote on Mr. Peterson's resolution.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**YES-834; NO-45**

**CA09.06.39**

**To move the balance of the Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee, exclusive of Motion D, and where recommendations are not provided, approve the resolution as presented.**

The chair declared that the motion had been adopted.

**MOTION C: BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON MISSION FUNDING**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 3.

RESOLVED, that the ELCA Church Council continue to receive regular reports on the implementation of the Blue Ribbon Committee Report, "Mission Flowing from God's Abundance:" and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA Church Council request that a definitive plan be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit in consultation with the Conference of Bishops for continued close collaboration and mutual accountability among the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization regarding mission support in this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this plan include a rationale for establishing a percentage goal for mission support within the congregations of this church, including but not limited to the biblical practice of tithing; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a report be brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly regarding progress in mission support efforts in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**CA09.06.39a**

**To refer Motion C to the Church Council; and  
To request that a response to the motion be reported to the  
2011 Churchwide Assembly.**

**MOTION E: WILLS AND LIVING TRUSTS**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 5.

RESOLVED, that this assembly request that the ELCA develop a focused, long-term churchwide program to include publicity, education, survey response forms and any such other means to encourage all members to prepare an updated will, along with updated beneficiary designations, and furthermore to encourage all members to consider including one or more ELCA-affiliated ministries in their estate plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that each member of this and subsequent assemblies, all rostered pastors, staff members, and leaders of the ELCA be encouraged to undertake such planning and be leaders by example in this effort.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**CA09.06.39b** To refer Motion E to the Development Services unit with a report to be brought to the Church Council.

**MOTION F: PROPOSED STUDY ON “BOUND CONSCIENCE”**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 6.*

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America direct the Church Council to request the department for studies of the Church in Society program unit, in collaboration with the Lutheran Teaching Theologians of the ELCA, to undertake a study of the concept of “bound conscience,” focusing specifically on the historical understanding, the present meaning, and the institutional significance of “bound conscience,” and to disseminate widely through appropriate mechanisms the results of this study throughout the ELCA.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**CA09.06.39c** To refer Motion F to the Church Council to receive the evaluation of the Research and Evaluation section and to determine whether the requested study should be initiated.

**MOTION G: APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDING BISHOP MARK S. HANSON**

*Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 7.*

Be it RESOLVED:

We, as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered as the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, receive with the gratitude of the entire church the report of Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson.

We thank God for Bishop Hanson’s pastoral, strategic, and visionary leadership in guiding this church through unprecedented challenges to its mission, witness, and service to the world.

We support his vision for the church to:

- Support congregations;
- Grow in evangelical outreach;
- Step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love;
- Deepen and extend our global, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships; and
- Bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders.

We have been blessed by Bishop Hanson’s powerful preaching and challenge to imagine what this church’s witness will be by the 2017 Commemoration of the Lutheran Reformation. Manifesting a Pentecost church, he calls us to:

- Become more fully a “Book of Faith” church;
- Demonstrate in memorable and powerful ways, “God’s work. Our hands.”
- Develop congregations as growing centers of evangelical mission;
- Become more fully a multicultural church;
- Develop a social statement on justice for women; and

- Build on our strong ecumenical partnerships and global relationships so that all may have daily bread, live in a world free of violence and terrorism, and live whole and healthy lives no longer captive to HIV and AIDS, malaria, or unequal access to health care.

We extend our love and prayers to Bishop Hanson and his family. We commit ourselves to find and trust in the unity of Christ alone, engage one another with respect, and seek a communal discernment of the Spirit's leading. We will carry this message with us to our congregations, synods, homes, and workplaces, as we leave this assembly. With deep appreciation we say, "Thanks be to God."

## **MOTION H: APPRECIATION FOR VICE PRESIDENT CARLOS E. PEÑA**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 7.

Be it RESOLVED:

With great appreciation and deep gratitude, we, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, receive the report of Vice President Carlos E. Peña.

In love for his Lord, he has taken to heart our baptismal call to be disciples who reach out, invite, and grow. We commend his commitment shown in 17 Church Council meetings, 27 synod assemblies, 41 Executive Committee meetings, six regional meetings, 12 Conference of Bishops meetings, and his travels for the World Council of Churches. As the highest elected lay leader, he has used his gifts of humor, hospitality, listening, and leadership to keep us focused on God's work. During times of great personal challenge, where even the seas have raged and foamed, Vice President Peña has continued to bear witness that God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble.

We give thanks to his wife Diane and their children for the sacrifices they have made in supporting Vice President Peña in this elected call to serve in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to God for Vice President Peña's six years of faithful, wise, gracious, and courageous leadership and his challenge to us to speak the language of faith. With deep appreciation we say, "Gracias à Dios."

## **MOTION I: APPRECIATION FOR SECRETARY DAVID D. SWARTLING**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, pages 7-8.

WHEREAS:

- We are grateful to Secretary David Swartling for being a faithful, wise, and courageous leader of this church, doing God's work with his hands;
- We are grateful for the care he has given to his meticulous work with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, thus providing the structure and foundation for this church body;
- We are grateful that his leadership in the churchwide organization necessarily begins with a commitment to proclaiming the Gospel and service to neighbors in collaboration with synods and congregations;
- We are grateful for his service at this, his first Churchwide Assembly as secretary;
- We are grateful for his gracious humor and his infectious love of the church, which enliven the assembly and inspire the members; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this assembly thanks Mr. Swartling, a good and faithful servant of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for his outstanding work. With deep appreciation we say, "Thanks be to God."

## **MOTION J: APPRECIATION FOR TREASURER CHRISTINA JACKSON-SKELTON**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 8.

Be it RESOLVED:

The members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America thank Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton for her comprehensive report.

We are grateful to Treasurer Jackson-Skelton for both her extensive knowledge of the finances of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and her oversight of our mission funding for 2009. We recognize her leadership in maintaining the budget of this church and in telling the stories of mission and ministry that define our life together.

We are thankful for the way she serves with integrity, clarity, commitment, passion, and vision for the future of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

We thank God for her guidance in working with the churchwide units and staff in ways that lead to good stewardship of resources. We are most appreciative of her fiduciary and managerial skills, as demonstrated in her role and responsibilities with church-related programs and organizations including the Mission Investment Fund and the World Hunger appeal. With deep appreciation we say, "Thanks be to God."

## **MOTION K: RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION AND THANKSGIVING FOR THE CHURCHWIDE STAFF**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 8.

Be it RESOLVED:

We, as members of the ELCA gathered in the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, thank the churchwide staff for their tireless work on the Churchwide Assembly. Throughout the year, but especially during the last several months, the staff has devoted increasing amounts of time to making arrangements, preparing documents, absorbing anxieties and anticipating the unexpected.

We thank the staff, both those present at the assembly and those remaining in their offices, for their faithful service to this church, particularly in difficult times of staff reductions, budget cuts, and other uncertainties, and we commend their competence, their faithfulness, and their gracious flexibility. With deep appreciation we say, "Thanks be to God."

## **MOTION L: RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION AND THANKSGIVING FOR HOSPITALITY**

Reference: 2009 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 8.

Be it RESOLVED:

Let it be known and acclaimed that we have been literally blown over with the manifest hospitality of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota! From the very beginning, they have delighted us with comfortable and spacious hotels and a most inviting convention center. They have provided catered meals that have been delicious and served in a most timely and cordial manner. Their safety personnel have brought protection from storms with a most sunny disposition, even as they put their lives in danger to keep us safe.

We wish to thank the citizens of these two cities, their mayors, city councils, and chambers of commerce for a beautiful downtown, for excellent shops, welcoming restaurants, and much to see in artwork and architecture. It is pleasing to be in a setting where the name Lutheran is known and cherished as a living stone within the history and present fabric of the culture.

We have been blessed by the countless hours of tireless effort given by wonderful volunteers clothed in red vests, by area congregations and synods behind the scenes doing far more than we could ever ask or imagine, with the often invisible but essential work of staff from the hotels, convention center, city workers, fire department and rescue groups, police, custodians, housekeepers, and so many others.



Let it be known that these twin cities have provided us a most memorable place to rest and meet beside the river, even as we remember this assembly with the pillar of cloud by day that walked with us and brought us under one roof for deliberation and decision. With deep appreciation we say, “Thanks be to God.”

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION:**

**CA09.06.39d**      **To approve the resolutions as presented in Motions G–K.**

The presiding bishop asked Mr. Helmke to introduce the remaining motion, Motion D.

Mr. Helmke stated that Motion D would amend the bylaws to distribute reports electronically while still allowing opportunities for those congregations that would prefer to have those reports by mail.

**MOVED:**

To amend the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* as follows:

- 12.31.03.      At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a pre-assembly report. Distribution to congregations may be accomplished by posting the report on the Web site of this church. Distribution to voting members-elect may be accomplished electronically to those who have provided e-mail addresses. A written copy of the pre-assembly report will be mailed to any voting member-elect who does not provide an e-mail address and to any congregation or voting member-elect who requests a written copy.
- 12.31.02.      The secretary shall give notice of the time and place of each regular assembly by publication thereof at least 60 days in advance in this church’s periodical. The secretary shall give written notice of a special assembly to the bishop of each synod upon the issuance of a call thereof and shall publish the same in this church’s periodical at least 30 days in advance of the special assembly. ~~Written notice shall be mailed to all voting members not more than 30 days nor less than 10 days in advance of any meeting.~~ Notice shall be provided to all voting members or voting members-elect not more than 30 days or less than 10 days in advance of any meeting. Notice may be provided electronically for voting members or voting members-elect who have provided e-mail addresses, unless the voting member or voting member-elect has requested that written notice be mailed.

Mr. Joshua A. Kelly [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] offered the assembly some helpful visualizations of how much paper the assembly used. He also encouraged it to consider the amount of air conditioning and water that had been used during the duration of the Churchwide Assembly.

The Rev. Katrina D. Foster [Metropolitan New York Synod] offered an amendment to the motion providing that all future *Pre-Assembly Reports* be distributed by CD to those voting members who would provide an e-mail address, while written reports would still be mailed to those without an e-mail address.

Secretary David D. Swartling responded to Pr. Foster stating that while he was sympathetic to her amendment, it raised legal, practical, and cost problems. He added that options such as making laptops available for voting members at future Churchwide Assemblies were being investigated.

Hearing the response of Secretary Swartling, Pr. Foster withdrew her amendment.

The Rev. Carl D. Shankweiler [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate on all matters before the house.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

**MOVED;**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**SECONDED;**

**YES-836; NO-29**

**CARRIED:**

**The previous question.**

Debate being closed, Motion D was before the assembly.

**ASSEMBLY**

**TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED**

**ACTION:**

**YES-827; NO-39**

**CA09.06.40**

**To amend the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* as follows:**

**12.31.03. At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a pre-assembly report. Distribution to congregations may be accomplished by posting the report on the Web site of this church. Distribution to voting members-elect may be accomplished electronically to those who have provided e-mail addresses. A written copy of the pre-assembly report will be mailed to any voting member-elect who does not provide an e-mail address and to any congregation or voting member-elect who requests a written copy.**

**12.31.02. The secretary shall give notice of the time and place of each regular assembly by publication thereof at least 60 days in advance in this church's periodical. The secretary shall give written notice of a special assembly to the bishop of each synod upon the issuance of a call thereof and shall publish the same in this church's periodical at least 30 days in advance of the special assembly. ~~Written notice shall be mailed to all voting members not more than 30 days nor less than 10 days in advance of any meeting.~~ Notice shall be provided to**

**all voting members or voting members-elect not more than 30 days or less than 10 days in advance of any meeting. Notice may be provided electronically for voting members or voting members-elect who have provided e-mail addresses, unless the voting member or voting member-elect has requested that written notice be mailed.**

The chair announced that Motion D had been adopted.

The presiding bishop offered the Rev. John V. Carrier [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] an opportunity to test the body as to whether it wanted to consider his motion. The chair earlier had ruled his motion out of order for failure to meet the deadline.

Pr. Carrier expressed his desire that the assembly direct the Church Council to consider planning the dates when assemblies occur so that youth and young adults might be able to attend. He suggested the best dates were after June 1 and no later than the first week in August. Pr. Carrier chose not to challenge the ruling of the chair but shared his hope that his concern would be heard.

The presiding bishop offered his thanks to Pr. Langhauser and Mr. Helmke for the work of the Reference and Counsel Committee. The assembly responded with applause.

The Rev. Serena S. Sellers [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] rose to a point of personal privilege. She stated her belief that the assembly would appreciate an opportunity to rise and offer their thanks to all those who had been named in the resolutions of thanksgiving. The assembly responded with applause and a standing ovation.

## **Recognition: Church Council Class of 2009**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson introduced those who were completing their terms as members of the Church Council. He expressed his gratitude on behalf of this church for their diverse experience and theological wisdom. The class of 2009 included the following: Ms. Judith A. Bunker, Pinellas Park, Fla.; Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, Des Moines, Iowa; the Rev. David E. Jensen, Minocqua, Wis.; Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr., Harrisburg, Pa.; the Rev. J. Paul Rajashekar, Philadelphia, Pa.; the Rev. John C. Richter, Allentown, Pa.; the Rev. Norene A. Smith, Milwaukee, Wis.; Mr. Richard L. Wahl, Millersville, Md.; Dr. Phyllis L. Wallace, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands; and Mr. Gary L. Wipperman, Waverly, Iowa.

The assembly responded with applause and a standing ovation.

## **Announcements**

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called on Secretary David D. Swartling to provide announcements.

Secretary Swartling announced that the next Churchwide Assembly would be held at the Marriott World Center in Orlando, Fla., August 14–20, 2011. A short hospitality video was shown to the assembly.

Secretary Swartling informed the assembly that worship would begin the following morning at 8:30 A.M. in Hall D of the Minneapolis Convention Center. He noted that the remarks made previously by the Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, would be available in the back of the plenary hall. He further announced that voting members could still register their support or opposition to the ministry policies with the secretary's deputy.

Secretary Swartling also made a number of announcements about recycling, hotel checkout, and shuttle service. He encouraged everyone to complete an evaluation prior to leaving the assembly. He announced that the next issue of *The Lutheran* magazine, which contained assembly coverage, would be available within eight to ten days. Information regarding the actions that were taken during the Churchwide Assembly would be available on the ELCA Web site. He added that the actions of the assembly also would be shared with ELCA congregations. Finally, he stated that a compline service at Central Lutheran Church was scheduled for 9:00 P.M.

## **Closing Remarks: Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson**

The presiding bishop thanked members of the assembly for the consistent and faithful way in which they had engaged one another. He said he was grateful for their many prayers and for gathering regularly around the means of grace. He expressed his commitment to continue to lead this church in days that may be challenging for some, joyous for others, and wearisome still to others. He asked them to prayerfully and consistently speak well of this church. He challenged them not to be fearful. He stated that this church must continue to be a church body where all feel safe to teach, lead, and serve, consistent with ordination promises and affirmations made at baptism.

The presiding bishop requested time to live into the actions and time to process all that had been done at the assembly. He urged that now was the time, more than ever, to stay engaged with one another. He asked those who might be wondering about their place in this church to let this church help them make those decisions because this church's capacity to do God's work would be diminished by their leaving. He continued by stating that the story of the assembly was a story of God's love for us in Christ Jesus, who regularly offers a message and ministry of reconciliation. He challenged the assembly to bring to the world the good news of hope that is borne of faith in the risen Christ.

The assembly responded with applause and a standing ovation.

Presiding Bishop Hanson concluded with a word of thanks to his wife, Ione.

## **Adjournment**

The presiding bishop called on the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, member of the Church Council from Willmar, Minn., to lead the assembly in a closing hymn and prayer. Those present joined in singing "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." Following the singing of the hymn, the presiding bishop invited to the stage members of staff who were instrumental in the planning and execution of the assembly. Those called to the stage included the following: Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, executive for governance and institutional relations and chair of the assembly planning committee; Ms. Mary Beth Nowak, assembly manager; the Rev. Robert G. Schaefer, executive for worship and liturgical resources; Ms. Kristi S. Bangert, executive director of communication services. He also expressed his thanks to his fellow officers: Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president, Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary, and Ms. Christina L. Jackson-Skelton, treasurer.

Pr. Obregon gave the closing prayer. Following the prayer, the presiding bishop chimed the bell and extinguished the candle.

The final plenary session of the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America concluded at 6:28 P.M. CDT.

A Service of Holy Communion, including the Order for the Closing of the Assembly, began at 8:30 A.M. CDT on Sunday, August 23, 2009, in Hall D of the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minn. The Rev. Allan C. Bjornberg, bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops, preached and the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, ELCA presiding bishop, presided.

# Members of the Churchwide Assembly

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## Voting Members

### Officers

Bp. Mark S. Hanson, *presiding bishop*  
Mr. Carlos E. Peña, *vice president*  
Mr. David D. Swartling, *secretary*  
Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, *treasurer*

### Alaska Synod (1A)

Ms. Susie D. Delgado  
Bp. Michael F. Keys  
Ms. Twyla G. Mundy  
Pr. Karen L. Sonray

### Northwest Washington Synod (1B)

Pr. Christopher D. Berry  
Bp. Wm. Chris Boerger  
Mr. Steven R. Chapman  
Ms. Millie A. Fosberg  
Mr. Diakonda L. Gurning  
Pr. Jianhua N. Hao 8/17-8/22  
Mr. Larry P. Johnson  
Pr. Victor C. Langford III 8/22  
Pr. Pamela S. Russell  
Mr. Glenn L. Ryder II  
Ms. Sarah P. Tveit  
Ms. Vanessa M. Unti

### Southwestern Washington Synod (1C)

Ms. Catherine I. Crossan-Vork  
Pr. Donald G. Fossum  
Bp. Robert D. Hofstad  
Mr. John W. Hoyum  
Mr. James M. Hushagen  
Ms. Lynette M. Lile  
Mr. Jack S. Oakley  
Ms. Marcia L. Riggers  
Pr. Jan A. Ruud

### Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D)

Ms. Susan M. Berg  
Ms. Sarah B. Comi  
Mr. Gary A. Dahlke  
Mr. Gary H. Gemar  
Pr. Kathryn B. LePard  
Ms. Cheri L. Nelson  
Pr. Erik T. R. Samuelson  
Bp. Martin D. Wells

### Oregon Synod (1E)

Mr. James R. Anderson  
Bp. David Brauer-Rieke  
Pr. Nick C. Doversberger  
Ms. Sara M. Gross  
Ms. Carole D. Halvorson  
Pr. Laurie A. Larson Caesar  
Ms. Tonia J. Lindquist  
Mr. Ronald L. Pittman  
Mr. William H. J. Smith

### Montana Synod (1F)

Mr. Douglas B. Allie  
Mr. Jacob A. Block  
Bp. Jessica R. Crist  
Ms. Cynthia Z. Gustafson  
Mr. James L. Kittilsby  
Pr. Jean K. Larson  
Ms. Susan E. Leaverton  
Pr. Steven J. Nelson  
Ms. Randi A. Phelps  
Pr. Thomas P. Schlotterback  
Ms. Stacey L. Siebrasse  
Mr. Harold Spilde

### Sierra Pacific Synod (2A)

Ms. Karen Anderson DiFrancesca  
Pr. Lyle J. Beckman  
Pr. Anne T. Carlson  
Ms. Joanne Chadwick

Mr. Steven C. Herzfeldt  
Bp. Mark W. Holmerud  
Mr. Paul W. Konanz  
Mr. Steven M. Krefting  
Ms. Margaret L. Martinez  
Mr. Mark Nelson  
Ms. Elizabeth A. Parks  
Ms. Karen L. Reed  
Pr. Mary K Sanders  
Mr. Larry D. Struve  
Pr. Jeffrey D. Thiemann

### **Southwest California Synod (2B)**

Pr. Terry T. Allen  
Mr. Mark A. Davis  
Mr. R. Guy Erwin  
Ms. Jamie L. Hovland  
Ms. Janet M. Joe  
Bp. Dean W. Nelson  
Pr. Carl J. Nielsen  
Pr. Robert P. Rognlien Jr.  
Ms. Janice E. Smith  
Ms. Lori J. Splinter

### **Pacifica Synod (2C)**

Mr. John G. Barnes  
Ms. Georgina L. Califf  
Bp. Murray D. Finck  
Pr. James R. Hale  
Pr. Karla J. Halvorson  
Pr. Laura A. Line  
Ms. Kristen M. Naus  
Mr. Bradley S. Perkins  
Ms. Meri Jo Petrivelli  
Ms. Pamela A. Reynolds  
Pr. Esaul Salomon  
Ms. Sheila M. Wenzel

### **Grand Canyon Synod (2D)**

Ms. Roene M. Cammack  
Pr. Pamela J. S. Challis  
Mr. Curt R. Hahn  
Ms. Marcia S. Hill  
Mr. Robert L. Johnston  
Mr. Terry L. Pochert  
Mr. Michael L. Reed  
Pr. Patricia N. Reed  
Pr. Jeffrey C. Ruby

Pr. Kathryn A. Schlechter  
Pr. Kurt A. Sortland  
Ms. Leora E. Stadler  
Bp. Stephen S. Talmage  
Ms. Arsenia R. Walker

### **Rocky Mountain Synod (2E)**

Bp. Allan C. Bjornberg  
Ms. Linda D. Bobbitt  
Pr. Susan Candea  
Ms. Katherine L. Cruson  
Pr. Beth Ann Doerring  
Mr. John F. England Jr.  
Pr. Debra R. Engquist  
Ms. Nicole M. Garcia  
Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez  
Ms. Susan E. Hernandez  
Ms. Beverly A. Larzelere  
Pr. Jay M. McDivitt  
Mr. Victor H. Nelson  
Ms. Kirsten M. Nelson Roenfeldt  
Pr. Timothy P. Orlovski  
Mr. Paul A. Rosin  
Ms. Marilyn M. Skogen

### **Western North Dakota Synod (3A)**

Ms. Karen M. Broderson  
Pr. Heather E. Brown  
Ms. Pamela G. Hartman  
Pr. Michael E. Johnson  
Ms. Marilyn R. Krause  
Mr. Timothy C. Kretschmar  
Pr. Kenneth M.C. Miller  
Ms. Nancy C. Montgomery  
Bp. Mark E. Narum  
Mr. Dustin I. Roise  
Ms. Emma B. Schauer  
Mr. Ted E. Sitz  
Pr. Shirley J. Teske  
Pr. Allen J. Wagner  
Ms. Robin L. Wagner

### **Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B)**

Pr. Rafe L. Allison  
Ms. Dianne R. Billey  
Ms. Mildred P. Dick  
Pr. Richard A. Fitzer  
Ms. Sharlene B. Gumke

Mr. Eldo J. Haugen  
 Mr. Craig R. Johnson  
 Ms. Julie R. Johnson  
 Pr. Julie L. Johnson  
 Pr. Kenneth B. Kirchenwitz  
 Pr. Jolene M. Knudson-Hanse  
 Mr. David M. Olson  
 Mr. John M. Pederson  
 Mr. Harold E. Randall  
 Bp. William E. Rindy  
 Mr. Curtis A. Sorbo  
 Ms. Darla K. Thiele  
 Mr. Larry T. Thiele  
 Pr. Michael J. Toomey  
 Pr. Paul M. Trenne  
 Mr. Robert T. Turner  
 Pr. Bruce A. Vold  
 Ms. Eunice V. Vold  
 Pr. Harold O. Vold

8/17-8/22

8/22

**South Dakota Synod (3C)**

Pr. David J. Baer  
 Pr. Siri C. Beckmen Sorenson  
 Ms. Carla J. Borchardt  
 Pr. Mark S. Docken  
 Pr. Mindy J. Ehrke  
 Ms. Sheila D. Fauth  
 Mr. Arlan R. Feistner  
 Ms. SaRena L. Freet  
 Ms. Teresa L. Gayer  
 Pr. Wilbur L. Holz  
 Mr. Tyrone B. Inglis  
 Mr. Carrold J. Kraemer  
 Ms. Janel L. Laufman  
 Mr. Steve W. Laufman  
 Ms. Carolyn Lindekugel-Manlove  
 Ms. Karen R. Lindgren  
 Pr. Carla J. Nelson  
 Mr. Ronald L. Nygaard  
 Ms. Teresa E. Nygaard  
 Pr. Tanya R. Rist  
 Mr. Steven J. Sweetman  
 Mr. David M. Thom  
 Mr. Eugene C. Weerts  
 Ms. Mary C. Weerts  
 Pr. N. Craig Werling  
 Pr. Herbert G. Wounded Head III  
 Bp. David B. Zellmer

8/21-8/22

8/17-8/21

**Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D)**

Pr. Marilee J. Bergerson  
 Mr. Allen M. Bertilrud  
 Mr. Terry J. Blake  
 Pr. Benjamin T. Carlsen  
 Ms. Rebecca L. Cusey  
 Pr. H. Wade Dutton  
 Ms. Joy J. Eidem  
 Pr. Karol E. Hendricks-McCracken  
 Mr. Philip L. Holum  
 Ms. Judith M. Jensen  
 Pr. Charles L. Johnson  
 Pr. Katie A. Koch  
 Pr. Paul C. Koch  
 Ms. Darlene M. Larson Matz  
 Ms. Carol J. Lockhart  
 Mr. Michael E. Lockhart  
 Mr. Fathom M. Morey  
 Mr. John H. Nelson  
 Ms. Bonnie Nordvall  
 Mr. Jay M. Ostgaard  
 Ms. J. Rene Rodriguez  
 Ms. Zinta Z. Sundby  
 Ms. Clare A. Swenson  
 Bp. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe

**Northeastern Minnesota Synod (3E)**

Bp. Thomas M. Aitken  
 Mr. Roger Boatman  
 Ms. Julie A. Burns  
 Pr. David M. Carlson  
 Mr. Robert A. Jalonen  
 Mr. Monte J. Jarvis  
 Ms. Rebecca L. May  
 Pr. Jean M. Megorden  
 Pr. Dean G. Oelfke  
 Pr. Mark W. Skinner  
 Ms. Susan K. Skinner  
 Pr. Melissa L. Stoller  
 Mr. Philip H. Strom  
 Mr. Dennis L. Velander  
 Mr. Eric D. Wong  
 Ms. Emily N. Wyman

**Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)**

Bp. Jon V. Anderson  
 Ms. Gwen E. Arneson  
 Ms. Marilyn K. Bernhardson

Pr. Ronald R. Bockhaus  
 Ms. Cheryl L. Colbert 8/22  
 Mr. Roy N. Colbert  
 Pr. Timothy A. Ehling  
 Mr. Roald W. Haugan 8/17-8/22  
 Pr. Mary L. Hovland  
 Mr. Jon M. Hoyme  
 Ms. Corlys A. Knudson  
 Pr. Steven J. Knudson  
 Ms. Deborah A. Krogstad  
 Mr. Lowell J. Krogstad  
 Pr. Linda P. Lagergren  
 Ms. Brittani A. Lamb  
 Mr. Robert C. Lamb 8/22  
 Mr. Larry Larson  
 Pr. Kristi R. Mitchell  
 Pr. Harvey L. Nelson  
 Pr. José Pablo Obregon  
 Pr. Katherine A. Rood  
 Ms. Vickie K. Sarclay  
 Mr. Denny A. Schmit  
 Ms. Marsha L. Schmit  
 Mr. Edward A. Sievert 8/17-8/22  
 Pr. David A. Weeks  
 Ms. Brenda K. Wiese  
 Mr. Chad N. Winterfeldt  
 Ms. Karen E. Wojahn

**Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)**

Pr. Lalahery Andriamihaja  
 Pr. Debra D. Bergstrand  
 Mr. David B. Boorsma  
 Ms. Marilyn D. Boorsma  
 Mr. James H. Borowick  
 Pr. Kristine L. Carlson  
 Mr. Ivan Choloprav  
 Ms. Cynthia Derendal  
 Ms. Debra L. Diederich 8/17-8/20  
 Mr. Gary A. Diers  
 Ms. Linda M. Diers 8/20-8/22  
 Ms. Sonja M. Dixon  
 Pr. Drew E. Flathmann  
 Ms. Joan M. N. Freeberg  
 Pr. Daniel A. Garnaas  
 Pr. David N. Glesne  
 Pr. Margaret I. Guelker  
 Mr. Randall Holt-Woehl  
 Mr. Eric C. Huser

Bp. Craig E. Johnson 8/17-8/19, 8/20-22  
 Mr. Douglas J. Jones  
 Ms. Lee Anne Lack  
 Pr. Kimberly C. Leetch  
 Pr. Mark B. Lepper  
 Mr. David L. Lillehaug  
 Ms. Vicki N. Mann  
 Ms. Karimi Anna J. Mattson  
 Pr. Louise A. Mollick  
 Mr. Kevin L. Olsen  
 Pr. Maria C. Pederson  
 Ms. Gervaise M. Peterson  
 Mr. Albert H. Quie  
 Ms. Michelle A. Reichow  
 Pr. Gale G. Reitan  
 Pr. Jon C. Rhodes  
 Mr. Joseph S. Roberts  
 Mr. James W. Ryberg  
 Ms. Phyllis L. Score  
 Pr. Pamela I. Stalheim Lane  
 Pr. Mark D. Vinge  
 Pr. Glen T. Wheeler 8/19  
 Pr. Linda H. Willette  
 Ms. Heidi M. Wyatt

**Saint Paul Area Synod (3H)**

Pr. Christopher Z. Beckman  
 Ms. Sally C. Ea  
 Ms. Maxine A. Enfield  
 Ms. Audrey A. Fairchild-Ehm  
 Mr. Barry W. Fick  
 Ms. Kristie L. Graner  
 Pr. Craig H. Hanson  
 Mr. Paul O. Hardt  
 Mr. Richard J. Helgerson  
 Ms. Carol A. Hood  
 Pr. Timothy J. Housholder  
 Mr. David E. Laden  
 Pr. Lon Larson  
 Ms. Kathryn J. Lightfoot  
 Pr. John W. Matthews  
 Ms. Janet K. Metcalfe  
 Ms. Myrna I. Nelson  
 Mr. Brian R. Oberman  
 Mr. David B. Olsen  
 Ms. Gail M. Olson  
 Mr. Ronald E. Peterson  
 Bp. Peter Rogness



Mr. Mark H. Rogosheske  
Pr. William T. Siong  
Pr. John L. Stiles  
Pr. Zachary N. Thompson  
Pr. Paul A. Tidemann  
Ms. Rebecca J. Westermeyer  
Pr. Bonnie L. Wilcox

### **Southeastern Minnesota Synod (3I)**

Mr. Khan C. Bayek  
Pr. Karen R. Behling  
Mr. Earl L. Branum  
Pr. John V. Carrier  
Pr. Joseph G. Crippen  
Ms. Susan E. Ferries  
Ms. Shirley L. Gangstad  
Pr. Karen R. Grandall  
Mr. Paul W. Hamlin  
Pr. Patricia A. Hinkie  
Mr. Joseph A. Jackson  
Ms. Barbara F. Kittelson  
Ms. Michelle L. Klemme  
Pr. Jeffrey L. Laeger-Hagemeister  
Ms. Mary A. Laeger-Hagemeister  
Pr. Cary G. Larson  
Mr. James V. Nagel  
Pr. Reyna M. Purcell  
Ms. Joan V. Rose  
Pr. David W. Rossow  
Pr. Kristen S. Schlauderaff  
Ms. Katharine W. Tanabe  
Mr. Roger G. Thompson  
Bp. Harold L. Usgaard  
Ms. Nichole W. Wentzloff  
Mr. Richard T. Wintersteen  
Mr. Peter C. Zaffke

### **Nebraska Synod (4A)**

Mr. Daryl P. Boots  
Bp. David L. deFreese  
Pr. Randal R. Fett  
Ms. Jane A. Flores  
Mr. Jon A. Fredricks  
Mr. Brennan C. Frerichs  
Mr. John Jim Gonzales  
Pr. James C. Helgren  
Ms. Mary R. Hock  
Pr. Nathan C. Houfek

Ms. Sandra M. Johnston  
Mr. Brian O. Lund  
Pr. Brian D. Maas  
Ms. Mary A. Mohl  
Mr. David M. Nelson  
Pr. Phillip R. Nielsen  
Pr. Nancy A. Nyland  
Pr. Michelle F. Oetken  
Ms. Julie B. Petersen  
Pr. Donella J. Silveira  
Ms. Sandra K. Smith  
Ms. Susan M. Stover  
Ms. Susan A. Thompson  
Mr. Kurt Vogel  
Ms. Winnie T. Voss  
Pr. David S. Witkop

### **Central States Synod (4B)**

Ms. Melba J. Bangert  
Pr. James A. Banner  
Pr. David E. Carlson 8/19-8/22  
Ms. Lois C. Carlson  
Mr. Godwin Chong  
Ms. Dinah E. Dutta 8/17-8/22  
Mr. Daniel E. Greenwood  
Ms. Paula J. Greenwood 8/22  
Ms. Rhonda E. Haberer 8/17-8/22  
Mr. Phillip L. Knox 8/17-8/19  
Pr. Cheryl A. Lamaak  
Ms. Kristy L. Langdon 8/22  
Mr. William J. Langdon  
Bp. Gerald L. Mansholt  
Pr. David A. Miller  
Ms. Amanda Lynn Mong 8/20-8/22  
Mr. Terry L. Moore  
Ms. Emily M. Wearing 8/17-8/20  
Pr. Keith E. Wiens

### **Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C)**

Mr. Susan J. Humphrey  
Pr. Jack D. Russell  
Bp. Floyd M. Schoenhals  
Ms. Vernetta I. Wilson

### **Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D)**

Mr. Matthew A. Cleaver  
Ms. Bethany A. Dietrich

Ms. Debra K. Gebhardt  
Mr. Caleb L. Geleske  
Bp. Kevin S. Kanouse  
Mr. Owen G. Lokken  
Pr. Jane A. Mar  
Pr. Ryan D. Mills

### **Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)**

Pr. Janice A. Campbell  
Ms. Kara H. Clark  
Pr. Sylvia A. De La Garza  
Mr. John E. Dellis  
Ms. Jill Frisbie  
Pr. William C. Hassel  
Mr. Mark S. Helmke  
Ms. Norma A. Kazen  
Mr. Alton F. Luedke  
Mr. Thomas D. Pearson  
Mr. Carl A. Teinert  
Bp. Ray Tiemann  
Ms. E. Jean Weber  
Pr. Paul R. Ziese

### **Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F)**

Mr. Kurt E. Koopmann  
Pr. Christopher T. Markert  
Ms. Susan K. Moehring  
Mr. Evan M. Moilan Jr.  
Pr. Robert G. Moore  
Ms. Meredith L. Nelson  
Ms. Ada E. Norman  
Bp. Michael W. Rinehart  
Mr. Carroll S. Shaddock  
Pr. Barbara A. Simmers  
Mr. Stanley W. Sommer

8/17-8/20

### **Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)**

Pr. Sue E. Allen  
Mr. Raymond E. Bebee  
Mr. David Chen  
Ms. Joan D. Church  
Ms. Nanette C. Dahlke  
Ms. Jennifer G. DeLeon  
Pr. Soren S. Flessen  
Pr. Curtis W. Gerald  
Mr. Jason S. Glombicki  
Ms. Judith A. Keippel  
Mr. Drew M. Knobloch

Pr. Mark H. Larson  
Mr. Willie Lee  
Sr. Laura L. Mankivsky  
Mr. Fernando Mercado  
Bp. Wayne N. Miller  
Mr. Kenneth E. Olson  
Pr. Brooke N. Petersen  
Ms. Delois T. Thomas  
Pr. Carla R. Thompson Powell  
Pr. Darryl D. Thompson Powell  
Pr. Leslie K. Williamson  
Ms. Jenny M. Wu

### **Northern Illinois Synod (5B)**

Pr. Steven L. Dow  
Pr. Carol S. Gates  
Pr. Rebecca I. Gordon  
Ms. Mary E. Howe  
Mr. Jerry W. Johansen  
Ms. Paula M. Larsen  
Pr. Janet L. Lepp  
Pr. Margo D. Peterson  
Ms. Esther K. Prabhakar  
Mr. John M. Prabhakar  
Pr. Bret L. Reedy  
Mr. Kevin A. Rogers  
Pr. C. Franklin Samuelson  
Mr. George Sanchez  
Mr. Kyle R. Severson  
Ms. Carla Y. Vanatta  
Pr. Linda L. Winkelman  
Mr. Alan R. Wold  
Bp. Gary M. Wollersheim

### **Central/Southern Illinois Synod (5C)**

Mr. Kenneth M. Bergo  
Bp. Warren D. Freiheit  
Mr. Henry L. Harms  
Ms. Cindy R. Koonce  
Mr. Robert F. Mueller  
Ms. Deanna J. Osterbur  
Pr. Heidi W. Punt  
Ms. Willa J. Rapp  
Pr. Robert J. Rasmus  
Pr. Samuel J. Roth  
Pr. Donna L. Smith  
Mr. Virlon J. Suits

8/21-8/22

Ms. Julia M. Warren  
Mr. Chris L.S. Whitaker 8/17-8/21

**Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D)**

Pr. Kristin D. Berglund  
Mr. John L. Bonte  
Ms. Martha K. Bonte  
Pr. Cindy F. Breed  
Bp. Michael L. Burk  
Mr. Larry A. Christensen  
Pr. David L. Cline  
Pr. Donald K. Dovre  
Ms. Evelyn J. Dymkowski  
Ms. Jennifer M. Early  
Mr. Lowell Guard  
Ms. Jebamani M. Inbarasu  
Mr. Noah E. Judson  
Pr. Linda M. Keeter Schultz  
Ms. Lois A. Lembke  
Mr. Valdean C. Lembke  
Ms. Bette J. Maybee  
Mr. John W. Meyer  
Pr. Duane E. Miller  
Pr. Fayonne L. Tooman

**Western Iowa Synod (5E)**

Mr. Gerald L. Clausen  
Pr. Mark G. Decker  
Mr. Jay E. Denne  
Mr. Scott L. Essing  
Pr. Steven R. Frock  
Pr. Daniel W. Gerriettes  
Ms. Molly E. Hall  
Ms. Mary Lou Hansen  
Ms. Karen A. Hanson  
Mr. Paul D. Jacobson  
Pr. Christine A. Lang  
Bp. Michael A. Last  
Pr. C. Peter Maisenbach  
Pr. Ronald W. Nelson  
Ms. Cindy L. Youngquist

**Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)**

Pr. David H. Andreae  
Ms. Susan K. Armstrong  
Pr. Randall V. Baldwin  
Mr. Duane Ernster  
Mr. Vernon F. Greder Jr.

Ms. Karen M. Hagen  
Pr. Marshall E. Hahn  
Mr. Wayne A. Jacobson  
Ms. Joan R. Jurs  
Mr. Michael T. Lette  
Ms. Bonnie B. Niewoehner  
Pr. Robin M. Ramos 8/17-8/22  
Pr. Miles E. Renaas  
Pr. Victoria L. Shepherd 8/22  
Ms. Gayle L. Tate  
Ms. Rita Tejada  
Pr. Claudia W. Tessmer  
Mr. Philip A. Thomas  
Bp. Steven L. Ullestad  
Mr. Larry Voigts  
Pr. Barbara M. Wills

**Northern Great Lakes Synod (5G)**

Mr. Clay R. Hilman  
Pr. Corinne R. Johnson  
Pr. Jennifer Johnson Wrege 8/18-8/22  
Ms. Sara C. Kayser  
Ms. Rosemary Larson 8/17-8/18  
Mr. David L. Mason  
Mr. Ray O. Miller  
Pr. Norman C. Peterson  
Bp. Thomas A. Skrenes

**Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H)**

Ms. Betty L. Anderson  
Mr. Albert Arndt  
Mr. Gary C. Banker  
Ms. Kaitlyn G. Bredeson  
Ms. Christine V. Drew  
Pr. Christine J. Emerson  
Mr. James R. Erickson  
Ms. Kay M. Erickson  
Pr. Brian L. Ferguson  
Pr. Robert J. Giese  
Mr. Larry A. Gilbertson  
Ms. Ardala E. Littlefield  
Mr. Steven L. McCormack  
Bp. Duane C. Pederson  
Ms. Sandra J. Rau  
Pr. Linda A. Rozumalski  
Pr. Shelly D. S. Schultz  
Pr. Scott A. Stai  
Mr. Joshua R. Toufar

Mr. Timothy J. Voigts  
Pr. Leslie W. Walck  
Ms. Susan A. Zahrbock

### **East-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5I)**

Pr. Dwight L. Anderson  
Pr. Jeffrey J. Blain  
Mr. Robert J. Brumm  
Pr. Jennifer L. Czarnota  
Mr. John R. Emery  
Ms. Teresa L. Emery  
Pr. Theodore B. Gulhaugen  
Pr. Karen I. Jewell-van Buskirk  
Bp. James A. Justman  
Pr. Mark C. Kinney  
Mr. Paul C. Mogged  
Ms. Susan L. Mogged  
Mr. William T. Ostrem  
Pr. Kay S. Richter  
Ms. Alissa K. Shepeck  
Ms. Karen A. Torkelson  
Ms. Sandra J. Wendland  
Mr. Lowell E. Wickman  
Ms. Karen K. Wilkinson  
Mr. W. William Zimdars

### **Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)**

Mr. Mark Aamot  
Pr. Gerald L. Anderson  
Mr. Gus Barnes Jr.  
Mr. Paul Bedker  
Pr. Sandra L. Chrostowski  
Ms. Susan E. Cyr  
Ms. Nancy J. Groethe  
Mr. John F. Gruber  
Ms. MaryBeth Hoffman  
Pr. Mark W. Knappe  
Mr. David D. Larsen  
Pr. Meredith B. Musaus  
Ms. Linda K. Rattle  
Mr. Robert A. Reinders  
Mr. Taylor D. Rockhill  
Bp. Paul W. Stumme-Diers  
Pr. Christine C. Thompson  
Ms. Suzanne J. Timmer  
Pr. Charles R. Turbin

### **South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)**

Mr. Timothy R. Asplund  
Pr. Katherine E. Baardseth  
Ms. Mara N. Bakken  
Mr. Hans E. Becklin  
Mr. Jay R. Becklin  
Pr. David J. Berggren  
Ms. Winifred Brown  
Bp. Bruce H. Burnside  
Ms. Carolyn J. Butts  
Pr. Brent H. Campbell  
Ms. Solveig M. Carlson  
Ms. Mary deYoung  
Mr. Todd R. Fossum  
Ms. Constance M. Kilmark  
Pr. Steven R. Kottke  
Mr. Larry L. Larrabee  
Ms. Sally J. Lee  
Pr. Sylvia A. Lee-Thompson  
Mr. Thomas B. Martin-Erickson  
Mr. Timothy J. Mumm  
Pr. Martha J. Nack  
Mr. Eric M. Peterson  
Pr. William R. White

8/18

8/17, 8/19-8/22

### **La Crosse Area Synod (5L)**

Pr. Elizabeth F. Albertson  
Bp. James A. Arends  
Mr. Kyle B. Bakkum  
Mr. Ross A. Hardie  
Ms. Cheryl A. Mader  
Mr. Thomas S. Rislow  
Ms. JoAnn M. Salava  
Pr. John W. Stennes-Spidahl  
Pr. Matthew E. Toso

### **Southeast Michigan Synod (6A)**

Pr. Rani R. Abdulmasih  
Mr. Albert S. Asfour  
Pr. Cherlyne V. Beck  
Pr. Matthew D. Bode  
Ms. Joyce L. Freund  
Mr. Michael V. Johnson  
Pr. Stephen G. Marsh, *bishop-elect*  
Ms. Chelsea L. Mathis  
Ms. Rosalind S. Moldwin  
Mr. Willie G. Scott  
Pr. Susan F. Sprowls

Ms. Peggy H. Vuylsteke  
Mr. George C. Watson  
Mr. Michael J. Yagley

### **North/West Lower Michigan Synod (6B)**

Pr. Michael J. Anton  
Ms. Kira H. Ayoub  
Pr. Rebecca R. Ebb-Spees  
Ms. Sandra M. Foster  
Ms. Carolyn M. Mann  
Pr. Joan E. Oleson  
Pr. Paul J. Owens  
Mr. Matthew M. Riak  
Bp. John D. Schleicher  
Mr. Terry D. Speese  
Mr. Paul T. Werner  
Ms. Kim M. Winchell

### **Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C)**

Mr. William A. Beghtel 8/17-8/20  
Mr. Roger L. Burrus 8/20-8/22  
Pr. Jeffery G. Gramza  
Pr. Gary R. Groth  
Ms. Bonnie N. Harstad  
Ms. Mary F. Hudson  
Ms. Katherine N. Knoerzer  
Mr. Paul Knoerzer 8/22  
Ms. Liz Michael  
Mr. C. Theodore Miller  
Ms. Joyce A. Partyka  
Mr. Hansel S. Ramathal  
Pr. Shirley J. Ross-Jones  
Pr. Steven J. Rye  
Pr. Charles R. Strietelmeier  
Bp. James R. Stuck  
Ms. Cheryl A. Walker  
Ms. Jill C. Watson  
Mr. Philip R. Zillinger

### **Northwestern Ohio Synod (6D)**

Pr. David W. Brobston  
Mr. Roy L. Gibbs  
Ms. Jeannine G. Grimm  
Mr. Frederick H. Heintz  
Mr. Richard C. Jensen  
Mr. Craig O. Klopffleisch  
Ms. Marilyn M. Koenig  
Bp. Marcus C. Lohrmann

Ms. Cathy M. Martin  
Ms. Cynthia S. Milbry  
Pr. Blair G. Miller  
Mr. David F. Miller Jr.  
Pr. Joy L. Miller  
Pr. Don L. Neumann  
Pr. David L. Nevergall  
Ms. Diane K. Ninke  
Pr. Samuel S. Payne  
Pr. Timothy P. Philabaum  
Ms. Darlene A. Schaadt  
Pr. Linda B. Zaye

### **Northeastern Ohio Synod (6E)**

Mr. Y. T. Chiu  
Bp. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Ms. Patricia F. Echko  
Ms. Janet Galbreath-Smith  
Ms. Linda S. Gotthardt-Allende  
Ms. Sharon A. Gsellman  
Pr. Jean M. Hansen  
Ms. Carol A. Kilgore  
Mr. Edward A. Kirst  
Ms. Diane S. Koch  
Mr. Thomas A. Kratzer  
Pr. Pentti Maki  
Ms. Amanda K. Marenchin  
Mr. Donald L. Palmquist  
Pr. Robert H. Quaintance  
Pr. Connie D. Sassanella  
Mr. John L. Seng  
Pr. Steven P. A. Woyen

### **Southern Ohio Synod (6F)**

Mr. Terry O. Bruns  
Pr. Jonathan D. Bull  
Ms. Marjorie B. Ellis  
Pr. Craig L. Fourman  
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Pr. Orinda W. Hawkins-Brinkley  
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Ms. Rebekah R. Paulson  
Ms. Elizabeth B. Smiley  
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Ms. Sandra Cline  
Mr. Timothy L. Deal  
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Pr. Jennifer M. Ginn



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Ms. Diana G. Haywood  
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# Report of the Elections Committee

## First Common Ballot

Note: The people elected on this ballot are indicated in bold-face print. The designation (PC/L) is used to indicate positions reserved for persons of color or whose primary language is other than English. An asterisk (\*) indicates an incumbent who was eligible for reelection.

		VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 1 / Church Council / Clergy <i>Western Iowa Synod (5E)</i></b>			
A	Pr. Danette E. Johns, Storm Lake, Iowa (5E) .....	413	46.4
<b>B</b>	<b>Pr. Michael J. Schmidt, Sioux City, Iowa (5E) .....</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>53.5</b>
	Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
	Total Ballots .....	890	100
<b>Ticket 2 / Church Council / Clergy <i>Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)</i></b>			
<b>A</b>	<b>Pr. Raymond A. Miller, Quakertown, Pa. (7F) .....</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>73.8</b>
B	Pr. Carlton E. Rodgers, Wyncote, Pa. (7F) .....	220	26.2
	Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
	Total Ballots .....	841	100
<b>Ticket 3 / Church Council / Clergy <i>Saint Paul Area Synod (3H)</i></b>			
<b>A</b>	<b>Pr. Kathryn A. Tiede, Lino Lakes, Minn. (3H) .....</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>54.4</b>
B	Pr. Bonnie L. Wilcox, St. Paul, Minn. (3H) .....	386	45.5
	Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
	Total Ballots .....	849	100
<b>Ticket 4 / Church Council / Clergy (PC/L) <i>Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G)</i></b>			
<b>A</b>	<b>Pr. Amsalu T. Geleta, Springfield, Va. (8G) .....</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>69.5</b>
B	Pr. Jongkil Na, Beltsville, Md. (8G) .....	266	30.4
	Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
	Total Ballots .....	876	100
<b>Ticket 5 / Church Council / Lay Female (<i>under 28</i>) <i>Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H)</i></b>			
<b>A</b>	<b>Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson, Cumberland, Wis. (5H) .....</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>65.7</b>
B	Ms. Brianna L. Kunkel, Eau Claire, Wis. (5H) .....	283	34
	Invalid Ballots .....	2	0.2
	Total Ballots .....	832	100
<b>Ticket 6 / Church Council / Lay Female <i>South Carolina Synod (9C)</i></b>			
<b>A</b>	<b>Ms. Susan W. McArver, Columbia, S.C. (9C) .....</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>64</b>
B	Ms. Gloria D. Rast, Cameron, S.C. (9C) .....	318	35.8
	Invalid Ballots .....	2	0.2
	Total Ballots .....	889	100
<b>Ticket 7 / Church Council / Lay Female <i>La Crosse Area Synod (5L)</i></b>			
<b>A</b>	<b>Ms. Louise A. Hemstead, Cashton, Wis. (5L) .....</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>57.5</b>
B	Ms. Cheryl A. Mader, Prairie du Chien, Wis. (5L) .....	376	42.5
	Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
	Total Ballots .....	885	100

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 8 / Church Council / Lay Female (PC/L) <i>New England Synod (7B)</i></b>		
<b>A Ms. Judith E. Barlow-Roberts, Windsor, Conn. (7B)</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>58.1</b>
B Ms. Feronika A. Rambing, Newton, N.H. (7B)	341	41.9
Invalid Ballots	0	0
Total Ballots	813	100
<b>Ticket 9 / Church Council / Lay Male <i>Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)</i></b>		
A Mr. Fernando Mercado, Warrenville, Ill. (5A)	356	43.5
<b>B Mr. Ivan A. Perez, Chicago, Ill. (5A)</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>56.4</b>
Invalid Ballots	1	0.1
Total Ballots	819	100
<b>Ticket 10 / Church Council / Lay Male (under 28) <i>Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A)</i></b>		
A Mr. Erik G. Meyer, Oil City, Pa. (8A)	322	37.6
<b>B Mr. Blaire P. Smith, Erie, Pa. (8A)</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>62.1</b>
Invalid Ballots	2	0.2
Total Ballots	856	100
<b>Ticket 11 / Church Council / Lay Male (PC/L) <i>Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E)</i></b>		
<b>A Mr. William B. Horne II, Clearwater, Fla. (9E)</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>82.1</b>
B Mr. Orville A. Williams, Lake Park, Fla. (9E)	148	17.9
Invalid Ballots	0	0
Total Ballots	826	100
<b>Ticket 12 / Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission / Clergy <i>Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D)</i></b>		
A Pr. Robert W. Kenyon, Ritzville, Wash. (1D)	205	24.8
<b>B Pr. Erik T. Samuelson, Spokane, Wash. (1D)</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>75.1</b>
Invalid Ballots	1	0.1
Total Ballots	826	100
<b>Ticket 13 / Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission / Lay Female <i>New Jersey Synod (7A)</i></b>		
A Ms. Cynthia E. Gerrits, East Windsor, N.J. (7A)	337	41.7
<b>B Ms. Janet A. Peters, Flemington, N.J. (7A)</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>58.3</b>
Invalid Ballots	0	0
Total Ballots	808	100
<b>Ticket 14 / Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission / Lay Male <i>Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D)</i></b>		
<b>A Mr. Paul H. Lewellan, Davenport, Iowa (5D)</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>57.8</b>
B Mr. William Rosberg, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (5D)	339	42.1
Invalid Ballots	1	0.1
Total Ballots	805	100
<b>Ticket 15 / Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission / Clergy</b>		
A Pr. Robert W. Fritch, Jamaica, N.Y. (7C)	230	27
B Pr. Lori Ann Strang, Toledo, Ohio (6D)	351	41.1
C Pr. Vickie T. Garber, Crestview Hills, Ky. (6C)	119	14
D Pr. Lee M. Miller II, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F)	138	16.2
Invalid Ballots	15	1.8
Total Ballots	853	100

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 16 / Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission / Lay Male</b>		
<b>A Mr. Emried D. Cole, Baltimore, Md. (8F)</b> .....	471	60.4
B Mr. Steven D. Moll, Turbotville, Pa. (8E) .....	309	39.6
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	780	100
<b>Ticket 17 / Global Mission / Clergy Alaska Synod (1A)</b>		
A Pr. Keith Anderson, Ketchikan, Alaska (1A) .....	327	40.9
<b>B Pr. Lisa A. Smith, Anchorage, Alaska (1A)</b> .....	472	59.1
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	799	100
<b>Ticket 18 / Global Mission / Lay Female Caribbean Synod (9F)</b>		
A Ms. Audrey D. James, San Juan, Puerto Rico (9F) .....	151	19.4
<b>B Ms. Martha R. Norat, Dorado, Puerto Rico (9F)</b> .....	625	80.4
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	777	100
<b>Ticket 19 / Global Mission / Lay Male Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)</b>		
A Mr. Walter J. Chossek, Milwaukee, Wis. (5J) .....	366	47.5
<b>B Mr. R. Timothy Muth, Brookfield, Wis. (5J)</b> .....	404	52.5
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	770	100
<b>Ticket 20 / Global Mission / Clergy</b>		
<b>A Pr. Douglas S. Cox, Excelsior, Minn. (3G)</b> .....	496	58.8
B Pr. Charles Leonard, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F) .....	347	41.1
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	844	100
<b>Ticket 21 / Global Mission / Lay Female</b>		
A Ms. Deborah Matern Graf, Reading, Pa. (7E) .....	262	32.2
B Ms. Amanda F. Tompkins, Tannersville, Pa. (7E) .....	300	36.9
C Ms. Stacey Siebrasse, Havre, Mont. (1F) .....	157	19.3
D Ms. Rosalind "Sally" S. Moldwin, Port Huron, Mich. (6A) .....	88	10.8
Invalid Ballots .....	6	0.7
Total Ballots .....	813	100
<b>Ticket 22 / Vocation and Education / Clergy Southwest California Synod (2B)</b>		
A Pr. Terry T. Allen, Pasadena, Calif. (2B) .....	345	42.9
<b>B Pr. John I. Rollefson, Los Angeles, Calif. (2B)</b> .....	460	57.1
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	805	100
<b>Ticket 23 / Vocation and Education / Lay Female Allegheny Synod (8C)</b>		
<b>A Ms. Alicia R. Anderson, Boalsburg, Pa. (8C)</b> .....	481	60.6
B Ms. Cynthia L. Fritz, State College, Pa. (8C) .....	313	39.4
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	794	100



	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 24 / Vocation and Education / Lay Male Northern Great Lakes Synod (5G)</b>		
<b>A Mr. David M Blomquist, Iron Mountain, Mich. (5G)</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>55.8</b>
B Mr. Steven W. Wesselhoft, Ironwood, Mich. (5G)	334	43.9
Invalid Ballots	2	0.3
Total Ballots	760	100
<b>Ticket 25 / Vocation and Education / Clergy (PC/L)</b>		
A Pr. Brian A. McClinton, York, Pa. (8D)	262	32.1
<b>B Pr. Lamont A. Wells, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F)</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>66.7</b>
Invalid Ballots	10	1.2
Total Ballots	816	100
<b>Ticket 26 / Vocation and Education / Lay Female</b>		
A Ms. Maren R. Hulden, Moorhead, Minn. (3D)	392	49.4
<b>B Ms. Kari A. Lipke, St. Peter, Minn. (3F)</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>50.5</b>
Invalid Ballots	1	0.1
Total Ballots	794	100
<b>Ticket 27 / Church in Society / Clergy Northern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)</b>		
A Pr. Gail H. Kees, Stroudsburg, Pa. (7E)	383	49.2
<b>B Pr. William S. Maxon, Emmaus, Pa. (7E)</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>50.8</b>
Invalid Ballots	0	0
Total Ballots	779	100
<b>Ticket 28 / Church in Society / Lay Female Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D)</b>		
<b>A Ms. Siri J. Fiebiger, Moorhead, Minn. (3D)</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>64.8</b>
B Ms. Jody Horntvedt, Baudette, Minn. (3D)	276	35.2
Invalid Ballots	0	0
Total Ballots	785	100
<b>Ticket 29 / Church in Society / Lay Female (PC/L)</b>		
<b>A Ms. Angela Ellis, Baltimore, Md. (8F)</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>71</b>
B Ms. Yerley Fuller, Baltimore, Md. (8F)	219	29
Invalid Ballots	0	0
Total Ballots	754	100
<b>Ticket 30 / Church in Society / Clergy</b>		
A Pr. Kevin R. Maly, Denver, Colo. (2E)	396	47.9
B Pr. Erik J. Strand, Edina, Minn. (3G)	222	26.8
C Pr. K. Jennie Lightfoot, St. Paul, Minn. (3H)	207	25
Invalid Ballots	2	0.2
Total Ballots	827	100
<b>Ticket 31 / Church in Society / Clergy (PC/L)</b>		
<b>A Pr. Khader N. El-Yateem, Brooklyn, N.Y. (7C)</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>57.6</b>
B Pr. Rimon R. Said, Chicago, Ill. (5A)	326	42.4
Invalid Ballots	0	0
Total Ballots	769	100
<b>Ticket 32 / Multicultural Ministries / Clergy European-American</b>		
<b>A Pr. Susan Gamelin, High Point, N.C. (9B)</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>66.5</b>
B Pr. Sarah B. Isakson, Berkeley, Calif. (2A)	278	33.3
Invalid Ballots	1	0.1
Total Ballots	834	100

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 33 / Multicultural Ministries / Clergy (PC/L) <i>American Indian and Alaska Native</i></b>		
A Pr. Robert L. Stone, Caldwell, Idaho (1D) . . . . .	224	28.4
<b>B Pr. Herbert G. Wounded Head III, Brookings, S.D. (3C) . . . . .</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>71.5</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	1	0.1
Total Ballots . . . . .	790	100
<b>Ticket 34 / Multicultural Ministries / Lay Female (PC/L) <i>Arab and Middle Eastern</i></b>		
A Ms. Anahit A. Oundjian, Las Vegas, Nev. (2D) . . . . .	304	40.9
<b>B Ms. Rose Oundjian, Las Vegas, Nev. (2D) . . . . .</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>58.7</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	3	0.4
Total Ballots . . . . .	744	100
<b>Ticket 35 / Multicultural Ministries / Lay Male (PC/L) <i>Latino</i></b>		
A Mr. David Cruz, Brooklyn, N.Y. (7C) . . . . .	273	35.1
<b>B Mr. Jonathan G. Gomez, Phoenix, Ariz. (2D) . . . . .</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>63.8</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	9	1.2
Total Ballots . . . . .	778	100
<b>Ticket 36 / Multicultural Ministries / Lay Male (PC/L) <i>Biracial or Multiracial</i></b>		
A Mr. Joseph S. Roberts, Minneapolis, Minn. (3G) . . . . .	331	42.8
<b>B Mr. Nathaniel P. Viets-VanLear, Chicago, Ill. (5A) . . . . .</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>57.1</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	1	0.1
Total Ballots . . . . .	774	100
<b>Ticket 37 / Publishing House / Clergy</b>		
A Pr. Edward N. Kay, Baltimore, Md. (8F) . . . . .	380	48.3
<b>B Pr. Brian C. King, Iowa Falls, Iowa (5F) . . . . .</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>51.7</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	0	0
Total Ballots . . . . .	787	100
<b>Ticket 38 / Publishing House / Clergy (PC/L)</b>		
<b>A Pr. Winston D. Persaud, Dubuque, Iowa (4B) . . . . .</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>64.3</b>
B Pr. Jose D. Rodriguez, Chicago, Ill. (4E) . . . . .	293	35.6
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	1	0.1
Total Ballots . . . . .	824	100
<b>Ticket 39 / Publishing House / Lay Female (PC/L)</b>		
<b>A Ms. Rosemary R. Ohles, Lincoln, Neb. (4A) . . . . .</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>55.6</b>
B Ms. Arsenia Walker, Las Vegas, Nev. (2D) . . . . .	334	44.4
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	0	0
Total Ballots . . . . .	752	100
<b>Ticket 40 / Publishing House / Lay Male</b>		
<b>A Mr. Brilsford "Bril" B. Flint, Austin, Texas (4E) . . . . .</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>59.5</b>
B Mr. Edward G. Martin, Lancaster, Pa. (7E) . . . . .	305	40.5
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	0	0
Total Ballots . . . . .	754	100
<b>Ticket 41 / Publishing House / Lay Male</b>		
A Mr. Gregory S. Lea, Kasson, Minn. (3I) . . . . .	248	33.2
<b>B Mr. Timothy I. Maudlin, Edina, Minn. (3G) . . . . .</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>66.6</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	1	0.1
Total Ballots . . . . .	746	100

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 42 / Mission Investment Fund / Clergy</b>		
A Pr. John R. Kotovsky, Chesterfield, Mo. (4B) . . . . .	365	47.6
<b>B Pr. Lorenz “Larry” W. Lutey, Naperville, Ill. (5J) . . . . .</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>52.4</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	0	0
Total Ballots . . . . .	767	100
<b>Ticket 43 / Mission Investment Fund / Lay Female</b>		
<b>A Ms. Kendra D. Brodin, Fridley, Minn. (3G) . . . . .</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>51.9</b>
B Ms. Mary S. Ranum, Circle Pines, Minn. (3H) . . . . .	361	48.1
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	0	0
Total Ballots . . . . .	750	100
<b>Ticket 44 / Mission Investment Fund / Lay Male<sup>1</sup></b>		
A Mr. Warren W. Hudson, Minneapolis, Minn. (3G) . . . . .	486	69.7
B Mr. Brian S. Lubnow, Wheaton, Ill. (5A) . . . . .	205	29.4
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	6	0.9
Total Ballots . . . . .	697	100
<b>Ticket 45 / Mission Investment Fund / Lay Female (4-year term)</b>		
A Ms. Liza M. Canino, Long Grove, Ill. (5A) . . . . .	263	35.8
<b>B Ms. Judy L. Conklin, Crystal Lake, Ill. (5B) . . . . .</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>63.9</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	2	0.3
Total Ballots . . . . .	734	100
<b>Ticket 46 / Mission Investment Fund / Lay Male</b>		
<b>A Mr. Daniel M. Bringman, Gettysburg, Pa. (8D) . . . . .</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>53.5</b>
B Mr. Tyrone B. Inglis, Sioux Falls, S.D. (3C) . . . . .	357	46.1
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	3	0.4
Total Ballots . . . . .	775	100
<b>Ticket 47 / Board of Pensions / Clergy <i>Plan Participant</i></b>		
A Pr. Scot E. Sorensen, Sacramento, Calif. (2A) . . . . .	309	41.8
<b>B Pr. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, Walnut Creek, Calif. (2A) . . . . .</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>58.2</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	0	0
Total Ballots . . . . .	740	100
<b>Ticket 48 / Board of Pensions / Lay Female <i>Plan Participant</i></b>		
A Ms. Patricia Peterman, Billings, Mont. (1F) . . . . .	288	37.3
<b>B Ms. Jill A. Schumann, Gettysburg, Pa. (8D) . . . . .</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>62.7</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	0	0
Total Ballots . . . . .	773	100
<b>Ticket 49 / Board of Pensions / Lay Female</b>		
A Ms. Sharon E. Buhr, Valley City, N.D. (3B) . . . . .	366	49.2
<b>B Ms. Lisa Ann Kro, Plymouth, Minn. (3G) . . . . .</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>50.7</b>
Invalid Ballots . . . . .	1	0.1
Total Ballots . . . . .	744	100

<sup>1</sup> The first ballot of Ticket 44 was ruled invalid because the name on Ticket A was listed incorrectly. This election was decided on the Second Common Ballot.

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 50 / Board of Pensions / Lay Female</b>		
A Ms. <b>Kathleen K. Mooney, Cold Spring, Minn. (3F)</b> .....	443	59.8
B Ms. Rachel A. Riensche, Bloomington, Minn. (3G) .....	298	40.2
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	741	100
<b>Ticket 51 / Board of Pensions / Lay Male</b>		
A Mr. Grieg L. Anderson, Portland, Ore. (1E) .....	346	45.5
B <b>Mr. Kevin D. Anderson, Gaithersburg, Md. (8G)</b> .....	414	54.5
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	760	100
<b>Ticket 52 / Nominating Committee / Clergy Male</b>		
A Pr. Richard D. Ajer, San Diego, Calif. (2C) .....	379	47.3
B <b>Pr. Herbert E. Anderson, Berkeley, Calif. (2A)</b> .....	422	52.6
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	802	100
<b>Ticket 53 / Nominating Committee / Clergy Female</b>		
A Pr. Joy Mortensen-Wiebe, Oshkosh, Wis. (5I) .....	158	19.3
B <b>Pr. Kathie Bender Schwich, Park Ridge, Ill. (5A)</b> .....	662	80.7
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	820	100
<b>Ticket 54 / Nominating Committee / Lay Female</b>		
A Ms. Linda J. Gjere, Omaha, Neb. (4A) .....	290	35
B <b>Ms. Kathy J. Magnus, Edina, Minn. (3G)</b> .....	538	65
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	828	100
<b>Ticket 55 / Nominating Committee / Lay Female (PC/L)</b>		
A Ms. Emma G. Porter, Jamaica, N.Y. (7C) .....	366	46.4
B <b>Ms. Judith A. Tutt-Starr, Los Angeles, Calif. (2B)</b> .....	422	53.5
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	789	100
<b>Ticket 56 / Nominating Committee / Lay Male</b>		
A <b>Mr. Ken F. Aicher, Tampa, Fla. (9E)</b> .....	402	51.3
B Mr. David R. Poppe, Fremont, Neb. (4A) .....	382	48.7
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	784	100
<b>Ticket 57 / Nominating Committee / Lay Male (under 30)</b>		
A <b>Mr. Brandon W. Huston, Hamilton, Ohio (6F)</b> .....	430	58
B Mr. Jeremy Marburger, Broomfield, Colo. (2E) .....	310	41.8
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	741	100
<b>Ticket 58 / Committee on Discipline / Clergy</b>		
A <b>Pr. Michel D. Clark, Knoxville, Ill. (5B)</b> .....	458	57.9
B Pr. Kim A. Stover, Wayne, Neb. (4A) .....	330	41.7
Invalid Ballots .....	3	0.4
Total Ballots .....	791	100

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 59 / Committee on Discipline / Clergy</b>		
A Pr. Sandra B. Kreis, Olympia, Wash. (1C) .....	294	37
<b>B Pr. Joyce Piper, Willmar, Minn. (3F) .....</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>61.2</b>
Invalid Ballots .....	14	1.8
Total Ballots .....	794	100
<b>Ticket 60 / Committee on Discipline / Clergy (PC/L)</b>		
A Pr. Samuel S. Payne, Lima, Ohio (6D) .....	345	43.6
<b>B Pr. Andrea L. Walker, Summit, N.J. (7A) .....</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>56.4</b>
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	792	100
<b>Ticket 61 / Committee on Discipline / Lay Female</b>		
A Ms. Sheryl L. Andreasen, Rockford, Ill. (5B) .....	316	40.2
<b>B Ms. Kathryn E. Baerwald, Washington, D.C. (8G) .....</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>59.7</b>
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	787	100
<b>Ticket 62 / Committee on Discipline / Lay Female</b>		
A Ms. Tracey A. Beasley, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F) .....	383	47.6
<b>B Ms. Joanne Chadwick, San Francisco, Calif. (2A) .....</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>52.4</b>
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	805	100
<b>Ticket 63 / Committee on Discipline / Lay Female</b>		
<b>A Ms. Janice M. Quirl, Austin, Texas (4E) .....</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>59.6</b>
B Ms. Eva B. Roeber, Gretna, Neb. (4A) .....	310	40.3
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	770	100
<b>Ticket 64 / Committee on Discipline / Lay Male</b>		
A Mr. David M. Keck, Westerville, Ohio (6F) .....	271	35.7
<b>B Mr. Arthur E. Murphy, Bellaire, Texas (4F) .....</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>64.3</b>
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	759	100
<b>Ticket 65 / Committee on Discipline / Lay Male (PC/L)</b>		
<b>A Mr. Miguel A. Hernandez, El Paso, Texas (2E) .....</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>50.5</b>
B Mr. James W. Hilliard, Chicago, Ill. (5A) .....	384	49.4
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	778	100
<b>Ticket 66 / Committee on Appeals / Clergy</b>		
<b>A Pr. Philip L. Hougren, West Branch, Iowa (5D) .....</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>77.3</b>
B Pr. Lyle G. Miller, Gig Harbor, Wash. (1C) .....	185	22.7
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	814	100
<b>Ticket 67 / Committee on Appeals / Clergy <i>West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)</i></b>		
A Pr. Gerald R. Kliner, Jr., Hurricane, W.Va. (8H) .....	380	47.9
<b>B Pr. Matthew L. Riegel, Morgantown, W.Va. (8H) .....</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>52</b>
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	793	100

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 68 / Committee on Appeals / Lay Female</b>		
<b>A Ms. Madelyn H. Busse, Denver, Colo. (2E)</b> .....	<b>453</b>	<b>55.9</b>
B Ms. Leslie M. Frost, Minneapolis, Minn. (3G) .....	357	44.1
Invalid Ballots .....	0	0
Total Ballots .....	810	100
<b>Ticket 69 / Committee on Appeals / Lay Male</b>		
A Mr. William R. Lloyd, Jr., Somerset, Pa. (8C) .....	397	49.6
<b>B Mr. George C. Watson, Port Huron, Mich. (6A)</b> .....	<b>402</b>	<b>50.2</b>
Invalid Ballots .....	1	0.1
Total Ballots .....	800	100

## Second Common Ballot

	VOTES	PERCENT
<b>Ticket 15 / Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission / Clergy</b>		
<b>Pr. Lori Ann Strang, Toledo, Ohio (6D)</b> .....	<b>530</b>	<b>61.9</b>
Pr. Robert W. Fritch, Jamaica, N.Y. (7C) .....	326	38.1
Total Ballots .....	856	100.0
<b>Ticket 21 / Global Mission / Lay Female</b>		
<b>Ms. Amanda F. Tompkins, Tannersville, Pa. (7E)</b> .....	<b>435</b>	<b>51.5</b>
Ms. Deborah Matern Graf, Reading, Pa. (7E) .....	409	48.5
Total Ballots .....	844	100.0
<b>Ticket 30 / Church in Society / Clergy</b>		
<b>Pr. Kevin R. Maly, Denver, Colo. (2E)</b> .....	<b>493</b>	<b>57.3</b>
Pr. Erik J. Strand, Edina, Minn. (3G) .....	368	42.7
Total Ballots .....	861	100.0
<b>Ticket 44 / Mission Investment Fund / Lay Male</b>		
<b>Mr. Warren W. Hanson, Minneapolis, Minn. (3G)</b> .....	<b>595</b>	<b>68.5</b>
Mr. Brian S. Lubnow, Wheaton, Ill. (5A) .....	273	31.5
Total Ballots .....	868	100.0

# Report of the Presiding Bishop

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## Part One:

*“Child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.”*

We gather for the eleventh Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) under the sign of Christ’s death and resurrection and in the promise and power of the Holy Spirit. Bathed in God’s baptismal grace and joined to Christ’s body through God’s living Word, we approach the work of the assembly with humility and hope.

We also gather in the midst of a significant economic recession. Consequences of the volatile economy are being felt in the lives of ELCA members, the ministries of congregations and the churchwide organization, and the work of partner agencies and institutions. Such challenging times call for:

- Evangelical missional imagination;
- Faithful and generous stewardship of God’s bountiful gifts and of our interdependence; and
- Telling the story of what God is doing in and through this church.

This report seeks to build upon these three themes through the lens of “Faithful Yet Changing: The Plan For Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” (2003), looking at progress made, shared work strengthened, and challenges being addressed. I offer this report with profound gratitude for this church and for the lives of faith, witness, and service of each member.

## Mission Statement

*“Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.”*

## Five Strategic Directions

The five strategic directions of the Plan for Mission commit the churchwide expression to work with partners to undergird and sustain what we do to support congregations, grow in evangelical outreach, step forward as a public church, deepen relationships, and bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders.

## Four Commitments for Implementation

The Plan for Mission’s four “commitments for implementation” state that the churchwide organization, in collaboration with its partners, will exchange resources and ideas throughout this church; deepen relationships with institutions and agencies of this church and with partners; confront the scandalous realities of barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence; and pursue our commitment to become more diverse, multicultural, and multi-generational in an ever-changing and increasingly pluralistic context.

## **Guided by the Plan for Mission**

Within the context of the Plan for Mission, the churchwide organization is focusing on priorities that will give greater clarity to its work and decisions regarding budget, staffing, and programs. They assist the churchwide organization, working collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies and institutions, and other partners, to sharpen its focus and increase its impact in specific areas:

- Accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission; and
- Building capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.

### **Strategic Direction:**

#### **Supporting Congregations**

*Support congregations in their call to be faithful, welcoming, and generous, sharing the mind of Christ.*

#### **Congregations in the ELCA Today**

The first critical priority for this church is to accompany congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission. The vision of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) unit captures the energy of this priority: Every person is a missionary, every pastor is a mission director, and every congregation is a mission center for the sake of the world.

Congregations, whatever their context, location, size, diversity, age, or style, are the bedrock of this church's mission and ministry. Thanks be to God for congregations, for those who lead them, and for their "faithful, welcoming, and generous" presence throughout this church.

Some observations about congregations in the ELCA today:

- Through the "Book of Faith" initiative, the Holy Spirit is once again renewing this church. We are committed to becoming fluent in the first language of our faith, the language of Scripture. The initiative will take different forms in every context, but will include hearing the Word, praying and singing the Scriptures, and studying God's Word. Eagerly anticipated resources include the *Lutheran Study Bible*, the *Spark Bible* for children, and many Bible study guides. "Book of Faith" advocates in each synod are scheduling workshops for congregational leaders. It is my hope that every ELCA congregation will be a Book of Faith congregation, just as this Churchwide Assembly will be a Book of Faith Assembly.
- In response to a 2007 Churchwide Assembly action, the ELCA bureau for federal chaplaincy ministries led a series of workshops on care for returning veterans. The workshops, now available on DVD, assist congregations in responding to the needs of those returning home from military service.
- In response to the report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly called for "renewed commitment to vigorous mission-support efforts throughout the congregations, synods, and churchwide ministries of the ELCA." Among the strategies were one-on-one conversations with synodical bishops and the ELCA Church Council "about their personal and corporate stewardship, including the importance of tithing." The ELCA officers have completed these remarkably rich conversations and encourage the use of this model as we seek to hold each other accountable for our stewardship.



## **Responding to Challenges**

The churchwide organization has worked to strengthen its connections with congregations, recognizing that the synodical expression is the key link in this interdependent church. We have work still to do:

- As we seek to be about God's mission in an ever-changing context, worship around the means of grace is central for the renewal of community within congregations. Data about worship life and giving, however, include some sobering trends:
  1. Many of the 25 percent of ELCA congregations with 50 or fewer people in worship each Sunday face the dual challenges of providing pastoral leadership while remaining focused on mission;
  2. Nearly two-thirds of ELCA congregations report a decrease in worship attendance of five percent or more from 2000–2007; nearly 20 percent report a comparable increase;
  3. In the last 20 years, approximately 300,000 fewer people worship in ELCA congregations each Sunday; and,
  4. In the last 20 years, undesignated giving to congregations, adjusted for inflation, is flat. Operating costs, however, have increased.
- Some of the challenges I have named in earlier reports continue to be challenges for us. These include:
  1. ELCA congregations are predominantly white in an increasingly diverse society. How can each congregation live out this church's commitment to be a Pentecost people: multilingual, multicultural, and multi-ethnic?
  2. We need to talk more honestly and openly about how each of us responds to God's call to be generous and faithful stewards of God's money.

## **Strategic Direction:**

### **Growing in Evangelical Outreach**

*Assist members, congregations, synods, and institutions and agencies of this church to grow in evangelical outreach.*

### **Evangelical Outreach in the ELCA Today**

As a church, we are claiming our name—*evangelical* Lutheran—and becoming an evangelizing church in a Lutheran key. Our name is a constant reminder that the good news of Jesus Christ is at the center of our lives of faith, the ministry of congregations, and our proclamation to the ends of the earth. Some observations about evangelical outreach in the ELCA today:

- The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) program unit has inspired a new vision for its work, the evangelizing congregations missional plan, with every bishop leading as a missionary bishop, and all leaders called to missional leadership for the plan's vision: every person is a missionary, every pastor is a mission director, and every congregation is a mission station for the sake of the world. Synodical mission tables will provide leadership for powerful renewal that embraces the growing diversity in America. Central to the plan is a newly designed staff position in each synod, the director for evangelical mission (DEM).
- For congregations to be growing centers of evangelical mission, ELCA members must grow in their discipleship faith practices, including worship, biblical study, spiritual formation, communal discernment, discipleship, and prayer. Likewise, in every congregation, prayer and other faith practices must permeate every meeting, decision, and aspect of parish life.

- Evangelical missional imagination responds to a changing and diverse context with new forms of ministry and mission. Examples include:
  1. ***Imagine the power of interdependence.*** When Hurricane Ike left large portions of the Houston area without power, students from Lutheran Campus Ministry prepared food and served meals to their neighbors. When an ice storm blanketed western Kentucky, members at House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Elizabethtown opened their building for people to gather. When a plane crash shattered the evening silence west of Buffalo, New York, the folks at Zion Lutheran Church in Clarence Center held a special prayer service for their community. And when the potential for historic floods threatened the Red River Valley, residents of Fargo and Moorhead and students from as far away as Iowa spent long hours sandbagging. Thank you for your prayers, support, and service in times of disaster. Thank you for walking together with those in need. Thank you for being Lutheran Disaster Response.
  2. ***Imagine equipping multicultural missional leaders.*** The Multicultural Ministries unit, in partnership with the Arkansas-Oklahoma, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Southwestern Texas, and Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast synods, held a multicultural event to engage and equip rostered and lay leaders in an intentional process of ministry among people of varying races, cultures, and ethnicities in their communities.
  3. ***Imagine missional congregations.*** Bridge of Peace is an urban congregation in Camden, N.J. Worship services are multi-racial and multilingual in Portuguese, Spanish, and English. Pr. Giselle Carvalho Coutinho says, “We are evangelists. There is so much hope here. There is always an opportunity to share the Gospel and help others.”
  4. ***Imagine funding missional leaders.*** The Mission Investment Fund, in response to conversations about seminary student debt, gave a \$1.5 million gift to the Fund for Leaders in Mission to launch a new matching gift program to provide \$4.5 million for seminary scholarships for future mission developers.
- Central to telling the story of what God is doing in and through this church is a fresh approach to the use of the ELCA’s graphic identity, its “emblem,” with this church’s name and tagline. Used together, these three elements make up the ELCA’s brandmark:



## **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

**God's work. Our hands.**

This brandmark brings the ELCA’s whole identity to life and provides an opportunity for each of this church’s three expressions to claim that identity and be part of the whole through customized use of the mark.

### ***Responding to Challenges***

There are some challenges related to evangelical outreach in this church, which I have shared in earlier reports:

- Perhaps our expectations of the Holy Spirit are low. The book of Acts reminds us of the Spirit’s power to create faith, inspire witness, and grow the church.
- Growing in evangelical outreach begins with us who are leaders. Let us invite and bring unchurched friends, colleagues, or family members with us to worship.
- When confronted with the loss of membership, let us imagine new possibilities for mission rather than focus on survival.

- Let us learn from our global companion churches how to tell the story of Jesus Christ and invite people to new life in Christ.

## **Strategic Direction:**

### **Stepping Forward as a Public Church**

*Step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God's love for all that God has created.*

### **The Public Church in the ELCA Today**

We are a public church when all the baptized live out their faith in their daily callings in home, school, neighborhoods, and the workplace. We are a public church when we gather around the means of grace in worship. We are a public church when we serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus. We are a public church when we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. We are a public church when we gather to wrestle with challenging questions.

- After two years of planning, synodical bishops, their spouses, and bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) traveled to the Holy Land for the Academy for Bishops, an annual gathering for study and worship. The trip was planned as a witness to God's will for a just peace for all people and as an expression of accompaniment with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) and ministries of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).
- The Conference of Bishops has engaged in training in the arts of public leadership. Many are involved in "ready benches" that are available to speak about critical advocacy issues: immigration, the environment, international matters, the Middle East, and farming. In addition, thousands of members have joined the ELCA e-Advocacy Network. As part of the network, members learn about, reflect upon, and advocate about issues based on their Christian values and informed by ELCA social statements.
- The development of this church's HIV and AIDS strategy began with a consultation that included global companion churches, partner agencies and institutions, and other organizations. Through personal stories, small-group discussion, and readings, participants identified critical issues to consider in the strategy. The strategy was approved by the Church Council in March 2009.
- We anticipate the launching of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative at this assembly under this compelling vision: "Working together, Lutheran World Relief, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and the ELCA will model a new and innovative partnership for the sake of Christ's mission in the world. Through collaboration, these partners will mobilize eight million Lutherans to amazing levels of generosity and action in the fight to contain malaria and other diseases of poverty."
- Lutheran Disaster Response has been recognized as a leader in providing case management to disaster-affected households. This includes Lutheran Social Services of the South, which received over \$24 million in federal funding to support case managers as they advocate for the recovery needs of Hurricane Ike survivors.
- While immigration currently is not a "front and center" issue legislatively, I strongly believe that we are called to make it so. The ELCA works hand in hand with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) to advocate and provide assistance for refugees, migrants, and those seeking political asylum. This assembly will honor Mr. Ralston H. Deffenbaugh Jr., who has served as president of LIRS for 18 years.
- With more than 82 million Americans using the Internet for faith-related reasons, the ELCA seeks to be a public church that actively participates in the global online community. Social

media are tools both for communication and invitation as we grow this church together. The ELCA continues to create opportunities for members to talk about their own faith stories by helping them tell others what it means to be Lutheran Christians in their contexts.

### **Responding to Challenges**

- We are a public church when we wrestle with challenging questions. Let us provide safe places for discernment and model ways to speak about difficult issues without the rancor associated with public debate.
- Let us seek ways to be leaders who convene people of varying perspectives so that we might discern together what God is calling us to do in the midst of our complex and conflicted world.
- Let us seek ways to join others as we advocate for particular public policies and seek to hold elected officials accountable.
- Let us partner as synod teams, churchwide staff, and congregational leaders toward living into our commitment to be a public church at the intersection of race and poverty.

### **Strategic Direction:**

#### **Deepening and Extending Relationships**

*Deepen and extend our global, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships for the sake of God's mission.*

#### **Relationships in the ELCA Today**

Just as the world is interrelated through the Internet and travel, the ELCA is interrelated through a rich variety of interdependent relationships. The once unimaginable inter-connections with global partners are now reflected throughout this church. The commitment to accompaniment as defined by the Global Mission unit provides strong guidance for these relationships. Some observations about global, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships in the ELCA today:

- At this assembly, voting members will consider joining with The United Methodist Church as our sixth full-communion partner. The basic agreement cites that “there are no church-dividing differences precluding full communion between the ELCA and The United Methodist Church.”
- In September 2008, I had the privilege of preaching in the Wittenberg Castle Church as the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) launched the “Luther Decade.” The next ten years will provide opportunity for us as Lutherans in the United States to find ways to commemorate the ongoing Lutheran Reformation and celebrate its results. One concrete example will take place in October 2009 as a province of the Roman Catholic bishops joins with the ELCA Conference of Bishops to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*.
- Throughout this church, Lutherans engage locally in interfaith dialogue and cooperative responses to human needs, learn more about people of other faiths, and hold the government accountable through advocacy. For the churchwide organization, a priority focus for interfaith dialogue is peace with justice in the Middle East, particularly through the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative (NILI) and Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP).
- Even as we continue the important and challenging work of bilateral dialogues, the ecumenical movement is sustained by a grass-roots ecumenism in local communities. Christians praying together, studying Scripture, and engaging in acts of witness, service, and

the pursuit of justice are strong testimonies to both our unity and our diversity as members of the body of Christ.

### **Responding to Challenges**

- This church has much to celebrate as we lift up our full-communion agreements with ecumenical partners. Let us not view these full-communion agreements as end points, but rather as the beginning of mission and ministry that can happen through them, including starting new ministries, collaborating on shared ministries, and finding other ways to be in mission together.
- The General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Christ (NCCC), Michael Kinnamon, wrote to the NCCC board, “In plentiful times, churches often equate being ecumenical with cooperation, doing some things together. Lean times may be an opportunity to go beyond cooperation to a generous sharing of resources, a sharing of life through an intentional deepening of relationships. It could be an opportunity to take seriously the famously ignored Lund Principle: ‘doing all things together except those which deep differences of conviction compel us to do separately.’”
- The Lutheran World Federation, a communion of churches, continues to grow in membership and mission. Together with 139 other member churches in 78 countries and 68 million baptized members, the ELCA is promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ, responding to humanitarian suffering, engaging in ecumenical and interfaith cooperation, and confronting a growing ecological crisis. Let us continue this church’s strong support for LWF.
- Some of the challenges named in earlier reports continue to be challenges for us. They include:
  1. Our increasingly interconnected and globalized world has significant implications for how we are engaged in global mission. How do we affirm the growing network of companion relationships between congregations and synods without becoming so fragmented that we lose the connection to strong church-to-church relationships? How do we respond to the financial needs of companion churches without creating relationships of dependency?
  2. Let us not submit to the rhetoric of religious extremism. Rather, through dialogue and shared action in local communities, both nationally and internationally, let us build inter-religious relationships.

### **Strategic Direction:**

#### **Bringing Forth and Supporting Leaders**

*Assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God’s mission in a pluralistic world.*

#### **Leadership in the ELCA Today**

A key emphasis of this strategic direction is vocation, which means “calling.” The vision of the Vocation and Education (VE) program unit captures the energy of this calling, which comes from the Gospel, works through the ELCA, and is for the world. As a church body, we seek to work through the goals of vocations claimed, networks nurtured, and leaders equipped. Some observations about leadership in the ELCA today:

- The cost of theological education is a challenge to both seminaries and seminarians. A consultation on seminarian student debt is committed to address this challenge, which burdens both rostered leaders and their ministries. A proposal has been submitted to the

Lilly Endowment, which has observed that, while most church bodies recognize this as a crucial issue, what makes the ELCA distinctive and promising is the way we are working to address it together.

- ELCA colleges and universities continue to strengthen their relationships to this church and to build upon the strong Lutheran themes of vocation, faith seeking understanding, and faith freeing us for engagement in the world. Students at our colleges and universities have a passion for being part of a church that is making a difference in the world. Let us seek opportunities to engage the gifts and energies of these young leaders.
- About 150 ELCA women of color in ministry gathered for the first of an anticipated three-event strategy to support this important group of leaders. The event focused on strengthening the individual and collective voices of rostered and lay women of color leaders to transform the congregations and ministry settings in which they serve.

### **Responding to Challenges**

- The seminaries of this church, increasingly interconnected, are vital to preparing and supporting leaders who bring biblical and theological wisdom necessary for a missional church. In the midst of current economic challenges and the growth of synodical lay leadership training programs, let us maintain the ELCA's strong sense of common mission in theological education.
- This church is committed to supporting healthy leaders through the "Healthy Leaders Enhance Lives" initiative, which focuses on interpersonal, intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual health centered in God's gift of grace. Let us challenge our leaders to make healthy living a daily discipline.
- The report and recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding give high priority to stewardship education and leadership throughout this church. Key components will be our willingness to speak honestly and forthrightly about our stewardship of money.
- Even as we address the commitment to increase the number of young adults in this church, let us receive the wisdom and gifts of the young adults who are present and be transformed by their passion to make a difference in the world.

### **Keeping Our Commitments**

It is very important that this church continue to implement the four commitments that intersect the Plan for Mission. The commitments are:

- Encourage, welcome, and depend upon the lively and creative exchange of resources and ideas throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- Recognize and encourage the vital contributions and deepening relationship with institutions and agencies of this church and with Lutheran, ecumenical, and interfaith partners;
- Confront the scandalous realities of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, personal, and class barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence; and
- Pursue ardently the ELCA's commitment to become more diverse, multicultural, and multi-generational in an ever-changing and increasingly pluralistic context, with special focus on full inclusion in this church of youth, young adults, and people of color and people whose primary language is other than English.

These commitments have informed much of the work I have described in this report. Permit me to share some additional reflections on the commitments:

- This church’s vision of freedom and liberation from the vestiges of racism are spelled out in the ELCA constitution and the social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*. The constitution committed this church to a membership goal of 10 percent people of color by 1998, but we still fall far short of this commitment. Let us as leaders consider our role in moving this church closer to being an anti-racist and multicultural church.
- Four alliances based on the churchwide organization’s commitments for implementation (young adult ministry, multicultural ministries, poverty and wealth, and justice for women) continue to assist the organization to express and deepen the commitments and to understand and, where necessary, change its culture in these matters.
- To support synodical anti-racism teams in their work, an event titled, “At the Intersection of Race and Poverty: An ELCA Capacity-Building and Network Gathering” brought together more than 100 current and emerging ELCA synodical anti-racism leaders from 30 synods and nine regions, plus other leaders to inform the next stage of ELCA synodical anti-racism work.
- The ELCA Church Council is committed to continuing anti-sexism and anti-racism training. During the biennium, the council also participated in a racial justice monitoring pilot to provide observations on the process of deliberations within the council. In addition, the council’s July 2008 retreat focused on “transforming scandalous realities,” specifically racism and sexism.
- In 2008, churchwide employees participated in mandated anti-racism education and training that focused on White power and privilege. In addition, Dr. Allan Johnson met with the Cabinet of Executives to discuss the challenges raised in his book, *The Gender Knot*.
- Synods are seeking processes to ensure that Synod Assemblies, Synod Councils, and other committees are more inclusive, including persons of color or those whose primary language is other than English, youth, and young adults.
- The 2008 film, “Native Nations: Standing Together for Civil Rights,” captures an important piece of this church’s history. Hosted by actor Peter Coyote, the film chronicles a relationship between the American Indian community and the Lutheran church during the 1970s and 1980s, when the National Indian Lutheran Board (NILB) was formed to address the issues of social justice, sovereignty, and the self-determination of Native people. A team of American Indian producers led the project.
- In response to a resolution from the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly, a “communal discernment task force” was convened by the Church Council in 2008 to “examine models of communal discernment and report on ‘recommendations about how we might work together in a way that fosters trust and deepens our spiritual discernment of challenging dilemmas and issues in our future.’” The Church Council approved the initial report in November 2008 and authorized continuing work through the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.
- More than 150 leaders from across this church attended the “Transformative Lutheran Theologies” conference, which highlighted Lutheran theological scholarship as a means to engender justice for women in church and society.

## **With a Grateful Heart**

It is a privilege to serve in this call and to give thanks to God for individuals growing in the faith, congregations alive in Christ, synods engaged in mission, and seminaries, colleges and universities, schools, campus, outdoor, and social ministries deepening their relationship to this church. I am encouraged by the resiliency, evangelical passion for the Gospel, and perseverance

in pursuing justice and peace in our global companions and by the growth in our ecumenical relationships.

One of the many strengths of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is that this church is an “ecology” of interdependent ecosystems. This image not only captures Paul’s description of the church as the body of Christ with many members, but also describes the deep commitment to interdependence, not only between congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, but also seminaries, colleges and universities, schools, social ministry organizations, camps and outdoor ministries, men’s ministries, Women of the ELCA, and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers. This ecology is part of a larger ecology that includes global companions, ecumenical partners, and shared ministries with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod: Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran Disaster Response, and military chaplaincy ministries.

It is very clear that the work of the churchwide organization highlighted in this report is possible only because of the exceptionally gifted colleagues with whom I am privileged to serve. My thanks to my colleagues on the churchwide staff; to my fellow officers, Vice President Carlos Peña, Secretary David D. Swartling, and Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton; to the members of the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council for their faithful leadership; and to Executive for Administration M. Wyvetta Bullock for her exceptional leadership of the churchwide organization.

During the past biennium, we have welcomed ten new bishops to the Conference of Bishops. Please join me in expressing deep gratitude to the bishops who have completed their terms during this biennium: Bp. Duane C. Danielson; Bp. David A. Donges; Bp. Richard J. Foss; Bp. Philip L. Hougen; Bp. April Ulring Larson; Bp. David G. Mullen; Bp. David R. Strobel; and Bp. Peter Strommen.

We continue to grieve with the Southeast Michigan Synod the death of Bp. John H. Schreiber and to express gratitude to former Bp. Kenneth R. Olsen, who has served the Southeast Michigan Synod as interim bishop, and to Bishop-elect Stephen G. Marsh, who began serving July 1, 2009.

We also acknowledge with heartfelt gratitude the exemplary leadership and service of the Church Council’s “Class of 2009,” who complete their terms at this assembly: Ms. Judith Anne Bunker; Ms. Norma J. Hirsch; Pr. David E. Jensen; Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr.; Pr. J. Paul Rajashekar; Pr. John C. Richter; Pr. Norene A. Smith; Mr. Richard L. Wahl; Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace; and Mr. Gary L. Wipperman.

In closing, I give thanks to God for all of you, for your commitment and dedication as elected leaders of this church, and for the faithful ways in which you lead, serve, and bear witness to the love of God in Christ Jesus for the whole world.

As I prayerfully prepare for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, I do so with a sense of confident hope. I am hopeful because our hope is in God, who by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel creates and sustains the Church.

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13).*



## Part Two:

### What Shall Be Our Witness?

Grace to you and peace in Jesus' name.

"What shall be our witness this week?" It is the question with which I began my sermon. It is a question we will consider in a variety of ways throughout this assembly.

As witnesses, we are never alone, for our witness is shaped and supported by the witness of others. The first two verses of Hebrews 12 remind us of this promise:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

We hear God's promise and are reminded that there are specific people in that cloud of witnesses who have strengthened our faith and given us courage. So I am curious. Among that great cloud of witnesses, from whose witness will you draw strength to run with perseverance this race that lies before us? Please share with one other person the story of one whose witness will strengthen you this week. *[Assembly participants were invited to share in small-group conversation.]*

This week I will be drawing upon the powerful witness of the 37,000 who were in New Orleans for the ELCA Youth Gathering under the theme "Jesus, Justice, Jazz." I invite you to experience something of the power of their testimony as they worshiped, danced, learned, and served their way through the week. *[Assembly participants were invited to watch a video about the Youth Gathering.]*

I thank God for the faithful and faith-filled witness of those young people. As I think about them and about the future of the ELCA, I want to reframe my question a bit. Rather than focusing only on "what will be our witness this week," I invite you to think ahead eight years and ask the question this way: "Looking back from 2017, what do we want our witness to have been?" Why 2017? Some of you already will have guessed: in 2017 Lutherans all over the world will commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation.

So what do we want our witness to be over the next eight years? How will the work of this assembly shape that witness?

I pray that, because of the Book of Faith initiative, by 2017 we will have become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture. Oh, friends, never doubt the power of the Holy Spirit to work through one congregation to move an entire church body. In 2005 Philadelphia Evangelical Lutheran Church in Dallas, North Carolina, brought a resolution to the North Carolina Synod Assembly. The resulting memorial inspired the 2007 Churchwide Assembly to launch the Book of Faith initiative. In just two years, evidence abounds that we are growing as a Book of Faith church. Testimonies at synod assemblies and Church Council meetings capture the power of "dwelling in the Word" to bring healing and hope to individuals' lives.

For example, at this spring's Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly, Janelle Curry, a 17-year old member of the Lutheran Youth Organization board from New Ulm, Minnesota, told the story of her father's death following an industrial accident. Tears glistened and rolled down our cheeks as we heard her powerful witness. Telling of how she first learned of the accident while on a mission trip in North Carolina, she said, in part:

I am here today to share a time in my life where I found hope in God's word . . . [for] God shines through many people in our lives.

. . . One of the ways I saw God was in the chaperone that came home with me. It was comforting to have her there, [but] on the connecting flights . . . home, I was separated from my chaperone. . . . [A]n older lady sat next to me [and] helped me through the journey. She prayed with me and really assured me that no matter what happened that God would always be with me. . . . I also saw God shining through one of the nurses in the ICU. She stood by my sisters and me. She talked with us, gave us hugs, and just comforted us. A perfect stranger showed me God's love. I know that God sent these people my way as angels to watch over me and to let me know that he was there.

I now turn to God's Word for comfort, guidance and healing. . . . [J]ust hearing his word gives me reassurance of the love God has for each and every one of his people on earth.

Thank you, Janelle, for allowing me to share your story here today. Janelle was one of the 37,000 Youth Gathering participants who received the gift of a Lutheran Study Bible last month. The Bibles were in use as synod bishops took turns leading study of the verses from Philippians 2 that framed the entire gathering.

Yes, we are a Book of Faith church. Through e-mails, copies of church bulletins, and many conversations, I have heard the same encouraging words, "Our congregation is engaged in 50 days of Scripture study and prayer for the churchwide assembly." This will be a Book of Faith churchwide assembly as we hear, study, sing, and pray the Scriptures.

Many of us are Book of Faith families. A few months ago our 33-year-old son called from his home in Florida. "Dad, I need a new Bible, one that I can understand and study. Could you send me one?" Only a bit stunned, I quickly said, "Sure." I sent Aaron a Lutheran Study Bible. A few weeks later he called and said, "Thanks for the Bible, Dad. It's just what I wanted."

This summer, Ione and I joyfully gave new Bibles to our grandchildren: the Spark Bible to 9-year-old Naomi and the Spark Story Bible to little Kingston, Danielle, and Sam. I am inspired by grandparents who use Skype to read Bible stories and pray with their grandchildren who live far away, even in other countries.

Eight years from now, we will mark the ongoing Lutheran Reformation, which began with Luther's engagement with Scripture—or perhaps more accurately, the Word's engagement with Luther. May our growing Lutheran witness be to the Word of God as God's living address: incarnate in Jesus the Christ, proclaimed as Law and Gospel, and written in the canonical Scriptures. May we continue to read and interpret the Scriptures evangelically—that is, what shows forth Christ.

Yes, let our witness be that we are a Book of Faith church: hearing, studying, sharing, praying, and singing the Scriptures.

Looking back from 2017, let our witness also be that "God's work. Our hands." became much more than our ELCA tagline, for it became a powerful and memorable way for us to communicate not only who we are, but whose we are. "God's work. Our hands." Our witness begins with God. The most important message we have is not about ourselves, but about what God is doing. God is at work and Jesus embodies what God is working on: the new creation.

Last year, I received a gift in Tanzania. It is a hand-carved cross that poignantly captures our witness to "God's work. Our hands." [*Assembly participants were invited to view a projected image of the cross.*]

The dove of the Holy Spirit is in the center and is surrounded by hands. It reminds me of three things about our witness: the center of our witness is the cross of Christ; the scope of our witness is the whole world; and the source of our witness is the Holy Spirit. That is why our ELCA tagline—"God's work. Our hands."—belongs with our ELCA emblem: a cross centered within in four quadrants of the globe. *[Assembly participants were invited to view a projected image of the ELCA landmark.]*

As I meditate on this cross, I wonder about the carved hands. Sometimes I see the hands of those who nailed Jesus to the cross. Other times I see hands clinging to the cross, desperate for a word of forgiveness. Often I see the hands of the baptized, marked with the cross of Christ forever, claimed, gathered, and sent to do God's work with our hands.

So, I am curious. Look at your hands. If I followed you for several days and videotaped only your hands, what would I see of God's work being done through your hands? Since I can't ask each of you individually, please share with one other person what I might see. *[Assembly participants were invited to share in small-group conversation.]*

Think about the images you shared. Did you see hands in prayer? Hands holding a child over baptismal waters? Hands pleading for mercy or justice? Hands reaching out to a friend who is in mourning or a colleague who has just lost a job? Would we see hands receiving bread broken, wine poured, the peace of Christ exchanged? Hands carrying food to a pantry? Hands bearing a casket? Hands placing offerings in a plate? Tending a garden? Harvesting a crop?

Earlier this summer, we invited ELCA congregations and individuals to submit 30–90-second videos to illustrate the meaning of "God's work. Our hands." The results were breathtaking—224 videos from across this church with 20 finalists chosen based on ratings from viewers. During this assembly we will see those 20 finalists and the two winners—one congregation and one individual—chosen by a panel of four judges. We'll announce the winners on Saturday. Let's begin with one of the videos. *[Assembly participants were invited to watch a video.]*

Two of the categories for judging were creativity and ability to inspire. I think we are off to a great start. Do you agree?

Looking back from 2017, let our witness be that every one of the 10,464 ELCA congregations has grown as a center for evangelical mission. That is not a wish. It is a commitment. It is one of the two priorities of the churchwide organization emerging out of the Plan for Mission:

The churchwide organization, working closely with congregations, synods, institutions and other partners, will give priority to accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission.

Listen to that again: congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission.

What image of the church shapes our witness in complex and challenging times? *A fortress* providing sanctuary from the storms of life and the onslaught of change? *A retreat center* named "Nostalgia," longing to relive more glorious days? *A franchise* trying to compete for members in a consumer-oriented and competitive religious marketplace? *A military outpost* in hostile territory seeking to conquer a corrupt culture?

They are understandable, perhaps even defensible, images of the church. Yet let this be our witness: we are a church *going with the flow*. No, I am not suggesting we go with the flow of whatever seems to be the current wave; rather, let our witness be that we are going with the flow of God's Spirit being poured out.

This is God's promise. We heard it in the lessons read in our opening worship. From the second chapter of Joel, "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh" (Joel 2:28). From John's Gospel, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them and said

to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (John 20:21–22). In Paul’s letter to the Romans, we hear, “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Romans 5:5). From the letter to Titus, “This spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:6–7).

Two weeks ago there was a baptism in the congregation where we belong. Over the shrill cries of a protesting baby, the pastor laid hands on the newly baptized and prayed, “Sustain Sophia Margaret with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.”<sup>1</sup>

Evidence abounds that the Holy Spirit is being poured out upon us. Think about your own life, your congregation, your community. Where do you see signs of God’s Spirit being poured out? Please do a little witnessing by sharing one sign of the Spirit’s presence with another person. [*Assembly participants were invited to share in small-group conversation.*]

A church going with the flow of the Spirit poured out will be an evangelizing people proclaiming the good news of God in Christ through word and deed. But that doesn’t seem to be our reputation or self-image. Garrison Keillor recently described how Lutherans engage in evangelism. A Lutheran, Keillor said, will say to a friend, “Well, ours isn’t the worst church you’re going to find. So why don’t you stop by some time?”

Let me be clear. The call for a commitment that every ELCA congregation be a growing center for evangelical mission is not about the survival of a denomination. Rather it is about the Holy Spirit being poured out, bringing renewal in and through us. It is about being who we claim to be: *evangelical* Lutherans.

We are called to evangelical mission because the good news of Jesus Christ is so indescribably good. It is just itching to be told. Think about the marvelous promise in 2 Corinthians, “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” (2 Corinthians 5:17) How good is that? Don’t you believe the world deserves to hear it?

I must confess to a bit of confusion, if not impatience. There have been warnings that, on the basis of our decisions this week, we could become another denomination declining in membership. Here is your morning wake-up call from the presiding bishop: we already are, and we have been for years! The ELCA has had a drop of 465,990 baptized members since I became presiding bishop in 2001. That is a fact for which we must all assume responsibility.

May our witness be that we are not all anxiously holding our collective breath over human sexuality. Let our witness be that we breathing in deeply God’s Spirit poured out upon each one of us. We are faithfully and generously using God’s abundant gifts for the sake of the gospel and the life of the world.

Imagine the power of our witness to those expecting to see dissension and division if—instead—they see a Pentecost church this week: each and every one of us in our various languages “speaking about God’s deeds of power” (Acts 2:11). Imagine the powerful witness if every ELCA congregation in their varied responses to our decisions this week were united in a commitment to grow as centers for evangelical mission.

Praise God that congregations already are. Throughout this assembly we will hear testimonies from ELCA congregations growing in evangelical mission. I would like to call upon

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<sup>1</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Holy Baptism (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, 2006) 231.

Robera Battal from the Minneapolis Area Synod to share the first in a series of testimonies. *[Robera Battal addressed the assembly participants.]*

In this endeavor ELCA congregations are not on their own. Synod bishops and directors for evangelical mission are convening tables where leaders from congregations gather to develop the tools for re-rooting in their communities. “Evangelical Mission Covenants” are being signed that will join congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization in a shared commitment. The eight ELCA seminaries and synodical lay schools are continuing their strong commitment to prepare evangelical leaders for a church in mission. At the center of all of this is the growth in faith practices of ELCA members as we articulated them in the ELCA “Call to Discipleship,” living out God’s baptismal calling in our daily lives as we worship, study Scripture, pray, give, serve, encourage, witness, and invite others.

Looking back from 2017, let our witness be that, as an entire church body, we resolved that no seminary graduate should be so burdened with educational debt that they are unable to flourish as faithful, wise, and courageous leaders. To make that happen, together let us build upon an almost \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment and the current three-year “stewards of abundance project” to increase the stewardship leadership and financial savvy of seminarians and first call leaders.

Looking back from 2017, let our witness be that we have trained 1,000 evangelists following the model of many of our global companion churches. One thousand evangelists linked to congregations and sent into communities, listening to neighbors in laundromats, coffee shops, parks, malls, and at their doors and sharing the story of Jesus, inviting people to prayer and Scripture study, and exploring the possibilities for planting a new congregation or ministry related to an established congregation.

Let our witness be that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is committed to becoming a more multicultural church—not because we need persons of color to preserve a predominantly white denomination. We are committed to becoming diverse because, absent the witness and the gifts of persons of color, we are not the community Christ reconciles and calls us and the Holy Spirit empowers us to be.

Looking back from 2017, let our witness be clear that in 2009 members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America said, “Enough. Enough. Enough of being a 97 percent white church in an increasingly and richly diverse context.” Let us resolve not to pass ethnic ministry strategies at churchwide assemblies and then go home to ministry as usual. Let those of us who are white begin to die to what gives us comfort, power, and privilege so that we might rise to become a Pentecost church.

Let the languages and songs in our worship reflect the diverse church we are committed to being and, indeed, expect to become. Let us renew our resolve to prepare, call, and elect persons of color and women to positions of leadership in all expressions and institutions of this church.

By 2017 let our witness be that each synod has new and renewed ministries that are the results of our ethnic ministry strategies and our commitment to ministry among persons living in poverty. Let our witness be that every synod has a Latino lay formation project on the model already begun by Latino lay leaders, clergy, and scholars.

If all of this is to become our shared witness in the next eight years, it will depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit, our commitment to sustaining a vibrant ELCA ecology of interdependence, and an exponential growth in mission capabilities made possible because of our full communion relationships. This vision for the next eight years calls for prayer, evangelical missional imagination, and growing financial support.

So also does the second priority emerging from the Plan for Mission that will shape our witness in coming years. It states:

The churchwide organization, working closely with congregations, synods, agencies and institutions and other partners, will give priority to building capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.

Now that by God's grace through faith on account of Christ we are free—free from bondage to sin, death, and the devil—what are we going to do? Now that we don't have to do anything to earn God's favor, what are we going to do? Listen to Luther's response in *Freedom of a Christian*:<sup>2</sup>

I will therefore give myself as Christ to my neighbor, just as Christ offered himself; I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ.

Yes, looking back from 2017 may our witness be that, in the midst of continued economic volatility and uncertainty, ELCA members advocated for public policies, business practices, and personal financial decisions that would first reduce poverty in local communities and throughout the world. Let us as ELCA members model this commitment by our personal stewardship of at least a tithe and also growing in our support of the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

Oh, sisters and brothers in Christ, as preoccupied as we might be with our personal or congregational financial stability, let us not close our ears and our eyes to the cries of our neighbors. In southern Sudan a couple of years ago, hunger got to a point that there literally was no bread or wine for the Easter Eucharist. Empty hands of the pastor were extended to empty hands of the worshippers with the words, "The body of Christ broken for you" and "The blood of Christ poured out for you."

May our witness be that the 2010 Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation under the theme "Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread" became the occasion for Lutherans throughout the world to renew their resolve to work together so that all will have bread sufficient for each day.

Looking back from 2017, may our witness be that in 2009, members of the ELCA—the vast majority of whom are descendants of a once immigrant people—gave leadership to welcome new migrants into their communities and congregations and were instrumental in the U.S. Congress adopting and President Obama signing fair and just immigration reform.

May this be our witness: ELCA members, building upon a longstanding Lutheran commitment to health care and drawing upon the ELCA social statement, *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*, actively participated in health care reform, achieving the goal of equitable access to basic health care for all people.

May this be our witness: that the ELCA fully implemented an HIV and AIDS strategy in 2009 by joining with global companion churches and local partners. Together, we increased access to government and non-government resources in the fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS. Through improved access to treatment and education, the number of cases were significantly reduced and stigmatization and discrimination diminished.

May this be our witness, that the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, in which the ELCA participated with Lutheran World Relief, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, the United Nations Foundation, the Global Fund, and partners around the world had a lasting impact on the efforts to fight diseases intensified with poverty: malaria, HIV and AIDS, and tuberculosis. Looking back from 2017, may our witness be that we all rejoiced when the United Nations' goal of eradicating malaria was reached by 2015.

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<sup>2</sup> Luther, Martin (c 1957), *Vol. 31: Luther's Works: Career of the Reformer I* (J. J. Pelikan, H.C. Oswald & H.T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (31:367). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

May this be our witness: that ELCA Lutherans—people of the prairies and cities and of mountains and rivers—continue to exercise leadership in the care of God’s creation. No small achievement was the completely green churchwide assembly in 2013, a feat that began in earnest in 2009.

May this be our witness: that the development of the social statement on justice for women will be as lively and participatory as the social statement on human sexuality. Let us continue to confront the scandalous reality of sexism in this church and society that too often is manifested in patriarchal power and the marginalization of women and girls.

May our witness be that this year the ELCA, building upon our strong ecumenical partnerships and global relationships, expanded our commitment to grow in understanding of and service with people of other faiths, together diminishing the once-growing power of religious extremists. Looking back from 2017, may our witness be that, accompanying the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and working with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities locally and internationally, ELCA members celebrated the signing in 2011 of a just two-state agreement between Israel and Palestine with Jerusalem as a shared city between Jews, Muslims, and Christians.

A question remains: what will be our witness regarding human sexuality and the rostering of people who are in publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships? We have been formulating our responses to that question over the last eight years through a very participatory process led by the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality. This assembly’s discussions and decisions will shape our witness. So, too, will the responses that are made to our actions.

So, what then shall be our witness? In a recent e-letter to rostered leaders I wrote:

God’s gift of unity in Christ informs our life and witness together in the community of Christ’s church. Rather than approach the assembly apprehensively, I invite you to see it as an opportunity for faith-filled witness to the larger human family that struggles with division and yearns for healing and wholeness that is real and true. We live in a polarized culture that equates unity with uniformity and sees differences as a reason for division. This moment, and our witness as a church body in the midst of it, deserves something better from us. We have the opportunity to offer the witness of our unity in Christ—diverse, filled with different-ness and differences, broken in sin, and yet united and whole in Christ. This moment deserves the witness of a community that finds and trusts its unity in Christ alone, engages one another with respect, and seeks a communal discernment of the Spirit’s leading.<sup>3</sup>

We go forward into this week and toward 2017 in confident hope because our hope is grounded in Christ. We finally meet one another—not in our agreements or disagreements—but at the foot of the cross, where God is faithful, where Christ is present with us, and where, by the power of the Spirit, we are one in Christ.

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13).*

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<sup>3</sup> Mark S. Hanson, e-mail message to rostered leaders, June 30, 2009.

# Report of the Secretary

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## Part One:

### Introduction

Perhaps the word “odyssey” best captures my multi-dimensional journeys in the past two years. From being a litigation lawyer in Seattle, to a part-time gift planner for the Foundation of the ELCA, to secretary of the ELCA, the odyssey certainly has been vocational. The move from Puget Sound to Chicago also has provided both geographical and climatological odysseys. And the death of my father, while my spouse Barbara and I were in transit to Chicago, has made the journey a psychological and generational odyssey, as well. As significant as all these journeys have been, however, none compares with the opportunities to witness to our common faith and to interact with members, congregations, synods, and leaders throughout this church. By the time the Churchwide Assembly convenes, I will have traveled in more than 20 states, as well as to Canada and the Holy Land, been on the territory of every region, consulted with leaders in almost every synod, and participated in 13 Synod Assemblies.

Wherever I travel and whenever I speak, I try to share a story of our common mission, of our interdependent ministries, of “God’s work. Our hands.” This spring, during Synod Assembly season, I was reminded profoundly of the ways God works through the hands of many ELCA members. After the South Dakota Synod Assembly, Barbara and I traveled to Moorhead, Minn., to visit someone important in our lives, Faraja Kurubai. Faraja will soon be a senior at Concordia College.

We first learned about Faraja from ELCA missionaries in Tanzania, Jean Wahlstrom and Marvin Konanen. More than seven years ago, they shared with us Faraja’s story—her birth and childhood in a typical Maasai family. But instead of remaining in her village, she enrolled in the MaaSae Girls Lutheran Secondary School. Jean, Marvin, and other teachers worked with Faraja, teaching her both the foundations of faith and the skills that she would need in the 21st-century world. Guided by these mentors, Faraja not only graduated from the MaaSae Girls School, she passed her national examinations with flying colors, and was awarded a scholarship to attend Concordia College.

Now, four years later, fluent in English (as well as Swahili and Maasai), she is back in Tanzania on an internship to help prepare her for studies in accounting and business. Faraja’s goal is to complete her education and return to Tanzania to provide microfinancing to spur small businesses among Maasai women. She already has organized a project on campus to help women in a Maasai village sell their handmade jewelry. Her ability to achieve her goals is directly the result of interdependent, ELCA-supported ministries. God’s work, many hands!

The responsibilities and activities of the Office of the Secretary are many and diverse. However, they all facilitate the mission of this wonderful church, in all its expressions and among all the partners in its interdependent ministries. Whenever I feel overwhelmed, I think of Faraja and others like her whose lives have been touched by the proclamation of the Gospel and the work of ELCA members. As you read about the work of the Office of the Secretary, as well as the reports of units of this church, put a human face on all that this church does in Christ’s name.



## Responsibilities

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* delineate the duties of the secretary of this church. Constitutional provision 13.41. establishes the overarching responsibility:

The secretary of this church shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership, as specified in Chapter 11 of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, and shall fulfill the normal functions of the secretary of a corporation.

Although subsequent provisions describe in detail the specific duties of the secretary, the reference to Chapter 11 is profoundly important because it provides the superstructure and foundation within which the individual responsibilities arise. For example, the definition of the churchwide organization in constitutional provision 11.11. states:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a churchwide organization that shall function interdependently with the congregations and synods of this church. The churchwide organization shall serve on behalf of and in support of this church's members, congregations, and synods in proclaiming the Gospel, reaching out in witness and service both globally and throughout the territory of this church, nurturing the members of this church in the daily life of faith, and manifesting the unity of this church with the whole Church of Jesus Christ.

Thus, leadership in the churchwide organization necessarily begins with a commitment to proclaiming the Gospel and service to neighbors in collaboration with synods and congregations.

Subsequent provisions in Chapter 11 describe the specific purposes of the churchwide organization. These include to undergird the worship life of this church; provide resources for worship and service; coordinate this church's mission; foster interdependent relationships with congregations, synods, and other partners; establish and maintain ecumenical relationships; provide for a comprehensive financial support system for this church's mission; provide for the ordained ministry and other rosters; provide pension and other benefit programs; and many more! While these multiple and diverse responsibilities are allocated appropriately among officers and other churchwide staff, we are all cognizant of the fact that together they make up a complex ecosystem that requires comprehensive oversight and imaginative coordination. One of the joys and challenges of serving as secretary is learning about and participating in the leadership of the diverse elements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America!

Before turning to the particular responsibilities of the secretary, I frequently remind myself that a specific constitutional mandate addresses the nature of leadership in the ELCA. That provision is found in Chapter 5, Principles of Organization. Constitutional provision 5.01.h. states:

Leaders in this church should demonstrate that they are servants by their words, life-style, and manner of leadership. Leaders in this church will recognize their accountability to the Triune God, to the whole Church, to each other, and to the organization of this church in which they have been asked to serve.

With this broad context in mind, what are the specific responsibilities of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America? The majority are specified in bylaw 13.41.02. as follows:

The secretary shall:

- Be responsible for the minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, Conference of Bishops, and Cabinet of Executives, and shall receive complete minutes for permanent record of all boards and committees of the churchwide organization;
- Maintain the rosters of ordained ministers, all other rostered persons, congregations, and synods;
- Provide for the publication of official documents and policies of this church, pre-assembly reports, assembly minutes, a directory of congregations, rostered persons, and entities of this church, and other informational and statistical material;
- Receive the annual report of the congregations in a form devised by the secretary, summarize the information, and make the summary available to this church;
- Coordinate the use of legal services by the churchwide organization;
- Be responsible for the archives of this church;
- Implement and operate a records management system for the churchwide organization;
- Arrange for and manage meetings of the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council;
- Have custody of the seal, maintain a necrology, and attest documents; and
- Provide library and reference services for the churchwide office.

In addition, other provisions in Chapter 13 also allocate to the secretary responsibilities for preparation and amendment of this church's governing documents (13.41.03.), providing constitutional and bylaw interpretations (13.41.04.), staffing the Nominating Committee and addressing vacancies on boards and committees (13.41.05.), and overseeing the risk management and insurance responsibilities of the churchwide organization (13.41.A03.).

## **Staff of the Office of the Secretary**

In fulfilling its multiple and diverse responsibilities, the Office of the Secretary is blessed to have a staff of knowledgeable and dedicated employees who faithfully serve the churchwide organization as well as provide service to synods and congregations. Collectively, they bring more than 200 years of experience and service. It is a joy to be able to thank them publicly for their dedication!

Executive for Administration: Pr. Ruth E. Hamilton

General Counsel: Mr. Philip H. Harris

Associate General Counsel: Mr. David A. Ullrich

Legal Assistant: Ms. Loraine Shields

Executive Administrative Assistant to the Secretary: Ms. Marie Fellows

Director for Library and Records Management: Ms. Claire H. Buettner

Director for Official Roster Records: Ms. Deborah K. Myers

Executive for Meeting Management and Travel: Ms. Mary Beth Nowak

Executive Assistant to the Secretary: Pr. Karen G. Bockelman

Archivist for Collection Management and Development: Ms. Catherine M. Lundeen

Archivist for Reference, Management, and Technology: Mr. Joel A. Thoreson

Archives Assistant: Ms. Lauren Gioe

Meeting Planner: Ms. Gail Schroeder

Registrar: Ms. JoAnne Brady

Managing Editor of the Yearbook and Rosters Assistant: Mr. Thomas J. Ehlen

Risk Manager: Mr. Rob Thoma

In addition, in the course of the year, the Office of the Secretary has been assisted by a number of temporary or part-time persons. They have provided invaluable assistance at critical

times, and their devotion, good humor, and hard work are greatly appreciated. They include Mr. Keith Fry, Mr. Luke Smetters, Mr. Andrew Walter, and Ms. Sonia Hayden.

We were saddened this spring to lose Mr. Russell S. Deloney, the long-time technician at the archives, who died after a brief battle with cancer. We grieve for Russ and his family, but the promise of the resurrection provides solace to all of us who miss him.

## **Priorities and Special Projects**

The ongoing responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary, as described above, require clear vision and substantial effort by the secretary and staff. These responsibilities also ebb and flow, depending on the work of others in the churchwide organization and the time of year (e.g., the proximity to the Churchwide Assembly!). Nonetheless, I want to describe briefly a number of special projects and priorities on which I have placed special emphases since my election in 2007.

## **Developing synergistic leadership**

During the election process in 2007, I commented that the governing documents of this church authorize either a layperson or an ordained minister to serve as secretary. I indicated to the Churchwide Assembly that I believed that it would be important at some time to have a layperson as secretary. I also commented to the voting members of the assembly that it was their decision to determine if this was the time and if I was the person to serve the ELCA as its secretary.

I do feel called to serve this wonderful church, full of multi-talented and dedicated leaders, focused on the proclamation of the Gospel and service. I also believe that one of the keys to the long-term success (not just survival) of this church is the development of lay leadership. Indeed, it is the development of both laypersons and clergy who work collaboratively to create synergistic, forward-thinking, missional leadership that is a key ingredient to the long-range success of the mission and ministries of this church.

I believe that all of us who have been baptized are marked with the cross of Christ forever and are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world. As a layperson and lawyer, I also understand the law of nonprofit organizations and the polity of the ELCA. I believe that understanding the missional mandates of our governing documents and the application of fiduciary responsibilities can provide the foundation for effective governance and facilitate wise decision-making in synods and congregations. Consequently, one of my objectives in serving as secretary of this church is to meet with congregation and synod councils and other groups of leaders (such as synodical vice presidents and secretaries) to provide instruction and encouragement. My objective is to work with leaders to develop synergies among the lay and clergy leaders within each expression of this church.

## **Bringing forth a new generation of leaders**

I took office after the churchwide organization had developed the Plan for Mission and its accompanying strategic directions. Given my personal priorities, I was delighted to see that one of the strategic directions specifically addresses leadership development. Indeed, as many synods have learned, the fifth strategic directive has provided me a launching pad for addressing leadership issues in this church. That strategic direction states that the churchwide organization will:

Assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in a pluralistic world.

This direction focuses on our mutual responsibility to both identify and inspire for service (“bring forth”) and to sustain in their ministries (“support”) leaders who have specific attributes that are necessary to lead this church in the 21st century (“faithful, wise, and courageous”). Just as significantly, this strategic direction focuses on both clergy and laypersons (“vocations”) and the setting for their leadership (“a pluralistic world”).

In addition to holding up this strategic direction to synodical and congregational leaders, the Office of the Secretary is working to translate this objective into reality in a number of ways that warrant brief mention. First, this Churchwide Assembly will address proposed amendments to the governing documents of this church that make concrete commitments to increase the participation of youth and young adults in governance. These proposals were developed in collaboration with staff in the Vocation and Education unit, and they represent an affirmation of the commitment to raise up faithful, wise, courageous, and *young* leaders of this church for the 21st century.

In addition, an important responsibility of the Office of the Secretary is facilitating the work of the Nominating Committee. Raising up and supporting faithful, wise, and courageous leaders in congregations and synods is a challenging responsibility, but the tasks of identifying potential nominees for service on churchwide boards and committees, eliciting nominations, evaluating nominees, and coordinating the process in light of representational, geographical, and other constitutional and practical considerations are daunting. For many months, the Office of the Secretary has worked with program units of this church to spur a more deliberate and expansive effort to identify and recommend nominees for service on churchwide boards and committees. These efforts culminated in the meeting of the Nominating Committee in April. By the time of the meeting, an extensive pool of potential nominees had been developed, and the Nominating Committee itself accepted the challenge to become more proactive in the future in identifying and recruiting potential nominees for leadership positions in this church. While we want individuals who are committed to and knowledgeable about this church, we also want to raise up others who are inspired by the Gospel and called to service but who have faith journeys and experiences different from many of ours.

I want to take this occasion to thank and commend both the Nominating Committee, under the excellent leadership of Pr. Martin J. Russell, chair, as well as Prs. Karen Bockelman and Ruth Hamilton, Legal Assistant Loraine Shields, and staff member Andrew Walter, for exceptional work in this important priority.

## **Collaboration with synods**

Both in the context of leadership development and in providing ongoing assistance, an important priority of the Office of the Secretary is facilitating the work of synods. In addition to this important responsibility, the Office of the Secretary has undertaken in collaboration with others at the churchwide organization a number of initiatives designed to facilitate the work of the synods.

In 2007 and 2008, the Office of the Secretary and the Synodical Relations section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop developed and updated comprehensive Guidelines for the Election of Synodical Bishops. The impetus for this document was the election of nine synodical bishops in 2007. The document became a template for discussion and collaboration in each of the synods holding elections in 2008 and in 2009. Based on experience in these years, the guidelines facilitated the work of synodical election committees and the nomination and election processes. In addition, work with these synods provided the opportunity to cooperate with Pr. Kathie Bender-Schwich and her successor Pr. Walter S. May in Synodical Relations

(both of whom we are blessed to have as colleagues), as well as numerous synodical staff and leaders overseeing nominations and elections processes.

On a number of occasions, members of the Office of the Secretary have attended meetings of synodical officers or staff to provide information and to answer questions. In March 2009, Pr. Ruth Hamilton and I attended the biennial gathering of assistants to the bishops. Our presentation and the opportunity to meet with staff and to answer questions underscored our commitment to collaboration and mutual problem-solving. Thanks to Pr. Hamilton for being a wonderful colleague in the work of the Office of the Secretary and for her invaluable assistance as I transitioned into this call.

In addition to work on elections, the Office of the Secretary has updated information and recommendations for synods on subjects ranging from background checks, to records management, to archives, to preparation for the Churchwide Assembly. Dave Ullrich and others also have provided important legal and practical information in an electronic newsletter (see the newsletter *Administration Matters* on the ELCA Web site), and Claire Buettner is working constantly on updating and refreshing the Web site of the Office of the Secretary. In the pipeline for 2010 is a set of model rules for synod assemblies and a review of the process of nomination and elections of synodical officers. On the more distant horizon is a manual for synod secretaries. If your synods have identified areas in which the Office of the Secretary could provide assistance, please let us know.

Finally, one of the unique aspects of serving as secretary of this church as a layperson is sitting in the Conference of Bishops. Although I approached this responsibility with some trepidation, I have found this aspect of my work among the most rewarding, both as a leader of this church and on a personal level. I have been greeted and treated as a colleague in ministry and have developed relationships of friendship and mutual respect with many, many bishops. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the synodical bishops for their gracious acceptance of me and for the opportunity to collaborate in their important work in this church.

## **Congregational reports**

One of the responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary is facilitating the collection of data from congregations. For the most part, this means dissemination, review, and evaluation of the congregational reports, which are sometimes called parochial reports. This is a recurring challenge for leaders in all expressions of the ELCA, but the data collected is very important for this church.

In working with the Conference of Bishops and colleagues at the churchwide organization, we have discussed ways to increase the response rate for congregations and to simplify the report to provide more accurate and useful information. With the encouragement of bishops, a task force was formed in the churchwide organization to work on the congregational report forms. It is in the final stages of development, and I anticipate that it will be rolled out to congregations later this year for reporting on 2009. With the assistance of a number of units, and especially the Research and Evaluation section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and with the able supervision of Ms. Deborah Myers, we hope to both ease the burden on those responding in congregations and to provide improved data for synods and the churchwide organization. A sample of the new Form A is attached to this report as Appendix A.

In the meantime, I urge congregations and synods to recommit themselves to providing the congregational report information, which the ELCA uses to plan for the future. Good plans require good data. Congregational leaders, please complete the forms (and call the Office of the Secretary if you need assistance). Bishops, please appoint a synod statistician in accordance with †S8.12.i.12., to help improve your response rates.

## **Greening of the Office of the Secretary and the Churchwide Assembly**

The Office of the Secretary is committed to being better stewards of God's creation. For any unit of a large organization, this is a complex task. However, we have pledged to take small steps forward, reminding one another of the three "Rs" of environmental stewardship: reduce, reuse, recycle.

Some may have noticed already that the process of preparing for the Churchwide Assembly was different this year. Registration for participants was carried out almost completely online. The *2009 Pre-Assembly Report* is being posted on the Churchwide Assembly Web site as it becomes available, with one mailing of the contents scheduled for mid-July, rather than being sent in multiple mailings as in previous years. The updated voting member orientation video has been posted online, as has a new video on parliamentary procedure for the Churchwide Assembly. These steps provide the opportunity for voting members to prepare further in advance of the assembly and to review material in smaller amounts. These steps also make important materials available to a wider audience, and they save many, many trees.

There also will be a greater emphasis on recycling at this assembly. The *Pre-Assembly Report* binder is made of recycled materials, and it will be recycled at the end of the assembly. Coffee mugs and water bottles will be distributed to decrease use of paper and Styrofoam cups. In addition, preliminary and final minutes will be posted electronically, with hard copies available by request. If you have suggestions on ways to enhance the "greening" of the Churchwide Assembly, please let us know!

## **An oral history project: "Voices of Vision—The ELCA at 25"**

One other aspect of the work of the Office of the Secretary warrants mention, in part because it is not readily apparent from the governing documents and because it provides a unique opportunity to prepare to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ELCA in 2013. It is the oral history project, "Voice of Vision—the ELCA at 25."

Funded by a generous grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and overseen by the staff at the archives and an advisory committee of historians, theologians, and other scholars, this project involves taking oral histories from leaders throughout the ELCA, focusing principally on the early years of this church. Already the former presiding bishops and several others have been interviewed, and a number of other interviews with leaders in all expressions of this church have been scheduled. It is our hope that these interviews can be synthesized and expanded into a 25th-anniversary gift to this church.

One important aspect of the oral history project can involve you as members of the Churchwide Assembly! Modeled on the "Story Corps" used by National Public Radio, "I Love To Tell the Story: My ELCA" will offer assembly participants an opportunity to give a recorded oral interview and provide reflections on your experiences and views as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We invite everyone to take the opportunity to be part of the history of this church in this unique way.

## **Risk management**

Risk management and insurance issues are important aspects of the "business" of congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. Looking at risk management issues tends to occur only sporadically or when problems arise.

Partly because of my background and experience as a lawyer and partly because of the study concerning insurance alternatives that was underway when I came to office, risk management has been one of the important issues over the past two years in the Office of the Secretary.

In early 2008, based upon the recommendation of the Insurance Alternatives Task Force, the decision was made to change the ELCA's endorsed insurance program (which is called for in constitutional provision 10.74. and continuing resolution 13.41.A03.) to Church Mutual Insurance Company of Merrill, Wis. Church Mutual committed to work with the ELCA churchwide organization, synods, and congregations to put together an excellent insurance program as well as risk management services. The decision to move to Church Mutual also was based on the company's history of providing insurance to religious institutions (already including thousands of ELCA congregations) and its excellent reputation in claims handling. Church Mutual also worked with staff in putting together an insurance program that included coverage for sexual misconduct. Thus far, despite challenges in the insurance industry and the broader economy, 42 synods and more than 3,700 ELCA congregations are insured through Church Mutual.

One other aspect of risk management should be mentioned. For a number of years, the ELCA has had a part-time contract employee serve as risk manager. I am delighted to report that effective May 1, 2009, Mr. Rob Thoma has come to work as a full-time ELCA employee responsible for risk management issues. One of my priorities is to help synods and congregations take a more proactive role in risk management, and Rob—together with Church Mutual—can provide the expertise and materials to facilitate this important objective. When members of the Churchwide Assembly return to their home congregations, I urge them to check their congregation's insurance programs and to confer with Rob and the local Church Mutual representative about both insurance needs and risk management.

## **Statistics**

As indicated above, the responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary include maintaining the rosters of this church as well as compiling and reporting congregational statistics.

Appendix B to this report is a summary of roster statistics. This includes data on the roster of congregations, the roster of ordained ministers, and the roster of laypersons (including associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers). Appendix C is a summary and discussion of parochial statistics from congregational reports. During the oral report of the secretary to the assembly, I will comment upon this data.

## **Conclusion**

The multi-dimensional odysseys that I have experienced since election as secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America frequently have buffeted me and sent me into unfamiliar territory. Oftentimes, I have felt like Sisyphus struggling on a daily basis to move a rock forward, only to be awakened the following morning to the same rock and a greater slope. During the difficult times (as well as the more often joyous ones!), three things have provided me with solace and strength.

First, I find incredible support in the knowledge that the staff of the Office of the Secretary and colleagues at the churchwide organization are devoted to providing assistance to me and to others throughout this church with whom we are in ministry together. I know that members of this church are holding Barbara and me and our ministries in their prayers. Words cannot adequately express our thanks for that support and those prayers.

Second, as I indicated to the assembly in 2007, I find both strength and comfort in Martin Luther's words that I frequently review before worship:

I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me

in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith.

Finally, when I get discouraged I reflect on Faraja Kurubai and others like her who are touched by the ministries of the ELCA.

Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are truly claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world. Strengthened by the incredible gifts of the Holy Spirit, we can do so much together to proclaim the Gospel and to serve our neighbors, near and far—much more than we could ever do as individuals, as separate congregations, as single synods. Truly, together, as interdependent partners, we can do God’s work with our hands!

## **Part Two:**

### **Report of the Secretary to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly**

When you visit my office (and I hope that you will), you’ll walk in, look out the window to the east, toward downtown Chicago. And you’ll see that it’s totally flat! Then, if you turn to your right, on the credenza, you’ll see a photograph of Puget Sound and Mount Rainier. That’s my reminder that God made mountains as well as plains! Immediately in front of you, on the table, you’ll see my parents’ large print Bible that I bought for them at Augsburg Fortress several years before they died. It’s usually open to one of the passages my father underlined. As you may know, my father died in October 2007, while we were in transit from Washington to Illinois.

I’ve inherited a love for many of those passages. One in particular speaks to me frequently in my new calling:

Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

Those are words of comfort in this my encore career. When I’m carrying a full-to-the brim briefcase and bulging suitcase through security to an airplane destined somewhere, I reflect on the meaning of that easy yoke, light burden, and promised rest!

In my written report and in my report to synod assemblies this year, I’ve reflected on the multi-dimensional journeys—the odysseys—that I’ve experienced in the past two years. It certainly has been a geographical odyssey.

What a joy it has been to see the Gospel proclaimed and the ministry of this church accomplished from California to Connecticut, from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to McAllen, Texas!

It’s been a climatological odyssey as well. As some of you know, my colleagues have worked hard to acclimate me to the central United States. First, they sent me to Fargo—in the winter. It was 10 degrees below zero. Then, in August, I went to Houston, where it was 110 degrees.

The weather was better in Israel in January of this year—close to 70 degrees when we departed. But this is what it looked like when we arrived in Chicago the following morning! Despite these climatological challenges, I’m pleased to report that we are more or less acclimated to life in the Midwest!





In the midst of all these odysseys— geographical, climatological, vocational—I remain energized by the call to be the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: to work alongside Bishop Hanson and the dedicated staff at the churchwide organization; to collaborate with synodical and congregational leaders; to participate on a full-time basis in the mission and ministry of this church.

I've learned in these past two years that the responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary are both diverse and daunting. They are doubly difficult in times of transition and fiscal turmoil. I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to the staff in the Office of the Secretary for effectively and gracefully rising to the challenge in these tumultuous times and for their patience as I have ascended the learning curve.

I frequently describe the role of the Office of the Secretary as the “oil in the engine” of the ELCA. I am pleased to report to you that the engine has been, for the most part, well lubricated these past two years!

I could devote my time with you this afternoon to addressing any one of the individual responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary, but I would like to hold out several priorities for you.

First, and most important from my perspective, if this church is to thrive—not just survive but thrive—we must develop synergistic leadership among our rostered and lay leaders. This is a multi-layered, multi-dimensional challenge. Our governing documents, in part, reflect a polity and governance structure that recognizes the need for collaborative and diverse leadership. I'm not yet convinced, however, that we are living our polity.

I was delighted to come to work at the churchwide organization, which held out as one of its strategic directions the following:

Claimed, gathered, and sent by God's grace for the sake of the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in and through its churchwide organization will:

- Assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in a pluralistic world.

As a former congregational president, synod vice president, board chair, and now churchwide officer, I believe that this strategic direction is an indispensable ingredient for effectively doing God's work with our hands in the ELCA. I would be delighted to meet with your synod councils to discuss this strategic direction and the importance of developing rostered leaders, lay leaders, multicultural leaders who can work collaboratively to proclaim the Gospel and serve the neighbor. Faith, wisdom, and courage are all important attributes—indispensable ingredients—of transformational leaders in the twenty-first century.

As a lawyer and the secretary of this church, I believe that our governing documents are not legalistic handcuffs, but templates for mission that provide the foundation and set the direction for developing faithful, wise, and courageous leaders who can work collaboratively to accomplish ministry in the twenty-first century. Collaborative leadership inspires synergistic ministry. Synergistic ministry requires, indeed presupposes, mutual confidence, cooperation, and collaboration among all the leaders in this church. We cannot be effectively interdependent unless, working collaboratively, we inspire synergistic ministry among the three expressions of this church.

Speaking of collaborative leadership and synergistic ministry, I would like to ask the vice presidents to stand as they are able. These volunteer lay leaders are a cornerstone within the polity of the ELCA. They are the front lines in translating concepts of cooperation, collaboration, and interdependence into missional reality. With virtually no position description,

they are challenged to develop effective relationships with synodical bishops, staff, members of synod councils, and congregational leadership in their synods. We're only beginning to tap into their potential.

Before the vice presidents sit down, I would like to ask synod secretaries and treasurers to stand as they are able. Almost all of these persons also are volunteers. They have complex responsibilities and provide, in part, the lubricant to keep synodical engines running. Keeping synods functioning effectively is vital to the ELCA because they serve as connective tissue between congregations and the churchwide organization.

Before the other officers sit, I ask that the bishops also stand as they are able. On a personal level, I want to thank the bishops for the collegiality that they have shown me. Words inadequately express my feelings for you, individually and collectively. In the past two years, I have come to appreciate the difficulties and complexities of your positions. Indeed, aside from Bishop Hanson, in my opinion, you have the most difficult positions in the ELCA. The position description for synodical bishops in the constitutions is among the longest provisions in our governing documents. Thank you for the work that you do as interdependent partners for the sake of mission and ministry in the ELCA.

Look at these folks who are standing. These are our synodical officers. They are keys to the future success of this church as they strive to develop and model cooperative, collaborative, synergistic leadership to congregations, members, and all with whom we interrelate. Keep them in your prayers! Please join me in expressing appreciation for their leadership.



Before departing from the subject of leadership, I would like to focus on another group of leaders—youth and young adults. The video clips you are about to see were restored by our talented archivists and premiered at the Augustana Heritage Association gathering last summer. It is particularly poignant to view this video and juxtapose it with images of the recent ELCA youth gathering in New Orleans, images that you saw yesterday in the report of the presiding bishop.

As Lutherans, we have consistently placed a priority on ministry to youth. But I wonder how effective we are in receiving ministry from youth! How effective are we at learning from young people? How effective are we at integrating youth and young adults into the governance of this church?

Now, I love attending Synod Assemblies. One of my joyous experiences this year was in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Last year they had 6 voting members under the age of 25; this year they had 55! The synod reached out to this generation and proactively brought them into the governance of the synod. And they made a difference—in plenary, in workshops, and in worship!

Later this week, you will consider amendments to the governing documents of this church. They include proposals to increase the numbers of youth and young adults in the governance of this church in each of its expressions—in congregations, in synods, and in the churchwide organization. Make no mistake, this proposal is not tokenism. It is an effort to reach out to a generation that we are at risk of losing, to integrate them into the life and leadership of this church, and to tap into their talents for the sake of the Gospel.

If you are under 30, would you please stand if you are able. For those of us who are a bit older, look at these folks who are an important part of the future of this church. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for their commitment to the Gospel. Let's give them a round of applause!

Let me touch briefly on several other important aspects of the work of the Office of the Secretary. (In doing so, I will try to resist the temptation to address the missional mandates in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* or to drift into a discussion of the fiduciary responsibilities of synod and congregational councils!)

The Office of the Secretary is the keeper of rosters and the collector of data from congregations in this church. In this capacity, we work collaboratively with the Research and Evaluation section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. Thus, I am acutely aware of data regarding membership, congregational size, and demographics. The data can be discouraging. But I also find encouragement and challenges in them.

Let me provide you some examples. We have just completed putting together the data from congregational reports for 2008. As you can see from Appendix B to my report, the 2008 data reflect a drop in baptized membership and in the number of congregations in the ELCA. As I reported to the Conference of Bishops last year, I am particularly concerned about declining worship attendance, and that figure continues to drop.

But there is good news embedded in the data.

First, we cannot lose sight of the facts that the Gospel is being proclaimed and new disciples are being baptized and confirmed. Congregational reports show that in the last five years there have been almost 330,000 child baptisms, more than 32,000 adult baptisms, more than 260,000 affirmations of faith, and more than 216,000 confirmations. This is good news and an indication that successful ministry is taking place in congregations within the ELCA.

Second, the ELCA continues to be a wealthy church that has sustained a high level of giving at the congregational level. Despite the beginning of a severe recession and decreased membership, ELCA Lutherans continue to be gracious stewards. As you can see, regular giving to ELCA congregations amounted to \$1.94 billion in 2008, down only one-half percent from 2007!

Despite the economic turmoil, reported congregational assets still amount to approximately \$20.6 billion—that's \$20.6 *billion*, almost the same as the total for assets in 2007. Our challenge in this church is to use these assets imaginatively and to translate their economic value into enhanced ministry.

Given my passion for whole life stewardship and my previous position with the ELCA Foundation, I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity for a learning moment. Not only are we a wealthy church in terms of regular giving, we have the opportunity to make a difference for the Gospel by leaving a legacy for ministry. I'll resist the temptation to ask if you have an estate plan and if the church is remembered in it, but I believe that the greatest untapped resource that will ensure the continued proclamation of the Gospel in the twenty-second century are the estate gifts of persons who were born in the twentieth century!

As part of the process of data collection from congregations, I am pleased to report that the Congregational Report Form A, after considerable evaluation, has been revised. Our goal is to reduce the time necessary to complete it and to provide more useful information for synods and the churchwide organization. Thanks to Research and Evaluation and a number of other colleagues in synods and at churchwide for making this possible! You can see a copy of the new Congregational Report form in Appendix A to my report. I urge you to help us work collaboratively with congregations and synods by asking that you have your congregation timely submit its congregational report.

The clips from the Augustana Youth Gathering remind us of our rich past. My predecessor and friend Pastor Lowell Almen, who has been so gracious in my transition from law practice to churchwide executive, wrote about the great cloud of witnesses that surrounds us, inspires our ministry, and informs our decision-making. One of the special tasks undertaken by the Office of the Secretary this biennium is an oral history project, spearheaded by the ELCA Archives. Thanks to a generous grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the archives, working with an advisory committee, have undertaken to conduct oral histories from a number of leaders in the ELCA. This is the first step toward preparing a 25th birthday present to this church, titled “Voices and Visions: the ELCA at 25.” In addition to these oral histories, we want to capture stories from you—individual histories of personal successes and disappointments, stories of ministry on the ground in your congregations and synods in the early years of the ELCA. This “story corps,” titled “My ELCA,” will be conducting interviews throughout this assembly in Room 209A; don’t miss this opportunity to add your personal stories to the history of the ELCA.

Two other interrelated priorities inform my work as your secretary. The first is transparency in decision-making and the second is environmental stewardship. You have experienced both of these in the preparation for this assembly. For the first time registration occurred only online, and most communication with voting members and others occurred electronically. Videos addressing churchwide assembly orientation and parliamentary procedure were posted on line. The entire *Pre-Assembly Report* also has been posted on the ELCA Web site, making it available to everyone watching at home as well as to voting members. The binder for voting members is made from recycled and recyclable materials; even the mugs that have been provided to you can be recycled. In the planning for this assembly, we have attempted to be environmentally conscious as well as transparent. In the course of the week, I’ll hold out other efforts that have been undertaken as part of our commitment to environmental stewardship. In your evaluations, let us know how we did.

We also want to assist congregations and synods with their administrative responsibilities so that energy can be directed to mission and ministry. In collaboration with the Office of the Treasurer and others, an electronic newsletter titled “Administration Matters” is available online at the ELCA Web site. This newsletter reflects our commitment at the churchwide organization to make important and useful information readily available for synods and congregations. Much of this information can be found on the ELCA Web site.

I would like to conclude by showing another clip from the archives. These are but a very few of thousands of photographs that have been digitized and catalogued as part of the history of this church and are available for your review. But be forewarned—they’re mesmerizing! The photos that you are about to see come from a collection of photos from the 1957 Lutheran World Federation meeting in Minneapolis.

**Current Issue**  
July 2009 - Issue 4

## ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER FOR ELCA CHURCH LEADERS

*Administration Matters* addresses common, practical issues including finance, governance, risk management, tax, legal concerns and other topics of interest about day to day operations and management in church settings.



**In this issue:**

- o Identity Theft
- o ELCA Group Ruling Tax Exemption
- o Records Retention Information
- o Effective Fundraising
- o 2009 Churchwide Assembly
- o Tax Tip: Five Things to Remember About Clergy Housing Allowances

**Subscribe to Administration Matters.**  
Forward this e-newsletter to someone you know who may be interested in receiving Administration Matters.

**Identity Theft**  
Every day, the risk of identity theft grows greater. Congregations – and congregation administrators – are not immune from the risk of identity theft nor from the concern members may have for protecting their personal data. Government agencies and private organizations have enacted new laws, regulations and policies intended to prevent the loss of identity information. >more



In a way, these photos now seem quaint to us. But let me ask you reflect on them for a moment. Although 1957 was a long time ago, the people in those photos were living in an anxious time, at the intersection of hope and fear. Recall what happened in that time frame in the mid-1950s: a little known southeast Asian named Ho Chi Minh came to power in a place called Vietnam; Washington articulated a domino theory that wasn't a game; the USSR exploded a hydrogen bomb; in a matter of months after the LWF event, Sputnik was launched. Do you remember the doomsday

clock? Do you remember “duck and cover”?

Despite these events and the fears they engendered, these Lutherans came from throughout the United States and from throughout the world to proclaim their faith together, to share the Gospel, and to address serving the neighbor. In this very place, they paraded to witness that faith and commitment.

Since then, the times, the technology, the people have changed. Yet we are gathered in the same place for the same purpose. However, we cannot accomplish God's work in the twenty-first century with 1957 Chevrolets, with floats in a parade. Make no mistake, the gospel has not changed, but the way that we deliver its message has. The fears are different, but the hope is the same. Let us together rise to the challenge because we have work to do. “God's work. Our hands.”



Thanks be to God!

# Appendix A to the Report of the Secretary

## Parochial Report Form A



### EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA CONGREGATIONAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2009

This report can be filed online. Connect to the Web site ([www.elca.org/congregationreport](http://www.elca.org/congregationreport)) and enter your congregation's **ID and password (printed below)**.

If you decide *not* to file electronically, complete this paper form and return it to your synod office by **February 15, 2010**.



**INFORMATION ABOUT MEMBERS**  
BAPTIZED  
(Total Membership)

1. Membership at end of 2008										
2. Members received during 2009										
a. By Baptism: children (15 yrs. and younger)										
b. By Baptism: adults (16 yrs. and older)										
c. By affirmation of faith										
d. By transfer										
e. From other sources and statistical adjustment										
f. Total members received this year										
3. Members removed during 2009										
a. By death										
b. By transfer										
c. For other reasons and statistical adjustment										
d. Total members removed this year										
4. Membership, end of 2009										
5. Number of people confirmed in 2009										
a. Total confirmed membership, end 2009										
6. Average weekly worship attendance in 2009										
7. Total number of people (including children) actively participating in the life of the congregation in 2009										
8. Race / ethnic origin of ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS. Must equal active participants on line 7:										
African American/Black	Amer. Ind./Native	Arab/ Eastern	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Latino/ Hispanic	Multi-racial	White/ Caucasian	Other	TOTAL		

**12. Location address describes where the church or place of worship is physically located.** This may differ from the mailing address, but must identify a street name. Corrections should be made below:

**13. Please indicate how much emphasis the following programs/activities have received in your congregation in the past 12 months.**

	do not have	some emphasis	a lot of emphasis	congregation's speciality
a. worship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Christian ed. for those 15 or younger	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. other activities for children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Confirmation ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Christian ed. for those 16 to 19	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. other activities for those 16 to 19	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Bible study or other adult Christian ed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. prayer, meditation or spiritual development activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. fellowship or other social activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. support groups (bereavement, divorce, 12-step)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. evangelism or recruitment activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m. stewardship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
n. identifying and using the spiritual gifts of active participants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
o. social justice activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
p. community service activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Verify the following congregation information; correct as necessary.

9. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

11. E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Web site: Corrections can be made [online](http://www.elca.org/congregationurl) ([www.elca.org/congregationurl](http://www.elca.org/congregationurl))

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONGREGATION'S FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP (Please round all figures to nearest dollar. Omit cents.)

<b>14. Receipts during 2009</b>		
a. Regular giving	\$ _____	
b. Designated giving	\$ _____	
c. Earned income (any source)	\$ _____	
d. Grants (any source)	\$ _____	
e. All other receipts	\$ _____	
f. <b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	\$ _____	
<b>15. Assets as of December 31, 2009</b>		
a. Church real estate	\$ _____	
b. Endowment and memorial funds	\$ _____	
c. Cash, savings, bonds, etc.	\$ _____	
d. All other assets	\$ _____	
e. <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	\$ _____	
<b>16. Total indebtedness as of Dec. 31, 2009</b>	\$ _____	
<b>17. Bequests received during 2009</b>		
a. Number of bequests received	_____	
b. TOTAL VALUE of bequests received	\$ _____	
<b>18. Budgeted/projected 2010 Mission Support</b>	\$ _____	
<b>19. Disbursements during 2009</b>		
a. Current operating expenses	\$ _____	
b. Capital improvements	\$ _____	
c. Payments on debts	\$ _____	
d. Mission Support (regular synod benevolence)	\$ _____	
e. Other benevolence <b>sent directly to the synod</b> (for any synod OR churchwide appeal including the World Hunger Appeal, Disaster Response, missionary sponsorship, etc.)	\$ _____	
f. Other benevolence <b>sent directly to the churchwide office</b> (for any churchwide appeal including World Hunger Appeal, Disaster Response, missionary sponsorship, etc.)	\$ _____	
g. Benevolence sent <b>directly</b> to any of the following:		
1. an activity in another country including a missionary, a congregation, a companion synod, a hunger program, disaster response, etc.	\$ _____	
2. a camp(s)	\$ _____	
3. a college(s)	\$ _____	
4. a seminary(s)	\$ _____	
5. a social service group, agency or institution	\$ _____	
h. All other benevolence sent directly to the recipient	\$ _____	
i. Other expenses and realized losses	\$ _____	
j. <b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	\$ _____	

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ Council Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix B to the Report of the Secretary

## Roster Statistics

The secretary is responsible for maintaining the official rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. These include the rosters of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

## Roster of Congregations

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America counted 10,397 congregations on December 31, 2008, including congregations under development.

The record of those added to the roster of congregations is indicated in Table 1.

The record of removals from the roster of congregations by categories is shown in Table 2.

The process for *withdrawal* of a congregation is specified by constitutional provisions 9.62. and 9.71. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

“Merged” is defined as involving a congregation giving up its separate identity and uniting with an already existing congregation (i.e., being *merged* into an existing congregation).

“Consolidated” is defined as involving two or more congregations that join together to become a new entity with a new name and a new congregation identification number (i.e., the congregations are *consolidated* to become a new congregation).

The roster of congregations is published annually in the yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, prepared by staff of the Office of the Secretary. Congregations that have been received into this church or that have been consolidated, merged, withdrawn, disbanded, or removed are listed at the end of the roster of congregations in the yearbook.

Congregations	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Received by synodical action	22	30	20	17	25	19	29	18	31	16	9	12	12	16	22	11
Resulting from consolidations	3	6	4	8	5	4	5	2	1	0	2	1	5	5	10	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>

Congregations	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Withdrawn	8	8	2	4	5	2	5	12	6	17	8	26	22	18	7	13
Disbanded	36	32	34	34	40	32	29	33	42	26	39	40	31	38	29	24
Merged	7	7	5	5	9	4	5	2	2	0	9	7	3	10	2	5
Consolidated	6	13	10	18	12	15	10	4	0	0	6	2	5	12	12	8
Removed	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>51</b>

## Change of Synodical Relationship

Any change in a congregation's synodical relationship is to be reported to the Churchwide Assembly. As provided by ELCA bylaw 10.02.02., "Any congregation in a border area desiring to change its synod relationship may do so upon approval of the synod assemblies of the synods concerned, which shall report any such change to the Churchwide Assembly."

No changes in synodical relationship for congregations were reported in the 2007–2008 biennium.

## Roster of Ordained Ministers

As of December 31, 2008, the roster of ordained ministers of this church listed a total of 17,660 ordained ministers (active and retired). Included in that number were 3,515 women and 610 persons of color or whose primary language is other than English.

Additions to the roster of ordained ministers take place only in the ways defined by the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Those specific ways are:

1. Individuals who are ordained in accord with the constitution and bylaws of this church in effect at the time of their ordinations, after having been approved by a duly constituted synodical candidacy committee and having received and accepted a regular, attested Letter of Call to be a pastor.
2. Individuals received from other church bodies:
  - a. Individuals approved by a synodical candidacy committee who previously were ordained in another Lutheran church body or another Christian church body, under bylaw 7.31.14., whose ordination is recognized by this church under the policy that addresses such recognition. Others would be ordained by this church under the policy of such reception.
  - b. Individuals received, under churchwide bylaw 8.72.15.c., through the candidacy process for the roster of ordained ministers who were ordained in a full-communion partner church body.
3. Individuals reinstated to the roster of ordained ministers, under churchwide bylaw 7.31.15., who previously were ordained in this church or one of its predecessor church bodies.

<i>Additions</i>	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Ordained	310	298	339	336	338	361	308	315	309	279	308	270	279	283	295	327
Reinstated	20	14	13	15	17	9	20	23	19	9	19	22	11	8	15	2
Received from other churches	35	18	21	20	23	19	18	15	25	12	11	9	9	8	18	14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>343</b>
<i>Removals by</i>																
Death	196	182	188	210	207	211	249	211	224	213	246	223	226	208	227	226
Resignation	51	42	50	47	56	57	48	52	57	48	45	63	62	78	48	44
Removal	71	89	55	97	107	58	41	42	36	56	46	50	48	62	45	33
Transfer to ELCIC*	5	2	4	4	1	1	0	2	3	2	4	1	2	3	5	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>306</b>

\* Indicates Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

As was the case in our predecessor church bodies, including those that existed prior to 1960, unauthorized or irregular ordinations are not recognized.



- **Only ELCA clergy called:** In keeping with the criteria for membership in the ELCA, congregations agree to call as pastors only ordained ministers on the ELCA roster or duly approved candidates for the roster (churchwide constitutional provision 9.21.d. and bylaw 9.21.01.).

- **Partner church clergy under contract:** Service by ordained ministers from full-communion partner church bodies is addressed in churchwide bylaws 8.72.15. and 9.21.02. and takes place under contract with the approval of the synodical bishop. Such ministers are not eligible for call by an ELCA congregation.

- **Added to roster:** Only the names of individuals ordained or received in conformity with the governing documents and policy statements in place at the time of the ordination or reception are added to the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The names of people added to and removed from the roster of ordained ministers are listed annually in the yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The number of additions to the roster of ordained ministers and removals from that roster are shown in Table 3.

Percentages of pastors who are women as part of the *whole* clergy roster (active and retired) and as part of the *active* roster for 1990 through 2008 appear in Table 4.

**Table 4: Percentage of Ordained Ministers who are Women**

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Whole Roster	8.7	9.3	9.7	11	11	12	13	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	18	19	20
Active Roster	11	12	13	14	15	16	18	19	20	21	22	25	25	27	28	30	31

## Official Rosters of Laypersons

This church has established three rosters of laypersons. They are associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

The names of those approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for admission to the roster of associates in ministry, the roster of deaconesses, and the roster of diaconal ministers—as well as the names of those removed from those rosters—are listed annually in the yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

As of December 31, 2008, the roster of associates in ministry numbered 1,079 people (*see Table 5*).

**Table 5: Associates in Ministry**

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Additions</b>																
Commissioning	39	33	30	34	39	25	34	34	27	33	24	31	36	28	35	27
Reinstatement	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	1	3	0	1	1	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Removals by</b>																
Death	5	8	6	5	8	9	12	11	2	9	12	12	11	11	12	15
Ordination	12	2	9	9	9	4	6	2	1	9	9	8	2	2	3	4
Consecration	—	—	—	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Resignation	7	18	7	12	10	9	8	10	2	3	2	2	7	5	5	5
Removal	49	36	24	30	33	11	15	29	16	17	16	9	8	17	12	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>

The roster of deaconesses numbered 68 women as of December 31, 2008 (*see Table 6*). This figure does not include those in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

<b>Table 6: Deaconesses</b>																	
<b>Additions</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	
Consecration	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	0	2	0	3	4	
Reinstatement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>Removals by</b>																	
Death	2	2	6	3	3	2	8	7	4	3	4	2	2	1	0	1	
Ordination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Resignation	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	

Diaconal ministers, as of December 31, 2008, numbered 146 people (*see Table 7*). The roster of diaconal ministers, established by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, was started in 1996 with the consecration of seven people.

<b>Table 7: Diaconal Ministers</b>														
<b>Additions</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	
Consecration	7	7	4	12	20	12	11	13	14	10	15	28	12	
Reinstatement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Removals by</b>														
Death	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Ordination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	
Resignation	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	
Removal	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	

## Appendix C to the Report of the Secretary

### Summary of Congregational Statistics

#### *Comparison between 2006 and 2007*

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) reported a baptized membership of 4,709,956 in 10,448 congregations in 2007. Although this represents a dip in membership of 64,247 from 2006 and a decrease of 22 congregations, total receipts of ELCA congregations surged to more than \$2.8 billion, up more than \$67 million from the previous year. In addition, average giving per baptized member in ELCA congregations increased 3.96 percent over 2006, and has increased 29.09 percent since 2000.

According to ELCA Secretary David D. Swartling, the membership decline of 1.34 percent represented less of a drop than in the preceding year. "More importantly, congregational reports reflect the wealth of many ELCA congregations and the opportunities for expanding ministry," Secretary Swartling explained. Further, the reported value of assets held by ELCA congregations increased in 2007 to more than \$20.6 billion, an increase of 6.75 percent over the value in 2006. Membership and income data are obtained from parochial reports submitted annually by ELCA congregations.

The average number of people at worship in ELCA congregations in 2007 decreased slightly from the preceding year. A total of 1,362,120 persons or 28.92 percent of baptized members attend weekly worship. That compares to 1,408,682, or 29.50 percent of all baptized ELCA members, participating in worship each week in 2006.

"The ELCA remains committed to increasing the diversity of the church," Swartling said. For 2007, 3.23 percent of ELCA baptized members were identified as persons of color or persons whose primary language is not English, compared to 3.15 percent in 2006. Approximately 65 percent of ELCA congregations reported having people of color as members, he said.

The number of Arab and Middle Eastern members went up 9.87 percent, from 1,944 in 2006 to 2,136 in 2007. Latino membership increased 0.49 percent, from 39,563 to 39,760. Multiethnic membership rose 13.25 percent, from 13,613 to 15,417. Members classified as "other" increased 5.50 percent, from 10,802 to 11,397.

The number of African American and Black members in the ELCA went down 0.73 percent, from 53,288 in 2006 to 52,896 in 2007. American Indian and Alaska Native membership dropped 2.01 percent, from 7,007 to 6,866. Asian and Pacific Islander membership declined 1.52 percent, from 22,545 to 22,202. White membership fell 1.43 percent, from 4,624,249 to 4,558,059 in 2007.

## Summary of Congregational Statistics as of December 31, 2007

Summary of Membership Statistics	2006	2007	Change	Percent	<i>Statistical Analysis</i>
					<i>Averages per Congregation</i>
Total Number of Congregations	10,470	10,448	22-	0.21-	
Baptized Members	4,774,203	4,709,956	64,247-	1.34-	454.14
Confirmed Members	3,580,402	3,533,956	46,446-	1.29-	341.37
Communing Members, Confirmed	2,562,360	2,496,723	65,637-	2.56-	241.69
Communing Members, Unconfirmed	268,838	258,990	9,848-	3.66-	32.35
Voting Members	2,365,038	2,476,691	111,653+	4.72+	239.91
<b>Analysis of Membership Gains and Losses</b>					
<b><i>Baptized Members—Accessions</i></b>					
By Baptism—Children under Age 16	66,166	62,721	3,445-	5.20-	
By Baptism—Adults Age 16 and above	6,405	5,854	551-	8.60-	
By Affirmation of Faith	52,357	49,295	3,062-	5.84-	
By Transfer from ELCA Congregations	57,493	52,501	4,992-	8.68-	
By Transfer from Other Lutheran Congregations	13,617	11,896	1,721-	12.63-	
From Non-Lutheran Congregations	16,791	16,576	215-	1.28-	
From Other Sources and Statistical Adjustment	19,965	19,056	909-	4.55-	
Total Accessions—Baptized Members	232,794	217,899	14,895-	6.39-	
<b><i>Baptized Members—Losses</i></b>					
By Death	45,697	45,154	543-	1.18-	
By Transfer to ELCA Congregations	40,773	38,267	2,446-	6.05-	
By Transfer to Lutheran Congregations	9,520	8,673	847-	8.89-	
To Non-Lutheran Congregations	13,047	11,977	1,070-	8.20-	
For Other Reasons and Statistical Adjustment	202,246	183,958	18,288-	9.04-	
Total Losses—Baptized Members	311,243	288,029	23,214-	7.45-	
<b><i>Confirmed Members—Accessions</i></b>					
By Baptism—Adults Age 16 and above	4,580	4,228	352-	7.68-	
By Affirmation of Faith	39,064	37,249	1,815-	4.64-	
By Transfer from ELCA Congregations	42,750	39,120	3,630-	8.49-	
By Transfer from Other Lutheran Congregations	9,926	8,545	1,381-	13.91-	
From Non-Lutheran Congregations	11,744	11,589	155-	1.31-	
From Other Sources and Statistical Adjustment	17,850	17,955	105+	0.58+	
Baptized Members Confirmed	47,658	45,239	2,419-	5.07-	
Total Accessions—Confirmed Members	173,572	163,925	9,647-	5.55-	
<b><i>Confirmed Members—Losses</i></b>					
By Death	42,880	42,075	805-	1.87-	
By Transfer to ELCA Congregations	30,615	28,768	1,847-	6.03-	
By Transfer to Other Lutheran Congregations	6,947	6,366	581-	8.36-	
To Non-Lutheran Congregations	9,385	8,579	806-	8.58-	
For Other Reasons	139,077	126,117	12,960-	9.31-	
Total Losses—Confirmed Members	228,904	211,905	16,999-	7.42-	
<b><i>Active Non-Members (including Associate Members)</i></b>	155,363	162,782	7,419+	4.77+	

# Summary of Congregational Statistics as of December 31, 2007

## Summary of Financial Statistics

Totals—End of Year	2006	2007	Change	Percent	Statistical Analysis	
					Averages per Congregation	Indebtedness/Assets
Total Receipts	2,748,068,336	2,815,930,629	67,862,293+	2.46+	271598.24	
Total Disbursements	2,664,147,210	2,725,349,028	61,201,818+	2.29+	262861.59	
Assets, Value on December 31	19,355,482,029	20,663,332,394	1,307,850,365+	6.75+	1992991.16	
Total Indebtedness on December 31	1,733,938,188	1,781,435,454	47,497,266+	2.73+	171820.54	
Average Giving per Baptized Member	469.82	488.44	18.62+	3.96+		8.62%
Average Giving per Confirmed Member	626.47	650.98	24.51+	3.91+		Cong. with no debt 62.74%

### Detail of Financial Statistics

#### Receipts for Regular Operation

Regular Giving by Members	1,909,390,439	1,953,805,792	44,415,353+	2.32+		
Designated Giving by Members	333,656,738	346,732,154	13,075,416+	3.91+		
Earned Income, Unrestricted	94,814,604	95,206,073	391,469+	0.41+		
Earned Income, Restricted	58,995,418	66,273,498	7,278,080+	12.33+		
Grants and Subsidies	22,460,674	26,095,598	3,634,924+	16.18+		
Cash Borrowed	146,867,535	149,064,787	2,197,252+	1.49+		
Other Receipts	188,882,928	178,752,727	3,130,201-	1.72-		

#### Disbursements for Regular Operation

					Statistical Analysis	
					Percent of Total Disbursements	
Current Operating Expenses	1,835,443,858	1,885,298,911	49,855,053+	2.71+	69.17	
Capital Improvements	258,729,032	259,231,686	502,654+	0.19+	9.51	
Payment on Debts	222,884,155	229,695,096	6,810,941+	3.05+	8.42	
Mission Support	131,568,011	132,905,973	1,337,962+	1.01+	4.87	
Designated Giving for Mission Support	10,491,208	9,506,771	984,437-	9.38-	0.34	
World Hunger Appeal	11,156,302	11,126,748	29,554-	0.26-	0.4	
Disaster Response	4,004,978	2,528,170	1,476,808-	36.87-	0.09	
Mission Partners	4,541,954	4,808,638	266,684+	5.87+	0.17	
Mission Founders	339,967	191,904	148,063-	43.55-	0	
Vision for Mission	338,024	451,823	113,799+	33.66+	0.01	
Missionary Sponsorship	7,580,252	7,303,684	276,568-	3.64-	0.26	
Synodical Benevolences	18,730,876	18,984,526	253,650+	1.35+	0.69	
Local Community Benevolences	41,056,320	43,849,607	2,793,287+	6.80+	1.6	
Other Benevolences	20,600,973	22,913,611	2,312,638+	11.22+	0.84	
Other Expenses	96,681,300	96,551,880	129,420-	0.13-	3.54	

#### Assets, Value on December 31

Church Edifice and Lot	15,194,850,287	16,413,523,443	1,218,673,156+	8.02+		
Parish House and Lot	676,604,246	694,331,270	17,727,024+	2.61+		
Parsonage(s) and Lot(s)	542,765,159	542,627,461	137,698-	0.02-		
Other Real Estate	516,164,184	567,213,056	51,048,872+	9.89+		
Endowment and Memorial Funds	1,186,307,758	1,253,381,083	67,073,325+	5.65+		
Cash, Savings, Bonds, etc.	974,800,069	907,224,666	67,575,403-	6.93-		
Other Assets	263,990,326	285,031,415	21,041,089+	7.97+		

#### Bequests Received During Year

Number of Bequests Received	4,171	2,991	1,180-	28.29-	Per 100 Deaths: 6.62	
Total Value of Bequests Received	90,397,082	82,795,864	7,601,218-	8.40-	Avg. Beq. \$27,681.66	
Intended Mission Support	133,880,645	134,980,387	1,099,742+	0.82+		

## Summary of Congregational Statistics as of December 31, 2007

### Statistical Analysis Percentage of Congregations Reporting Ethnic Group Members

Worship Services	2006	2007	Change	Percent	
Total Attendance at Worship Each Week	1,408,682	1,362,120	46,562-	3.30-	
Average Sunday Attendance per Congregation	135	131	4-	2.96-	
Percent of Baptized Members Attending Worship	29.5	28.92	0.58-	1.96-	

#### Congregations Reporting Ethnic Group Members

African American/Black	3,623	3,578	45-	1.24-	34.24
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,173	1,146	27-	2.30-	10.96
Arab/Middle Eastern	573	614	41+	7.15+	5.87
Asian/Pacific Islander	3,526	3,424	102-	2.89-	32.77
Latino/Spanish	3,229	3,254	25+	0.77+	31.14
Multiethnic	2,279	2,508	229+	10.04+	24
White	10,251	10,222	29-	0.28-	97.83
Other	653	591	62-	9.49-	5.65

#### Percent Ethnic Baptized Membership

<b>Total Ethnic Baptized Membership</b>					
African American/Black	53,288	52,896	392-	0.73-	1.12
American Indian and Alaska Native	7,007	6,866	141-	2.01-	0.14
Arab/Middle Eastern	1,944	2,136	192+	9.87+	0.04
Asian/Pacific Islander	22,545	22,202	343-	1.52-	0.47
Latino/Spanish	39,563	39,760	197+	0.49+	0.84
Multiethnic	13,613	15,417	1,804+	13.25+	0.32
White	4,624,249	4,558,059	66,190-	1.43-	96.77
Other	10,802	11,397	595+	5.50+	0.24

#### Distribution of Congregations by Size: Baptized Members

	Size of Congregation	Total Congregations	Percent	Total Baptized Members	Percent
	-0-	77	0.73	0	0.00
Very Small	1-175	3,192	30.55	324,569	6.89
Small	176-350	2,796	26.76	713,769	15.15
Moderately Small	351-500	1,441	13.79	606,475	12.87
Medium Sized	501-700	1,109	10.61	656,305	13.93
Moderately Large	701-950	769	7.36	623,667	13.24
Large	951-1,500	622	5.95	724,008	15.37
Very Large	1,501 & over	442	4.23	1,061,163	22.53

#### Distribution of Congregations by Size: Confirmed Members

	Size of Congregation	Total Congregations	Percent	Total Confirmed Members	Percent
	-0-	96	0.91	0	0.00
Very Small	1-175	4,217	40.36	412,850	11.68
Small	176-350	2,866	27.43	725,466	20.52
Moderately Small	351-500	1,276	12.21	533,045	15.08
Medium Sized	501-700	891	8.52	523,696	14.81
Moderately Large	701-950	506	4.84	408,514	11.55
Large	951-1,500	402	3.84	469,903	13.29
Very Large	1,501 & over	194	1.85	460,482	13.03

### ***Comparison between 2007 and 2008***

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) reported a baptized membership of 4,633,887 in 10,396 congregations in 2008. The ELCA Office of the Secretary analyzed membership and income data obtained from parochial reports that ELCA congregations submit each year.

David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA, said the data indicated a decline in membership of 76,069 and 52 congregations. The membership decline was slightly higher than in 2007, but less than in 2006, he said.

Total receipts for ELCA congregations exceeded \$2.7 billion for 2008, dipping 2.64 percent from 2007. However, average giving per baptized member actually increased slightly in 2008, continuing the upward trend since 2000. In addition, total assets of ELCA congregations remained remarkably constant in 2008 at \$20.6 billion, virtually unchanged from 2007.

“Despite the challenging economic times that began in 2008, ELCA members continue to be faithful stewards of the resources that God has provided,” Swartling remarked. “Our challenge in these turbulent times is to find innovative ways to translate the asset wealth of our congregation into enhanced ministry,” he reflected.

The average number of people in worship in ELCA congregations declined slightly from the previous year. A total of 1,330,709 persons, or 28.71 percent of baptized ELCA members, attended weekly worship. That compares to 1,362,120, or 28.92 percent of baptized members who attended weekly worship in 2007.

“Increasing diversity in membership remains a strong commitment of this church,” Swartling said. For 2008, 3.35 percent of ELCA baptized members were identified as persons of color or people whose primary language is other than English. This is a slight increase from 3.20 percent in 2007. “It is also worth noting that the number of congregations reporting more than 5 percent multicultural membership has increased by almost 40 percent since 2008,” Swartling observed. “More and more congregations are coming to appreciate their calling to be more intentionally inclusive,” he said.

## Summary of Congregational Statistics as of December 31, 2008

Summary of Membership Statistics	2007	2008	Change	Statistical Analysis	
				Percent	Avg./Congregation
Total Number of Congregations	10,448	10,396	52-	0.49-	
Baptized Members	4,709,956	4,633,887	76,069-	1.61-	448.93
Confirmed Members	3,533,956	3,483,336	50,620-	1.43-	338.25
Communing Members, Confirmed	2,496,723	2,439,494	57,229-	2.29-	237.42
Communing Members, Unconfirmed	258,990	258,376	614-	0.23-	32.41
Voting Members	2,476,691	2,499,877	23,186+	0.93+	243.43
<b>Analysis of Membership Gains and Losses</b>					
<b>Baptized Members—Accessions</b>					
By Baptism—Children under Age 16	62,721	61,617	1,104-	1.76-	
By Baptism—Adults Age 16 and above	5,854	5,839	15-	0.25-	
By Affirmation of Faith	49,295	47,586	1,709-	3.46-	
By Transfer from ELCA Congregations	52,501	49,522	2,979-	5.67-	
By Transfer from Other Lutheran Congregations	11,896	10,446	1,450-	12.18-	
From Non-Lutheran Congregations	16,576	17,104	528+	3.18+	
From Other Sources and Statistical Adjustment	19,056	23,511	4,455+	23.27+	
Total Accessions—Baptized Members	217,899	215,625	2,274-	1.04-	
<b>Baptized Members—Losses</b>					
By Death	45,154	45,225	71+	0.15+	
By Transfer to ELCA Congregations	38,267	35,384	2,883-	7.53-	
By Transfer to Lutheran Congregations	8,673	7,830	843-	9.71-	
To Non-Lutheran Congregations	11,977	11,490	487-	4.06-	
For Other Reasons and Statistical Adjustment	183,958	193,133	9,175+	4.98+	
Total Losses—Baptized Members	288,029	293,062	5,033+	1.74+	
<b>Confirmed Members—Accessions</b>					
By Baptism—Adults Age 16 and above	4,228	3,836	392-	9.27-	
By Affirmation of Faith	37,249	35,746	1,503-	4.03-	
By Transfer from ELCA Congregations	39,120	36,496	2,624-	6.70-	
By Transfer from Other Lutheran Congregations	8,545	7,374	1,171-	13.70-	
From Non-Lutheran Congregations	11,589	12,110	521+	4.49+	
From Other Sources and Statistical Adjustment	17,955	24,060	6,105+	34.00+	
Baptized Members Confirmed	45,239	43,195	2,044-	4.51-	
Total Accessions—Confirmed Members	163,925	162,817	1,108-	0.67-	
<b>Confirmed Members—Losses</b>					
By Death	42,075	42,231	156+	0.37+	
By Transfer to ELCA Congregations	28,768	26,902	1,866-	6.48-	
By Transfer to Other Lutheran Congregations	6,366	5,664	702-	11.02-	
To Non-Lutheran Congregations	8,579	8,197	382-	4.45-	
For Other Reasons	126,117	130,859	4,742+	3.76+	
Total Losses—Confirmed Members	211,905	213,853	1,948+	0.91+	
<b>Active Non-Members (including Associate Members)</b>	162,782	177,090	14,308+	8.78+	



# Summary of Congregational Statistics as of December 31, 2008

## Summary of Financial Statistics

Totals—End of Year	2007	2008	Change	Percent	Statistical Analysis	
					Avg./Congregation	
Total Receipts	2,815,930,629	2,741,313,099	74,617,530-	2.64-	265811.41	
Total Disbursements	2,725,349,028	2,764,009,721	38,660,693+	1.41+	267986.2	
Assets, Value on December 31	20,663,332,394	20,616,480,228	46,852,166-	0.22-	1999076.91	
Total Indebtedness on December 31	1,781,435,454	1,770,824,328	10,611,126-	0.59-	171707.97	
Average Giving per Baptized Member	488.44	488.79	0.35+	0.07+		<b>Indebtedness/Assets</b> 8.58%
Average Giving per Confirmed Member	650.98	650.24	0.74-	0.11-		<b>Congrs. with no debt</b> 63.01%

### Detail of Financial Statistics

#### Receipts for Regular Operation

Regular Giving by Members	1,953,805,792	1,943,406,300	10,399,492-	0.53-	
Designated Giving by Members	346,732,154	321,610,482	25,121,672-	7.24-	
Earned Income, Unrestricted	95,206,073	88,195,438	7,010,635-	7.36-	
Earned Income, Restricted	66,273,498	57,717,694	8,555,804-	12.90-	
Grants and Subsidies	26,095,598	27,970,949	1,875,351+	7.18+	
Cash Borrowed	149,064,787	121,174,549	27,890,238-	18.71-	
Other Receipts	178,752,727	181,237,687	2,484,960+	1.39+	

#### Statistical Analysis

##### Percent of

Disbursements for Regular Operation	Total Disbursements				
Current Operating Expenses	1,885,298,911	1,926,284,447	40,985,536+	2.17+	69.69
Capital Improvements	259,231,686	261,089,360	1,857,674+	0.71+	9.44
Payment on Debts	229,695,096	215,247,530	14,447,566-	6.28-	7.78
Mission Support	132,905,973	131,498,498	1,407,475-	1.05-	4.75
Designated Giving for Mission Support	9,506,771	9,111,124	395,647-	4.16-	0.32
World Hunger Appeal	11,126,748	11,123,138	3,610-	0.03-	0.4
Disaster Response	2,528,170	2,548,292	20,122+	0.79+	0.09
Mission Partners	4,808,638	5,019,644	211,006+	4.38+	0.18
Mission Founders	191,904	347,468	155,564+	81.06+	0.01
Vision for Mission	451,823	400,037	51,786-	11.46-	0.01
Missionary Sponsorship	7,303,684	7,741,124	437,440+	5.98+	0.28
Synodical Benevolences	18,984,526	19,851,432	866,906+	4.56+	0.71
Local Community Benevolences	43,849,607	46,635,042	2,785,435+	6.35+	1.68
Other Benevolences	22,913,611	22,616,233	297,378-	1.29-	0.81
Other Expenses	96,551,880	104,496,352	7,944,472+	8.22+	3.78

#### Assets, Value on December 31

Church Edifice and Lot	16,413,523,443	16,593,866,599	180,343,156+	1.09+	
Parish House and Lot	694,331,270	699,488,249	5,156,979+	0.74+	
Parsonage(s) and Lot(s)	542,627,461	540,359,325	2,268,136-	0.41-	
Other Real Estate	567,213,056	539,136,212	28,076,844-	4.94-	
Endowment and Memorial Funds	1,253,381,083	1,093,785,974	159,595,109-	12.73-	
Cash, Savings, Bonds, etc.	907,224,666	869,634,754	37,589,912-	4.14-	
Other Assets	285,031,415	280,209,115	4,822,300-	1.69-	

#### Bequests Received During Year

Number of Bequests Received	2,991	4,948	1,957+	65.42+	<i>Per 100 Deaths:</i> 10.94
Total Value of Bequests Received	82,795,864	66,615,167	16,180,697-	19.54-	<i>Avg. Beq.</i> \$13,463.04
Intended Mission Support	134980,387	127,633,093	7,347,294-	5.44-	

## Summary of Congregational Statistics as of December 31, 2008

### Statistical Analysis Percentage of Congregations Reporting Ethnic Group Members

Worship Services	2007	2008	Change	Percent	
Total Attendance at Worship Each Week	1,362,120	1,330,709	31,411-	2.30-	
Average Sunday Attendance per Congregation	131	128	3-	2.29-	
Percent of Baptized Members Attending Worship	28.92	28.71	0.21-	0.72-	

### Congregations Reporting Ethnic Group Members

African American/Black	3,578	3,615	37+	1.03+	34.77
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,146	1,163	17+	1.48+	11.18
Arab/Middle Eastern	614	623	9+	1.46+	5.99
Asian/Pacific Islander	3,424	3,407	17-	0.49-	32.77
Latino/Spanish	3,254	3,287	33+	1.01+	31.61
Multiethnic	2,508	2,706	198+	7.89+	26.02
White	10,222	10,178	44-	0.43-	97.9
Other	591	542	49-	8.29-	5.21

### Percent Ethnic Baptized Membership

Total Ethnic Baptized Membership					
African American/Black	52,896	52,661	235-	0.44-	1.13
American Indian and Alaska Native	6,866	6,818	48-	0.69-	0.14
Arab/Middle Eastern	2,136	2,154	18+	0.84+	0.04
Asian/Pacific Islander	22,202	22,067	135-	0.60-	0.47
Latino/Spanish	39,760	42,621	2,861+	7.19+	0.91
Multiethnic	15,417	18,098	2,681+	17.38+	0.39
White	4,558,059	4,470,272	87,787-	1.92-	96.46
Other	11,397	17,510	6,113+	53.63+	0.37

### Distribution of Congregations by Size: Baptized Members

	Size of Congregation	Total Congregations	Percent	Total Baptized Members	Percent
	-0-	74	0.71	0	0.00
Very Small	1-175	3,256	31.31	329,416	7.1
Small	176-350	2,753	26.48	700,778	15.12
Moderately Small	351-500	1,428	13.73	598,975	12.92
Medium Sized	501-700	1,086	10.44	641,061	13.83
Moderately Large	701-950	765	7.35	620,412	13.38
Large	951-1,500	607	5.83	706,991	15.25
Very Large	1,501 & over	427	4.1	1,036,254	22.36

### Distribution of Congregations by Size: Confirmed Members

	Size of Congregation	Total Congregations	Percent	Total Confirmed Members	Percent
	-0-	98	0.94	0	0
Very Small	1-175	4,261	40.98	414,457	11.89
Small	176-350	2,837	27.28	718,917	20.63
Moderately Small	351-500	1,251	12.03	522,767	15
Medium Sized	501-700	872	8.38	511,524	14.68
Moderately Large	701-950	493	4.74	397,734	11.41
Large	951-1,500	394	3.78	463,300	13.3
Very Large	1,501 & over	190	1.82	454,637	13.05

## Appendix D to the Report of the Secretary

### Additions to the Roster of Ordained Ministers 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Admitted	Date	Region/ Synod
<b>2007</b>				
Abarno, Robert N.	Johnstown, Pa.	Received from American Baptist Church	6/30/2007	8C
Adams, Erica M.	Edgerton, Wis.	Ordained	8/19/2007	5K
Adams, Nathaniel Jr.	Euclid, Ohio	Ordained	8/18/2007	6E
Aelabouni, Meghan Johnston	Elmhurst, Ill.	Ordained	6/9/2007	5A
Ahlfeldt, William N.	Moorhead, Minn.	Reinstated	4/28/2007	3D
Ahola, Kelly Burns	Fertile, Minn.	Ordained	6/23/2007	3D
Albertson, David J.	Frederick, Md.	Ordained	11/11/2007	8F
Alexander, Chris E.	Bismarck, N.D.	Ordained	1/18/2007	3A
Allen, Amy Lynn	Leechburg, Pa.	Ordained	6/16/2007	8B
Allen, James E.	Leechburg, Pa.	Ordained	6/16/2007	8B
Allert, Eric J. W.	Port Orchard, Wash.	Ordained	9/20/2007	1C
Alves, Sozinho	Philadelphia, Pa.	Ordained	7/15/2007	7F
Amdahl, Charles M.	Helena, Mont.	Reinstated	2/28/2007	1F
Anderson, Gretchen S.	Fertile, Minn.	Ordained	8/25/2007	3D
Anderson, Julie Kurtz	Lake Benton, Minn.	Ordained	5/20/2007	3F
Anderson, Scott M.	Mount Holly, N.C.	Ordained	6/24/2007	9B
Anderson, Tobias V.	New Paltz, N.Y.	Ordained	3/10/2007	7C
Anenson, Nathan E.	Cottage Grove, Minn.	Ordained	1/21/2007	3H
Anspach-Hanson, Eric	Tokyo, Japan	Ordained	8/26/2007	3F
Asendorf, David K.	Catonsville, Md.	Ordained	1/13/2007	8F
Asplin, Peter D.	Scenery Hill, Pa.	Ordained	11/10/2007	8B
Austin, Amy C.	Russell, Kan.	Ordained	4/15/2007	4B
Baker, Jane C.	Roseburg, Ore.	Ordained	4/15/2007	1E
Bame, Susan L.	China Grove, N.C.	Ordained	8/25/2007	9B
Baranko, Joel Ronald	Outing, Minn.	Ordained	6/9/2007	3E
Barnes, Charlene E.	Axtell, Kan.	Ordained	7/28/2007	4B
Bean, Timothy A.	De Soto, Ill.	Ordained	7/1/2007	5C
Beard, Kevin R.	Carpio, N.D.	Ordained	6/16/2007	3A
Bents, Gerd J.	River Falls, Wis.	Ordained	9/1/2007	5H
Bergeson, Kevin D.	St. Louis Park, Minn.	Ordained	7/15/2007	3G
Berglund, Kristin Diane	Davenport, Iowa	Ordained	5/19/2007	5D
Bishop, Carolyn R. Kohn	Salisbury, N.C.	Ordained	8/18/2007	9B
Bishop, Virginia C.	Mariposa, Calif.	Ordained	9/8/2007	2A
Bjarnadottir, Eyglo	Center City, Minn.	Ordained	4/28/2007	3H
Block, Scott William	Oakes, N.D.	Ordained	1/14/2007	3B
Boehnke-Becker, Caroline	West Des Moines, Iowa	Ordained	8/26/2007	5D

Boese, Trisha R.	Centerville, S.D.	Ordained	2/10/2007	3C
Bolick-Lang, Joseph L.	Johnson City, Tenn.	Ordained	9/2/2007	9D
Borden, Andrew H.	Worcester, Mass.	Ordained	6/8/2007	7B
Bounma, Bounkeo T.	Des Moines, Iowa	Ordained	4/20/2007	5D
Breashears Schultz, Tracey L.	San Antonio, Texas	Ordained	7/21/2007	4E
Bredberg, Daniel Anton	Waterville, Ohio	Ordained	5/27/2007	6D
Brissett Erkkila, Erin J.	Grand Rapids, Minn.	Ordained	9/30/2007	3E
Brown, David L.	Bethlehem, Pa.	Ordained	10/13/2007	7E
Brumbaugh, Deborah Lee	Mechanicsburg, Pa.	Ordained	6/8/2007	8D
Bruneau, Barbara J.	Madison, Minn.	Ordained	7/22/2007	3F
Bryan-Wegner, Jason A.	Rochester, Minn.	Ordained	9/30/2007	3I
Buabeng, Edward K.	Woodbridge, Va.	Ordained	1/21/2007	8G
Burggraff, Jason M.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Ordained	9/9/2007	3C
Burroughs, Sandra M.	Sumner, Iowa	Ordained	6/1/2007	5F
Campbell, Jacqueline L.	Grafton, W.Va.	Ordained	2/3/2007	8H
Carroll, Dennis J.	Easton, Pa.	Reinstated	10/13/2007	7E
Carroll, Kathryn H.	Miami, Fla.	Ordained	10/13/2007	9E
Cauley, Steven Barrett	Houston, Texas	Ordained	2/13/2007	4F
Chapman, Paul A.	Conover, N.C.	Ordained	2/11/2007	9B
Christensen, Louise M.	Sidney, Mont.	Ordained	5/5/2007	1F
Conway, Kimberly S.	Dale City, Va.	Ordained	10/20/2007	8G
Cook, Annemarie	Lakewood, N.J.	Ordained	9/16/2007	7A
Cover, Virginia J.	Mechanicsburg, Pa.	Ordained	8/24/2007	8D
Derrick, Kelly D. B.	Roanoke, Va.	Ordained	6/9/2007	9A
Derrick, Owen	Flanagan, Ill.	Ordained	11/11/2007	5C
Dille, Sarah J.	St. Peter, Minn.	Transferred from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	8/31/2007	3F
Doerring, Beth Ann	Trinidad, Colo.	Reinstated	11/18/2007	2E
Dorman, Pamela E.	Runge, Texas	Reinstated	10/20/2007	4E
Dudley, Kevin R.	Columbus, Ohio	Ordained	10/24/2007	6F
Eckhart, Grant M.	Loveland, Ohio	Ordained	3/22/2007	6F
Edenfield, David J.	Greenville, S.C.	Ordained	12/2/2007	9C
Ehle, Scott G.	Fairwater, Wis.	Ordained	7/21/2007	5I
Ehlke, Troy D.	Charlotte, N.C.	Ordained	1/19/2007	9B
Ehrhardt, Melissa A.	Clarissa, Minn.	Ordained	9/8/2007	3D
Elliott-McGuffie, Joshua N.	Los Angeles, Calif.	Ordained	7/8/2007	2B
Erickson, Elise (Liz) M.	Elkton, Minn.	Ordained	6/24/2007	3I
Evans, Brian Alan	McKeesport, Pa.	Ordained	7/15/2007	8B
Evenson, Andrew J.	Lebanon, Pa.	Ordained	7/27/2007	8D
Faust, Joseph D.	Linton, Ind.	Ordained	6/8/2007	6C
Ferree, Brenda J.	York, Pa.	Ordained	8/24/2007	8D

Fetters, David A.	Elmhurst, N.Y.	Ordained	8/25/2007	7C
Fetters, Rebecka J.	Lynbrook, N.Y.	Ordained	8/25/2007	7C
Files, Christopher A.	Milford, Conn.	Ordained	2/18/2007	7B
Fiskness, Carl L.	Culver, Minn.	Ordained	9/9/2007	3E
Fitch, Frank H. III	North Platte, Neb.	Reinstated	10/18/2007	4A
Florio, Donna L.	Altus, Okla.	Ordained	9/8/2007	4C
Florio, Louis A. Jr.	Mechanicsville, Va.	Ordained	12/8/2007	9A
Fogi, Teka Obsa	Takoma Park, Md.	Ordained	10/27/2007	8G
Foss, Erika E.	Fordville, N.D.	Ordained	7/15/2007	3B
Franzen, Trudy L.	Sacramento, Calif.	Ordained	11/30/2007	2A
Freeman, Rebecca C.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Ordained	8/26/2007	3C
Freese, Gretchen M.	Glenwood, Ill.	Ordained	8/26/2007	5A
Friesen-Carper, Sarah M.	Charlotte, Mich.	Ordained	8/17/2007	6B
Fritts, Richard Barry	Schuykill Haven, Pa.	Ordained	7/7/2007	7E
Fuerst, Bradley S.	Houston, Texas	Ordained	8/19/2007	4F
Gallipo, Wayne W.	Watertown, S.D.	Ordained	12/9/2007	3C
Gay, Mikki Corley	Blythewood, S.C.	Ordained	7/27/2007	9C
Geleta, Amsalu Tadesse	Springfield, Va.	Ordained	2/18/2007	8G
George, Brian K.	Zanesville, Ohio	Ordained	9/15/2007	6F
Getzinger, Cynthia L.	Toledo, Ohio	Ordained	8/18/2007	6D
Gibson, Karen N.	Lexington, S.C.	Ordained	1/14/2007	9C
Goke, Brian W.	Atlanta, Ga.	Ordained	12/8/2007	9D
Gordy, P. Morgan	Lebanon, Tenn.	Ordained	7/29/2007	9D
Graham, Timothy M.	Fort Wayne, Ind.	Ordained	8/26/2007	6C
Graves, Kathleen Joy	Mason City, Iowa	Received from Evangelical Covenant Church	5/15/2007	5F
Gray-Reneberg, Jerayne J.	Arcata, Calif.	Reinstated	12/31/2007	2A
Griffith, G. Mark	North Bend, Wash.	Ordained	7/15/2007	1B
Guelmami, Jennifer H.	Staten Island, N.Y.	Ordained	8/25/2007	7C
Gunderlach, David P.	Newport News, Va.	Received from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod	3/16/2007	9A
Hagen, Karna M.	Rochester, Minn.	Ordained	9/9/2007	3I
Hagenow, Michael J.	San Diego, Calif.	Ordained	3/25/2007	2C
Hahn, Kacey C.	Lauderdale, Minn.	Ordained	6/3/2007	3G
Halvorson, Karla J.	San Marcos, Calif.	Ordained	12/15/2007	2C
Hansen, Joshua J.	Altoona, Pa.	Ordained	6/7/2007	8C
Hansen, Pamela	Southgate, Mich.	Ordained	12/9/2007	6A
Hanson, Martha J.	Glenwood, Minn.	Ordained	7/21/2007	3F
Harman, Derek M.	West Springfield, Mass.	Ordained	6/8/2007	7B
Hartikainen, Seppo Juhani	Lake Worth, Fla.	Received from Lutheran Church of Finland	2/17/2007	9E
Hawkins-Bowles, Catrina L.	Philo, Ohio	Ordained	11/18/2007	6F
Hayden, Robert B.	Fontanelle, Neb.	Ordained	10/28/2007	4A
Hedlund, Kerstin L.	Beavercreek, Ohio	Ordained	6/24/2007	4D

Heider, George C. III	Valparaiso, Ind.	Received from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod	11/27/2007	6C
Higham, Bradley D.	Dripping Springs, Texas	Ordained	11/17/2007	4E
Hiller, Elizabeth Lerohl	Chicago, Ill.	Ordained	9/8/2007	5A
Hodgetts, William T. Jr.	Amsterdam, N.Y.	Ordained	7/27/2007	7D
Hoffman, Abigail Zang	Elmira, N.Y.	Ordained	8/25/2007	7D
Hoffman, Preston Paul Sr.	West Milwaukee, Wis.	Ordained	5/19/2007	5J
Holland, Scott L.	Columbia, S.C.	Ordained	7/28/2007	9C
Holmen, Judy A.	West Fargo, N.D.	Ordained	6/30/2007	3B
Hopkins, Tiffany E.	Williamsburg, Pa.	Ordained	8/17/2007	8C
Horrell, Emily D. S.	Mason City, Iowa	Ordained	8/19/2007	5F
House, Diane M.	Cadott, Wis.	Ordained	9/8/2007	5H
Hunt, Charles T.	Portland, Ore.	Ordained	2/11/2007	1E
Ilten, Jay R.	Dubuque, Iowa	Reinstated	12/31/2007	5F
Ingram, Andrena T.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Ordained	2/10/2007	7F
Isabelle, Callista S.	New Haven, Conn.	Ordained	6/8/2007	7B
Jaeger, Stephanie B.	Los Angeles, Calif.	Ordained	8/4/2007	2B
Jahn, Timothy D.	Easton, Md.	Ordained	6/17/2007	8F
Jannett, Michael Lawrence	Greeneville, Tenn.	Ordained	6/30/2007	9D
Jenkins, Thomas E.	New Brighton, Minn.	Ordained	10/13/2007	3H
Jerbi, Steven J.	Milwaukee, Wis.	Ordained	1/13/2007	5J
Johanson, Gretchen M.	Catawisa, Pa.	Ordained	8/22/2007	8E
Johnson, Dixie L.	Eden Prairie, Minn.	Ordained	1/14/2007	3E
Johnson, Michael Edward	Minot, N.D.	Ordained	1/20/2007	3A
Johnson, Renee A.	Glenvil, Neb.	Ordained	2/27/2007	4A
Johnson, Sandra Jean	Prentice, Wis.	Ordained	7/14/2007	5H
Johnson, Stephanie K.	Herndon, Va.	Ordained	3/11/2007	8G
Johnson-Carlson, Patricia	Dawson, Minn.	Ordained	5/19/2007	3F
Jones, Melinda H.	North Charleston, S.C.	Ordained	8/24/2007	9C
Jones, Sandra I.	Columbia, S.C.	Ordained	8/25/2007	9C
Jordon, David E.	Lake Mills, Iowa	Ordained	7/28/2007	5F
Kay, Edward N.	Baltimore, Md.	Ordained	12/16/2007	8F
Keck, Daniel J.	Port Clinton, Ohio	Ordained	5/1/2007	6D
Kelly, Paul H.	Cole Camp, Mo.	Reinstated	2/28/2007	4B
Kern, Travis E.	Fort Lauderdale, Fla.	Ordained	7/15/2007	9E
Kienzle, Amy C.	Dearborn Heights, Mich.	Ordained	9/1/2007	6A
Koeneke, Patsy Perkins	Kensington, Kan.	Ordained	3/11/2007	4B
Koepke, Shane C.	St. Donatus, Iowa	Ordained	7/1/2007	5D
Kramer, Christopher T.	The Dalles, Ore.	Ordained	10/20/2007	1E
Krogstad, Kim S.	Freehold, N.J.	Ordained	9/16/2007	7A
Kunz, Robert T.	Park Ridge, Ill.	Received from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod	3/23/2007	5A

Kuznik, Joel H.	New York, N.Y.	Received from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod	4/21/2007	7C
Labagh, R. Zachary	Palatine Bridge, N.Y.	Ordained	2/2/2007	7D
Lahners, Kenneth W.	Ishpeming, Mich.	Ordained	8/28/2007	5G
Laird, Deena L.	Arenzville, Ill.	Ordained	7/29/2007	5C
Lamaak, Cheryl A.	Georgetown, Texas	Ordained	6/6/2007	4E
Lambert, Jessica D.	Jersey City, N.J.	Ordained	9/16/2007	7A
Lamirato, Alena M.	Mead, Neb.	Ordained	7/26/2007	4A
Lang, Christine A.	Thor, Iowa	Ordained	6/24/2007	5E
Lee, Jason M.	Wyomissing, Pa.	Ordained	7/25/2007	7E
Leese, Abigail C.	Etters, Pa.	Ordained	8/24/2007	8D
Leese, Benjamin E.	York Springs, Pa.	Ordained	8/24/2007	8D
Lee-Thompson, Sylvia Ann	DeForest, Wis.	Ordained	6/17/2007	5K
Leitzke, Emily J.	Cordova, Md.	Ordained	9/15/2007	8F
Lepp, Janet L.	Rock Island, Ill.	Ordained	10/28/2007	5B
Lindsey, Gregory Blair	Manchester, Pa.	Ordained	6/8/2007	8D
Loehrke, Timothy E.	Pigeon, Mich.	Ordained	6/10/2007	6B
Lohafer, Joel Thomas	Lynden, Wash.	Received from Association of Free Lutheran Churches	2/28/2007	1B
Longworth, John M.	Worcester, Mass.	Ordained	11/4/2007	7B
Lord, Stephanie F.	Santa Rosa, Calif.	Ordained	7/8/2007	2A
Lowe, Patricia R.	North Hollywood, Calif.	Ordained	6/3/2007	2B
Mabugu, Samuel	Titusville, Pa.	Received from Reformed Church of Zimbabwe	9/28/2007	8A
Magnus, Dagfinn	New Orleans, La.	Received from Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway	1/19/2007	4F
Malone, Amber R.	Castleton-on-Hudson, N.Y.	Ordained	9/2/2007	7D
Martin, Kevin A.	Mount Juliet, Tenn.	Ordained	8/26/2007	9D
Matheson, Frances R.	Weddington, N.C.	Ordained	11/25/2007	9B
Matthias, Reid William	Rockford, Ill.	Ordained	6/2/2007	5B
Mattson, Ari D.	Sussex, Wis.	Ordained	8/19/2007	5J
Maxwell, Brent D.	Paradise Valley, Ariz.	Ordained	8/19/2007	2D
McClanahan, Evan S.	Grapevine, Texas	Ordained	7/22/2007	4D
McCormack, Patrick F.	Thompson, N.D.	Ordained	5/27/2007	3B
McHale-Larsen, Holly	Lafayette, Calif.	Ordained	10/20/2007	2A
McHenry, Jack L.	Stanley, N.C.	Ordained	2/18/2007	9B
McHenry, Linda W.	Stanley, N.C.	Ordained	2/18/2007	9B
McIntyre, Clarence M.	Tampa, Fla.	Received from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod	12/31/2007	9E
McKillip, Michael A.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Ordained	11/3/2007	7F
Meeks, Marie A.	Olean, N.Y.	Ordained	6/27/2007	7D
Meier, Steven Lynn	Willmar, Minn.	Ordained	6/17/2007	3F
Mendez, Mariana L.	Laredo, Texas	Ordained	6/16/2007	4E
Merrell, Judson F.	Boiling Springs, S.C.	Ordained	7/22/2007	9C

Metropoulos, Valyn	Chester, Mont.	Ordained	11/24/2007	1F
Metz, Tony Alan	Sioux Center, Iowa	Ordained	7/8/2007	5E
Metzger, Daniel P.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Received from Evangelical Lutheran Synod	10/27/2007	7F
Micham, Melissa A.	Toledo, Ohio	Ordained	7/29/2007	6D
Miko, Kathleen A.	Timberville, Va.	Ordained	10/15/2007	9A
Miller, Christopher H.	Edinburg, N.D.	Ordained	7/17/2007	3B
Miller, Rebecca F.	Edinburg, N.D.	Ordained	7/12/2007	3B
Montgomery, Thomas F.	New Era, Mich.	Ordained	10/19/2007	6B
Moses, Leslie K.	San Antonio, Texas	Ordained	6/9/2007	4E
Muller, Timothy I.	Columbus, Ohio	Received from Lutheran Church in Australia	5/19/2007	6F
Murken, Heidi M.	Grafton, Wis.	Ordained	7/14/2007	5J
Myers, Ronald D.	Glenville, Minn.	Ordained	12/1/2007	3I
Narucki, Ruby K.	Erie, Colo.	Ordained	6/24/2007	2E
Neale, Patricia G.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Ordained	7/21/2007	7F
Nehring, Craig J.	Caroline, Wis.	Ordained	12/15/2007	5I
Neitzel, Kristin M.	Wichita, Kan.	Ordained	8/25/2007	4B
Nelson, Dana K.	Santiago de Surco, Lima, Peru	Ordained	6/10/2007	3H
Nelson, Katie J.	St. Paul, Minn.	Ordained	6/16/2007	3H
Nelson, Roy H. Jr.	DeKalb, Ill.	Ordained	6/10/2007	5B
Nelson-Bunkers, Kelle	Lake Oswego, Ore.	Ordained	1/14/2007	1E
Nesdahl, Emily A.	Harwood, N.D.	Ordained	1/27/2007	3B
Neubauer, Joel S.	Middletown, Conn.	Ordained	10/26/2007	7B
Nicolls, Ashley B.	Summerfield, Fla.	Ordained	10/10/2007	9E
Norstad, Diane P.	Balsam Lake, Wis.	Ordained	3/18/2007	5H
Odland, Mark P.	Circle Pines, Minn.	Ordained	6/17/2007	3F
Ohrman, Eric E.	Colville, Wash.	Ordained	8/31/2007	1D
Okey, Arlene M.	Evansville, Ind.	Ordained	11/3/2007	6C
Olsen, Donna Marie	Hoyt Lakes, Minn.	Ordained	7/1/2007	3E
Olson, Janine L.	St. Cloud, Minn.	Ordained	2/10/2007	3F
O'Meara, Candis M.	Chilhowie, Va.	Ordained	12/2/2007	9A
Oraw, Calvin J.	Fairview, Mont.	Ordained	5/5/2007	1F
Orlowski, Timothy P.	Albuquerque, N.M.	Ordained	8/4/2007	2E
Ost, Debra A.	Mendota Heights, Minn.	Ordained	12/8/2007	3H
Pagliari, Jean M.	Holmen, Wis.	Ordained	7/1/2007	5L
Pahl, Karen A.	Rochester, Minn.	Ordained	7/21/2007	3I
Palmer, Elizabeth A.	Chicago, Ill.	Ordained	8/26/2007	5A
Parker, Lisa Davis	Ankeny, Iowa	Ordained	6/23/2007	5D
Parsh, Karen D.	Knox, Pa.	Ordained	2/11/2007	8A
Parsons, Tonna M.	Sioux Rapids, Iowa	Received from The United Methodist Church	5/31/2007	5E
Paterson, Lydia	Austin, Texas	Ordained	1/4/2007	4F



Patterson, Patrick A.	Mankato, Minn.	Ordained	8/26/2007	3I
Payne, Patricia J.	Dover, Del.	Ordained	8/26/2007	8F
Pederson, Ann E.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Ordained	3/15/2007	3C
Pennington, Katherine M.	Moorhead, Minn.	Ordained	1/13/2007	3D
Peterson, Chad M.	Twin Valley, Minn.	Ordained	6/30/2007	3D
Peterson, Janice L.	Omaha, Neb.	Ordained	10/21/2007	4A
Pick, Nancy J.	Sully, Iowa	Ordained	2/11/2007	5D
Pile, Nathan A.	Spring Hills, Pa.	Ordained	6/7/2007	8C
Pope, Stephanie K.	Hicksville, N.Y.	Ordained	8/25/2007	7C
Powers, Kevin L.	Chapin, S.C.	Ordained	12/16/2007	9C
Prasek, Matthew S.	Seattle, Wash.	Ordained	1/26/2007	2A
Price, Michael B.	State College, Pa.	Ordained	7/20/2007	8C
Radtke, Elizabeth A.	Worthington, Minn.	Ordained	7/15/2007	3F
Ramseth, Carol L.	Marion, Ohio	Ordained	11/25/2007	6D
Rangel, Armando	Denver, Colo.	Ordained	5/12/2007	2E
Reid, Ian Bradstreet	Lebanon, Pa.	Ordained	6/8/2007	8D
Rhodes, Jon C.	Rockford, Minn.	Ordained	3/11/2007	3G
Roberts, Laurie Charles	Harrisburg, Pa.	Ordained	2/2/2007	8D
Robles, Luz Myrta Vera	Chicago, Ill.	Ordained	6/9/2007	5A
Roise, Gerald O.	Minot, N.D.	Ordained	8/18/2007	3A
Rose, Jennifer L.	Herman, Minn.	Ordained	1/14/2007	3D
Rose, Linda J.	Shepherd, Mont.	Ordained	9/30/2007	1F
Ross, Michael E.	Everett, Wash.	Reinstated	5/28/2007	1B
Rouse, Ryan R.	Las Vegas, Nev.	Ordained	8/26/2007	2D
Rouze, Kyle A.	Arlington, Texas	Ordained	9/22/2007	4D
Rowe, James W.	Norwich, Conn.	Ordained	7/15/2007	7B
Rozumalski, Linda A.	Luck, Wis.	Ordained	2/4/2007	5H
Ruen, Daniel	Evanston, Ill.	Ordained	4/29/2007	5A
Rydbom, Audrey F.	Missoula, Mont.	Ordained	12/15/2007	1F
Sands, David M.	Ridgeland, Wis.	Ordained	9/9/2007	5H
Scharmer, Jedidiah S.	Minnetonka, Minn.	Ordained	10/28/2007	3G
Scherschligt, Sarah S.	Rockville, Md.	Ordained	11/10/2007	8G
Schoen, Darrell E.	Bellingham, Wash.	Reinstated	3/17/2007	1B
Scholtes, Michael J.	Nescopeck, Pa.	Ordained	8/26/2007	7E
Schultz, Joseph A.	Naperville, Ill.	Ordained	6/9/2007	5A
Schwalbe, Nicole M.	New York, N.Y.	Ordained	8/25/2007	7C
Seaman, Diana L.	Crestline, Ohio	Reinstated	8/4/2007	6D
Segaran, Gnana	Rosebud, Texas	Ordained	1/21/2007	4D
Sersland, John P.	Fort Dodge, Iowa	Reinstated	12/31/2007	5E
Shaner, Katherine A.	Cambridge, Mass.	Ordained	6/8/2007	7B
Shealy, Jeffrey Wallace	Lancaster, S.C.	Ordained	6/10/2007	9C
Shebeck, Patrick H.	Chicago Heights, Ill.	Ordained	12/9/2007	5A
Shelden, James C.	Belgrade, Mont.	Reinstated	9/22/2007	1F

Shields, Jessica L.	Cleveland Heights, Ohio	Ordained	8/18/2007	6E
Simmont, Shelley M.	Dunkirk, Md.	Ordained	1/13/2007	8G
Simpkins, Matthew C.	Knoxville, Tenn.	Ordained	1/6/2007	9D
Simpson, David W.	Millersville, Md.	Ordained	6/2/2007	8F
Sinykin, Carol E.	Cannon Falls, Minn.	Ordained	7/22/2007	3I
Sire, Daniel T.	Wausau, Wis.	Ordained	7/14/2007	5I
Song, Daniel K.	Houston, Texas	Ordained	6/19/2007	4F
Speirs, Robert B.	Des Moines, Iowa	Ordained	10/20/2007	5D
Stahler, Jared R.	New York, N.Y.	Ordained	12/1/2007	7C
Stenberg, Mark E.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Ordained	10/28/2007	3G
Stoffel, Trudy A.	Woodridge, Ill.	Ordained	8/26/2007	5A
Stolte-Doerfler, Leah L.	Sublimity, Ore.	Ordained	9/16/2007	1E
Strum, Krista K.	Mankato, Minn.	Ordained	1/20/2007	3I
Sumner-Eisenbraun, Sarah D.	Arroyo Grande, Calif.	Ordained	7/1/2007	2B
Sundram, Chandra J.	Rockville, Md.	Received from Tamil Lutheran Church of South India	8/21/2007	8G
Suomala Folkerds, Aaron J.	LaSalle, Minn.	Ordained	7/22/2007	3F
Suomala Folkerds, Mary C. W.	LaSalle, Minn.	Ordained	7/22/2007	3F
Swanson, Charles D.	Bowman, N.D.	Ordained	8/4/2007	3A
Swehosky, JoAnne	Fort Worth, Texas	Ordained	9/1/2007	4D
Tannas, Kirstin A.	Detroit, Mich.	Ordained	9/23/2007	6A
Timm Welch, Becky L.	Wykoff, Minn.	Ordained	8/4/2007	3I
Tran, Vanson T.	Santa Ana, Calif.	Ordained	12/9/2007	2C
Trump, Suzanne Marie	Fogelsville, Pa.	Ordained	3/10/2007	7E
Tryggstad, Carolyn A.	Abington, Mass.	Ordained	6/8/2007	7B
Tyykila, Susan L.	Riverdale, Md.	Reinstated	11/4/2007	8G
Van Lishout, Grant M.	Viroqua, Wis.	Ordained	9/8/2007	5L
Vannavong, Phetsamone C.	Milwaukee, Wis.	Ordained	4/29/2007	5J
Veres, Joseph Andrew	New Stanton, Pa.	Ordained	2/24/2007	8B
Vickers, Phillip E.	Hutchinson, Kan.	Ordained	6/16/2007	4B
Vickstrom, Britt C.	Plattsburgh, N.Y.	Ordained	8/18/2007	7B
Ware, Sonja	Trevorton, Pa.	Received from Ev. Church in Hesse & Nassau-EKD	5/26/2007	8E
Waugaman, Amber Lynn	Brecksville, Ohio	Ordained	1/7/2007	6E
Waworuntu, Robert N.	Newington, N.H.	Received from Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa	4/14/2007	7B
Waymire, Celeste L.	Griswold, Iowa	Ordained	2/11/2007	5E
Weaver, Bonnie L.	Cando, N.D.	Ordained	8/18/2007	3B
Wentzien, Robert H.	Shishmaref, Alaska	Ordained	2/4/2007	1A
Wheeler, Matthew S.	Galion, Ohio	Ordained	7/14/2007	6D
Whetter, David J.	Lenexa, Kan.	Ordained	2/24/2007	4B
Wiese, Justin R.	Madison, Neb.	Ordained	5/27/2007	4A
Williams, Ritva H.	Davenport, Iowa	Ordained	12/15/2007	5D

Williamson, Mark D.	Wheaton, Ill.	Ordained	8/26/2007	5A
Williamson, Susan J.	Warriors Mark, Pa.	Ordained	2/17/2007	8C
Wilson, Daniel R.	Gig Harbor, Wash.	Ordained	7/29/2007	1C
Winke, Dayna M.	Des Plaines, Ill.	Ordained	12/9/2007	5A
Winkelman, Linda L.	Galva, Ill.	Ordained	6/15/2007	5B
Witt, Shannon M.	Andover, Iowa	Ordained	6/17/2007	5D
Wittman Grebe, Lydia N.	Custer, Wash.	Ordained	1/13/2007	1B
Wolbrecht, Sara E.	Walnut Creek, Calif.	Ordained	7/8/2007	2A
Wolfe, Ian Jacob	Maynard, Iowa	Ordained	6/30/2007	5F
Wolinski, Elizabeth M.	Frankford, Del.	Ordained	9/30/2007	8F

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Abel, Edward H.	Columbus, Texas	Ordained	5/18/2008	4F
Ahles-Iverson, Benjamin J.	Taylor, Wis.	Ordained	12/20/2008	5H
Ahola, John M.	Fertile, Minn.	Ordained	4/26/2008	3D
Alengo, Berhau W.	Soudan, Minn.	Received from Ethiopian Ev. Church Mekane Yesus	5/17/2008	3E
Alsop, Joy Stuber	Belvidere, Ill.	Ordained	6/19/2008	5B
Anderson, Carrie M.	Grassflat, Pa.	Ordained	6/29/2008	8C
Anderson, Darrell S.	Omaha, Neb.	Ordained	6/28/2008	4A
Anderson, Marsha K.	Moorhead, Minn.	Ordained	6/6/2008	3D
Anderson, Mary K.	La Grande, Ore.	Ordained	12/20/2008	1E
Avendaño Manzanares, José L.	Des Moines, Iowa	Ordained	5/11/2008	5D
Axel, Patricia A.	Bethlehem, Ga.	Ordained	7/6/2008	9D
Bahleda, Suellen Jo	Juneau, Alaska	Ordained	1/27/2008	1A
Bailie, Paul A.	San Antonio, Texas	Ordained	8/30/2008	4E
Barnes, Jenny L.	Bedford, Pa.	Ordained	6/27/2008	8C
Barter, William M.	Portland, Maine	Received from Roman Catholic Church	6/15/2008	7B
Bauer, John A.	Colorado Springs, Colo.	Received from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod	11/16/2008	2E
Bauer, Mary G.	Appleton, Wis.	Ordained	9/21/2008	5I
Behrens, Leta C.	Longmont, Colo.	Ordained	8/3/2008	2E
Beissel, Brian E.	Northumberland, Pa.	Ordained	6/21/2008	8E
Belanga, Ronnie L.	Massillon, Ohio	Ordained	7/26/2008	6E
Bell, Bobbi	Belgrade, Minn.	Ordained	4/26/2008	3F
Benjamin, Paul W.	Blissfield, Mich.	Ordained	7/5/2008	6A
Bentjen, Charles J.	Beatrice, Neb.	Ordained	5/25/2008	4A
Birra, Michael B.	Tampa, Fla.	Ordained	11/8/2008	9E
Body, Nina H.	Enumclaw, Wash.	Ordained	12/18/2008	1C
Bolick-Lang, Sarah	Boone, N.C.	Ordained	1/27/2008	9B
Bolz-Weber, Nadezhka	Denver, Colo.	Ordained	11/23/2008	2E
Bonn, Jeffrey T.	Freeland, Mich.	Ordained	4/27/2008	6B
Borkosky, Travis L.	Tekamah, Neb.	Ordained	7/13/2008	4A
Bowlan, Alison S.	State College, Pa.	Ordained	6/14/2008	8C

Boysen, Lauri S.	Ringsted, Iowa	Ordained	6/15/2008	5E
Brantner, Katherine R. L.	Etters, Pa.	Ordained	6/13/2008	8D
Brasher, Mary L.	Blanco, Texas	Ordained	7/19/2008	4E
Braun, Richard L.	Buena Park, Calif.	Ordained	10/25/2008	2C
Breedlove, Allen C.	Lawrenceville, Ga.	Ordained	8/23/2008	9D
Brennan-Mills, Kathleen	Springtown, Texas	Ordained	1/20/2008	4D
Brown, Joel R.	Crescent City, Ill.	Ordained	8/16/2008	5C
Brueggemann, Eugene V.	Longmont, Colo.	Received from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod	12/30/2008	2E
Bruno, Randal L.	Readlyn, Iowa	Ordained	8/18/2008	5F
Burkard, Holli R.	Toledo, Ohio	Ordained	10/18/2008	6D
Burke-Romarheim, Kari	Baldwin, Wis.	Ordained	11/2/2008	5H
Burton-Pye, Patti S.	Lexington, S.C.	Ordained	6/22/2008	9C
Byars, Christopher D.	Dade City, Fla.	Ordained	2/17/2008	9E
Byrnes, Beth Schultz	Mazomanie, Wis.	Ordained	11/16/2008	5K
Cain, Andrea L.	De Pere, Wis.	Ordained	6/1/2008	5I
Cain, Brian W.	De Pere, Wis.	Ordained	6/1/2008	5I
Carlin, Antoinette J.	Newville, Pa.	Ordained	6/13/2008	8D
Carlson, Meta H.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Ordained	7/27/2008	3G
Carlson, Michelle A.	Keymar, Md.	Ordained	8/10/2008	8F
Carlson, Paul J.	Soldiers Grove, Wis.	Ordained	6/15/2008	5L
Carriker, Naomi Sease	Dillsburg, Pa.	Ordained	8/8/2008	8D
Casey, Jennifer L.	Fort Salonga, N.Y.	Ordained	7/19/2008	7C
Castleberry, Jan L.	Mabank, Texas	Ordained	8/9/2008	4D
Chen, Joshua Ming-Hui	Houston, Texas	Ordained	2/10/2008	4F
Cox, Steven J.	Burton, Texas	Ordained	7/3/2008	4F
Cutter, Sara A.	Centerville, Ohio	Ordained	8/24/2008	6F
Dahl, Jonathan L.	Willmar, Minn.	Ordained	7/20/2008	3F
d'Ambruoso, Abigail C.	Seattle, Wash.	Ordained	8/23/2008	1B
Danchik, Amy E.	Victoria, Texas	Ordained	12/6/2008	4E
DeBoer, Jacob P.	Steele, N.D.	Ordained	8/16/2008	3A
Delgado, Judith	Bronx, N.Y.	Ordained	10/11/2008	7C
Dent, Daniel L.	Arcadia, Ohio	Ordained	11/1/2008	6D
Dobyns, Matthew W.	Mesa, Ariz.	Ordained	6/22/2008	2D
Droge, Nicholas M.	Kerman, Calif.	Ordained	3/30/2008	2A
Duckworth, Christopher T. K.	Arlington, Va.	Ordained	12/20/2008	8G
Duehring, James M.	Marquette, Mich.	Reinstated	3/9/2008	5G
Dukes, Debra K.	New Market, Va.	Ordained	8/30/2008	9A
Dumpys, Jon M.	Oak Park, Ill.	Ordained	8/31/2008	5A
Durig, Gregory B.	Fort Washington, Md.	Ordained	9/6/2008	8G
Eduardos, Charles G.	Rocky River, Ohio	Ordained	1/26/2008	6E
Edwards, Eric M.	East Liverpool, Ohio	Ordained	9/6/2008	6E

Eggemeyer, Diane M.	Miles, Texas	Ordained	8/10/2008	4D
Eggen, John E.	Lincoln, Neb.	Ordained	8/23/2008	4A
Eisenmann, Amy D.	Aurora, Minn.	Ordained	9/6/2008	3E
Ellis-Killian, Sandra C.	Glenside, Pa.	Received from American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware	1/3/2008	7F
Emerson, Joel A.	Spring Hill, Tenn.	Ordained	8/24/2008	9D
Espe, Nicole E.	Belleville, Wis.	Ordained	8/10/2008	5K
Evenson, Raket K.	Bolingbrook, Ill.	Ordained	6/13/2008	5B
Ferguson, Lance R.	Omaha, Neb.	Ordained	5/22/2008	4A
Flinn, Lisa M.	Virginia, Minn.	Ordained	12/7/2008	3E
Flippin, William E. Jr.	Columbus, Ga.	Ordained	11/30/2008	9D
Flohr, Anke	Honolulu, Hawaii	Received from North Elbian Ev. Lutheran Church	3/14/2008	2C
Forsgren, Daniel J. R.	Cannon Falls, Minn.	Ordained	6/7/2008	3I
Fossey, Derek B.	Palm Desert, Calif.	Ordained	8/16/2008	2C
Foster, Teresa	Englewood, Fla.	Ordained	6/22/2008	9E
Franek, Robert A.	Wataga, Ill.	Ordained	6/13/2008	5B
Freiberg, Shane M.	Moreno Valley, Calif.	Ordained	7/26/2008	2C
Frischmann, Margaret D.	Feasterville Trevoise, Pa.	Ordained	1/26/2008	7F
Garey, Kristin V.	Hovland, Minn.	Ordained	4/19/2008	3E
Garton, Darwin D.	Malmo, Neb.	Ordained	10/17/2008	4A
Gast, Jo Ann	Crookston, Minn.	Ordained	4/20/2008	3D
Gelinske, Judy E.	Donnelly, Minn.	Ordained	11/30/2008	3F
Genck, Tasha K.	Eden Prairie, Minn.	Ordained	9/7/2008	3G
Gonnerman, Joy M.	Northfield, Minn.	Ordained	8/24/2008	3I
Goodrich, Regina D.	Yeadon, Pa.	Ordained	12/20/2008	7F
Graber, Joshua A.	Moorhead, Minn.	Ordained	7/27/2008	3D
Grindberg, Kathryn A.	Citrus Heights, Calif.	Ordained	2/23/2008	2A
Grubb, George W.	Mohnton, Pa.	Reinstated	11/16/2008	7E
Gruesu, Paul M.	Greensburg, Pa.	Ordained	6/21/2008	8B
Hackler, Lisa M.	Imperial, Mo.	Reinstated	1/26/2008	4B
Hagen, Melodi K.	Lancaster, Minn.	Ordained	6/14/2008	3D
Haines, Elizabeth A.	Bowers, Pa.	Ordained	8/24/2008	7E
Halter, Deborah K.	Decatur, Ga.	Ordained	8/10/2008	9D
Halvorson, Jonathan B.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Ordained	7/12/2008	3C
Hammersten, Monica McGraw	Minneapolis, Minn.	Ordained	6/1/2008	3G
Hannem, Bruce R.	Nisswa, Minn.	Ordained	8/23/2008	3E
Hansen, Arnold	Manasquan, N.J.	Ordained	5/17/2008	7A
Harkness, Kathleen D.	Southampton, Pa.	Ordained	5/18/2008	7F
Harlow, Melinda A.	Little Rock, Ark.	Ordained	9/27/2008	4C
Hartman, Ronald G.	Sharon, Pa.	Ordained	7/27/2008	8A
Hartweg-Brown, Jennifer	Crescent City, Ill.	Ordained	11/8/2008	5C

Haverlah, Stephen M.	Abilene, Kan.	Ordained	6/15/2008	4B
Hayes, Margaret L.	Dumont, N.J.	Ordained	9/7/2008	7A
Heimgartner, Tammy R.	Connell, Wash.	Ordained	12/13/2008	1D
Heinold, Christopher R.	Ganado, Texas	Ordained	6/7/2008	4E
Helker, William L.	Cottage Grove, Minn.	Ordained	7/16/2008	3H
Hendershot, Dana M.	Naples, Fla.	Ordained	6/29/2008	9E
Henson, Mary Kay	Pontiac, Ill.	Ordained	7/26/2008	5C
Hershberger, Charles L.	Lewistown, Pa.	Ordained	4/6/2008	8E
Hickey, John A.	Goshen, Ind.	Ordained	7/12/2008	6C
Hierlinger, John S.	Fridley, Minn.	Ordained	12/6/2008	3G
Hilkert, Nathan D.	Conyers, Ga.	Ordained	12/7/2008	9D
Hill, Stacy M.	Bentonville, Ark.	Ordained	6/21/2008	4C
Hinrich, Peter D.	Clifton, Ill.	Ordained	2/17/2008	5C
Holben, Brian R.	Palmerton, Pa.	Ordained	8/16/2008	7E
Hoops, Cheryl J.	Harlem, Mont.	Ordained	1/4/2008	1F
Horsch, Beth E.	Plymouth, Minn.	Ordained	1/6/2008	3G
Hoth, Carrie A.	Geneva, Minn.	Ordained	9/13/2008	3I
Houck, James Hiller	Spartanburg, S.C.	Ordained	11/30/2008	9C
Hoverson, Jeffrey A.	Minot, N.D.	Received from Church of the Lutheran Brethren in America	3/17/2008	3A
Howard, Maureen M.	Eureka, Kan.	Ordained	6/21/2008	4B
Hunkler, Cyril B.	Medford, Ore.	Received from Roman Catholic Church	1/5/2008	1E
Hute, Kathryn L.	Claysburg, Pa.	Ordained	7/11/2008	8C
Inbarasu, Inba	Omaha, Neb.	Received from The Arcot Lutheran Church	11/3/2008	4A
Ingelson, Benjamin G.	Channahon, Ill.	Ordained	10/26/2008	5B
Isaackson, Emmy A.	Moorhead, Minn.	Ordained	6/5/2008	3D
Jackson, Emmanuel B.	Katy, Texas	Ordained	8/3/2008	4F
Janssen, Lara L.	Rialto, Calif.	Ordained	10/19/2008	2C
Johnsen, Frederick J.	Fort Hood, Texas	Ordained	9/20/2008	7C
Johnson, Darrel D.	Richardson, Texas	Reinstated	9/12/2008	4D
Johnson, Harvey J.	Grand Island, Neb.	Ordained	4/19/2008	4A
Johnson, Noah W.	Mahtowa, Minn.	Ordained	9/14/2008	3E
Johnston, Timothy D.	Cashton, Wis.	Ordained	6/22/2008	5L
Jones, Ellis O.	Andover, Mass.	Ordained	1/27/2008	7B
Jordan, James D.	Ashburn, Va.	Ordained	11/9/2008	8G
Kaden, Bryant C.	Brooten, Minn.	Ordained	6/20/2008	3F
Kaden, Ruth C.	Jamestown, N.D.	Ordained	8/28/2008	3B
Kaiser, Kevin R.	Stambaugh, Mich.	Ordained	8/24/2008	5G
Keenan, Dawn R.	Cambridge, Ill.	Ordained	10/26/2008	5B
Keller Koch, Katie A.	Gatzke, Minn.	Ordained	4/12/2008	3D
Kern, Michael W.	Albion, Neb.	Ordained	6/21/2008	4A

Kidd, Richard E.	San Antonio, Texas	Ordained	8/16/2008	4E
Kingstorf, Jennifer	Loogootee, Ind.	Ordained	4/5/2008	6C
Klingensmith, Shelly G.	Stuttgart, Kan.	Ordained	6/28/2008	4B
Knox, Kelly F.	Gibbon, Minn.	Ordained	1/6/2008	3F
Knutson, Sherri L.	Salisbury, N.C.	Ordained	3/30/2008	9B
Kopania, Frank	Coral Gables, Fla.	Received from Ev. Church in Hesse & Nassau-EKD	7/31/2008	9E
Krause, Nathan	Rochester, N.Y.	Ordained	8/3/2008	7D
Kremer, Richard H.	Providence, R.I.	Ordained	10/26/2008	7B
Krinke, David T.	Zumbrota, Minn.	Ordained	2/3/2008	3I
Kroeze, William R.	Stamford, Conn.	Ordained	6/6/2008	7B
Lagerstam, Bryan C.	Omaha, Neb.	Ordained	2/17/2008	4A
Lammi, Kurt M.	Dayton, Ohio	Ordained	10/26/2008	6F
Langlais, Michael J.	Norway, Mich.	Received from Evangelical Lutheran Synod	1/20/2008	5G
Langset, Kirk J.	Chatfield, Ohio	Ordained	8/9/2008	6D
Larsen, Travis C.	Boring, Ore.	Ordained	12/7/2008	1E
Leisk, Jeanette D.	Gettysburg, Pa.	Ordained	6/13/2008	8D
Lenz, Dustin W.	Loves Park, Ill.	Ordained	10/26/2008	5B
Lerum, Bruce T.	Jackson, Mich.	Ordained	8/3/2008	6B
Lewis, Linda A.	Hampstead, Md.	Ordained	2/17/2008	8F
Liggett, Amanda M.	Roundup, Mont.	Ordained	9/21/2008	1F
Liverance, Lee L.	Iron Mountain, Mich.	Ordained	4/13/2008	5G
Liverance, Lori L.	Iron Mountain, Mich.	Ordained	4/13/2008	5G
Loizeaux, Stacie G.	Rural Hall, N.C.	Ordained	8/16/2008	9B
Lorenz, Terry J.	Strum, Wis.	Ordained	12/14/2008	5H
Luckey, Amy L.	Chatham, Ill.	Ordained	7/21/2008	5C
Luedeman, Lloyd Leo	Mohawk, Mich.	Ordained	8/16/2008	5G
Lynn, Laura E.	Mount Union, Pa.	Ordained	6/5/2008	8C
Magid, Sigrid R.	Mechanicsburg, Pa.	Ordained	1/25/2008	8D
Malin, Paul J.	Homer Glen, Ill.	Ordained	6/13/2008	5B
Manisto, Christie E.	Princeton, Minn.	Ordained	7/27/2008	3E
Mann, Scott A.	Merrill, Wis.	Ordained	12/27/2008	5I
Marlett, Linda L.	Osseo, Wis.	Ordained	6/28/2008	5H
Marty, Lori A.	Hudson, S.D.	Ordained	12/7/2008	3C
Matson, Aaron C.	Toronto, S.D.	Ordained	7/6/2008	3C
Matson, Christina M.	Watertown, S.D.	Ordained	7/6/2008	3C
McClung, Ronald D.	Fife, Wash.	Ordained	5/30/2008	1C
McGarry, Joseph L.	Baldwinsville, N.Y.	Ordained	8/1/2008	7D
McGrath, Meredith A.	La Crosse, Wis.	Ordained	5/18/2008	5L
McGregor, Jill E.	Baden, Pa.	Ordained	2/2/2008	8B
McIntyre, Robert E.	Hagerstown, Md.	Ordained	6/14/2008	8F
McNitt, Julie M.	Littleton, Colo.	Ordained	10/26/2008	2E

Meckler, Sarah H.	Missoula, Mont.	Ordained	5/17/2008	1F
Merritt, Anna H.	Hickory, N.C.	Ordained	9/28/2008	9B
Meysing, Steven R.	Alliance, Neb.	Transferred from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	11/2/2008	4A
Miller, Danielle L.	Oceanside, N.Y.	Ordained	11/29/2008	7C
Miller, Janet M.	Bristol, S.D.	Ordained	7/21/2008	3C
Miller, Van C.	Shieldsville, Minn.	Ordained	3/2/2008	3I
Minnich, Christina H.	Hanover, Pa.	Ordained	1/25/2008	8D
Miska, Mary E.	Granville, N.D.	Ordained	1/26/2008	3A
Monson, Terry B.	Enderlin, N.D.	Ordained	1/6/2008	3B
Montgomery, Ronald G.	Muncy, Pa.	Ordained	12/13/2008	8E
Mosher, Ted J.	Lawrence, Kan.	Ordained	8/16/2008	4B
Moua, Houa C.	Holmen, Wis.	Ordained	6/5/2008	5L
Murray, Katherine A.	Clinton, Md.	Ordained	8/23/2008	8G
Musser, Melvin R.	West Milton, Ohio	Ordained	9/7/2008	6F
Myallis, Robert J.	Jonestown, Pa.	Ordained	8/8/2008	8D
Myhre, Thomas A.	South Paris, Maine	Reinstated	11/8/2008	7B
Nault, Cassandra K.	West Saint Paul, Minn.	Ordained	10/25/2008	3H
Nelsen, William C.	St. Peter, Minn.	Ordained	6/22/2008	3F
Nelson, Derek R.	Greenville, Pa.	Ordained	10/25/2008	8A
Nelson, Jon O.	Northwood, N.D.	Ordained	6/28/2008	3B
Newhouse, Dana A.	Terre Haute, Ind.	Ordained	9/13/2008	6C
Nienstedt, William B.	Arlington, Va.	Ordained	4/19/2008	8G
Niketh, Jonathan R.	Lynn, Mass.	Ordained	10/26/2008	7B
Nissen, Craig E.	Slayton, Minn.	Ordained	6/29/2008	3F
Noble, Robert S.	Northwood, Ohio	Ordained	6/28/2008	6D
Noble, William D.	Lancaster, Kan.	Ordained	6/25/2008	4B
Nocton, Scott A.	Fridley, Minn.	Ordained	9/21/2008	3G
Nuottila, David W.	Charleston, S.C.	Ordained	7/26/2008	9C
Nyren, Andrew D.	Lincoln, Ill.	Ordained	9/27/2008	5C
Olson, Elaine K.	Champaign, Ill.	Ordained	8/3/2008	5C
Olstead, Alvina M.	Opheim, Mont.	Ordained	10/12/2008	1F
Oslik, Drahomir	Robesonia, Pa.	Received from German Lutheran Church in Slovakia	6/7/2008	7E
Parker, David L.	Warren, Mich.	Ordained	8/4/2008	6A
Parker, Kelsay O.	Richmond, Mich.	Ordained	8/10/2008	6A
Payne, Todd A.	Newbury Park, Calif.	Ordained	11/23/2008	2B
Peacock, Alan W.	Jacksonville, Fla.	Ordained	7/19/2008	9E
Peek, Rosemary E.	Sylva, N.C.	Ordained	12/13/2008	9B
Peters, Rebecca E.	Tomahawk, Wis.	Ordained	5/31/2008	5I
Peterson, David W.	Highmore, S.D.	Ordained	9/27/2008	3C
Plummer, Charles B.	Portsmouth, Ohio	Ordained	10/12/2008	6F



Poock, Matthew A.	Davenport, Iowa	Ordained	6/21/2008	5D
Poole, Carole B.	Chesterton, Ind.	Reinstated	9/26/2008	6C
Powell, Angela E.	Mount Pleasant, N.C.	Ordained	12/6/2008	9B
Punch, Barbara M.	Prineville, Ore.	Ordained	6/8/2008	1E
Pursey, Christi L.	Goliad, Texas	Ordained	7/26/2008	9C
Quanbeck, Benjamin K.	Edgewood, Wash.	Ordained	6/8/2008	1C
Quanbeck, Jennifer L.	Edgewood, Wash.	Ordained	5/24/2008	1C
Quigley, Sara M.	Albia, Iowa	Ordained	9/28/2008	5D
Radtke, Ryan E.	Worthington, Minn.	Ordained	8/24/2008	3F
Raess, Connie J.	Byron, Neb.	Ordained	10/12/2008	4A
Rainson, Diane E.	Waterbury, Conn.	Ordained	10/26/2008	7B
Ramos, Sergio A.	Margate, Fla.	Ordained	9/27/2008	9E
Rasi, Juliet S.	Genoa, Neb.	Ordained	6/28/2008	4A
Rasmussen, Randy L.	Vermillion, S.D.	Ordained	2/17/2008	4A
Rasmussen, Ryan G.	McIntosh, Minn.	Ordained	7/20/2008	3D
Rawn, Sheila K.	Hustisford, Wis.	Ordained	8/31/2008	5K
Reed, Melissa O'Keefe.	Portland, Ore.	Ordained	12/14/2008	1E
Reed, Nancy P.	Kelley, Iowa	Ordained	1/16/2008	5D
Reiten, Kari H.	Everett, Wash.	Ordained	1/20/2008	1B
Retz, Elizabeth A.	Muskegon, Mich.	Ordained	9/18/2008	6B
Reynolds, Donald L.	Edmore, N.D.	Ordained	7/27/2008	3B
Rinas, Joshua D.	Waterbury, Conn.	Ordained	6/6/2008	7B
Ristvedt, Dennis A.	Center, N.D.	Ordained	7/20/2008	3A
Ritchie, David L.	Ironton, Ohio	Ordained	11/1/2008	6F
Roberts, Adam C.	Wishek, N.D.	Ordained	5/17/2008	3A
Robinson, Nathan J.	Woodstock, Va.	Ordained	8/9/2008	9A
Roderick, Jacquelyn H.	Lancaster, Pa.	Ordained	8/8/2008	8D
Rodgers, Susan E.	Paris, Ohio	Ordained	1/26/2008	6E
Roeun, Soriya Y.	Dakota City, Neb.	Ordained	2/9/2008	4A
Rogers, Sharon M.	Algonquin, Ill.	Ordained	4/13/2008	5B
Romsdahl, Randall J.	Shakopee, Minn.	Ordained	1/6/2008	3G
Rupp, Karen S.	Pine Ridge, S.D.	Ordained	5/24/2008	3C
Santos Rolon, Carmelo	Alexandria, Va.	Ordained	2/10/2008	8G
Savarese, Timothy J.	Braham, Minn.	Ordained	10/11/2008	3G
Saxton, Christopher T.	Phoenix, Ariz.	Ordained	4/13/2008	2D
Scheurer, Robert A.	Portland, N.D.	Ordained	4/19/2008	3B
Schlecht, Andrew J.	Kindred, N.D.	Ordained	6/22/2008	3B
Schmidt, Lucas C.	Brooklyn Park, Minn.	Ordained	9/14/2008	3G
Schmidt, Miriam A. E.	Plains, Mont.	Ordained	7/26/2008	1F
Schmiedeskamp, Charlotte F.	Thompson Falls, Mont.	Ordained	3/29/2008	1F
Schmitt, Paula J.	Altoona, Pa.	Ordained	7/27/2008	8C
Schoon, Christine M.	Ottawa, Ill.	Ordained	1/20/2008	5B

Schuster, Elisabeth B.	McClure, Pa.	Ordained	6/21/2008	8E
Schuster, Matthew D.	McClure, Pa.	Ordained	6/21/2008	8E
Seifried, Maureen L.	Punxsutawney, Pa.	Ordained	6/13/2008	8A
Senarighi, Cynthia S.	Mahtomedi, Minn.	Ordained	2/17/2008	3H
Settergren, JaneAnn W.	Ham Lake, Minn.	Ordained	4/13/2008	3G
Seymour, Julia B.	Anchorage, Alaska	Ordained	9/14/2008	1A
Sheets, Benjamin J.	Plover, Wis.	Ordained	1/20/2008	5I
Siegenthaler, Cheryl S.	DeGraff, Ohio	Ordained	5/9/2008	6F
Siffring, Janelle L.	Manson, Iowa	Ordained	9/21/2008	5E
Sipe, K. Raymond	Lexington, N.C.	Ordained	9/3/2008	9B
Sipe, Ruth A.	Lexington, N.C.	Ordained	9/3/2008	9B
Smith, Daniel B.	Hibbing, Minn.	Ordained	7/21/2008	3E
Smith, Erin E.	New Castle, Pa.	Ordained	6/21/2008	8B
Smith, Jean L.	Grove City, Minn.	Ordained	9/28/2008	3F
Smith, Pamela I.	Clearwater, Fla.	Ordained	7/26/2008	9E
Snyder, David A.	Farmersville, Ill.	Ordained	10/12/2008	5C
Snyder, James A.	Winthrop, Minn.	Transferred from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	4/18/2008	3F
Snyder, Lyle A.	Tyler, Minn.	Ordained	11/15/2008	3F
Sorensen, Daniel A.	Seatac, Wash.	Ordained	8/9/2008	1B
Sorrwar-Randall, Naomi S.	Syracuse, N.Y.	Ordained	1/5/2008	7D
Sourwine, Michael J.	Aliquippa, Pa.	Ordained	7/12/2008	8B
Spahr, Brian B.	Indian Trail, N.C.	Ordained	6/29/2008	9B
Spanjers, James L.	Plattsmouth, Neb.	Ordained	5/17/2008	4A
Spears, Heather R.	Davenport, Iowa	Ordained	7/20/2008	5D
Stange, Todd M.	West Warwick, R.I.	Ordained	10/26/2008	7B
Steege, Armin L.	Austin, Texas	Reinstated	2/8/2008	4E
Steinberg, Crystal L.	Racine, Wis.	Ordained	10/12/2008	5J
Steinwand, Dana K.	Viborg, S.D.	Ordained	3/16/2008	3C
Stetler, Roy H. IV	Dillsburg, Pa.	Ordained	8/8/2008	8D
Steubing, Christopher D.	Apple Valley, Minn.	Ordained	5/10/2008	3H
Stillions, Jared A.	Bay City, Texas	Ordained	6/17/2008	4F
Stolberg, Scott R.	Rockford, Ill.	Ordained	8/27/2008	5B
Stout, Ryan D. G.	New York Mills, Minn.	Ordained	6/22/2008	3D
Strickland, Kevin L.	Maryville, Tenn.	Ordained	6/14/2008	9D
Strietelmeier, Karen E.	Bristol, Ind.	Ordained	11/23/2008	6C
Stringer, Elise	Greenville, S.C.	Ordained	7/27/2008	9C
Stroppel-Johnson, Dona	Centerville, Ohio	Ordained	10/26/2008	6F
Stubbendick, Adam J.	Ceresco, Neb.	Ordained	8/2/2008	4A
Stubbendick, Jordan E.	Ceresco, Neb.	Ordained	7/26/2008	4A
Supper, Ralph III	Walnut Creek, Calif.	Ordained	7/20/2008	2A
Taylor, Robert M.	Harlowton, Mont.	Ordained	4/30/2008	1F
Taylor, Sarah E.	Starbuck, Minn.	Ordained	6/29/2008	3F
Thane, Becky L.	Budd Lake, N.J.	Ordained	9/7/2008	7A

Theobald-Rowlands, Emilie	Oakdale, Pa.	Ordained	6/21/2008	8B
Thurston, Linda J.	Hamilton, N.J.	Ordained	2/23/2008	7A
Torgerson, Megan L.	West Saint Paul, Minn.	Ordained	9/20/2008	3H
Toutges, Vicki R.	Westbrook, Minn.	Ordained	7/27/2008	3F
Travis, Benjamin E.	Meadville, Pa.	Ordained	6/8/2008	8A
Triplett, Kim M.	Staunton, Va.	Ordained	6/7/2008	9A
Troftgruben, Troy M.	Grand Forks, N.D.	Ordained	6/8/2008	3B
Trone Garriott, Sarah	Bergton, Va.	Ordained	8/23/2008	9A
van Wakeren, Kari Casper	Miltona, Minn.	Ordained	7/20/2008	3D
Veenendaal, Laurie A.	Madison, Wis.	Ordained	8/9/2008	5K
Vogel, Nancy	Gainesville, Fla.	Ordained	9/14/2008	9E
Vore, Jeremie A.	Greenleaf, Kan.	Ordained	6/17/2008	4B
Voyer, Matthew R.	Alta Vista, Iowa	Ordained	7/26/2008	5F
Wang, Jianhong R.	Renton, Wash.	Ordained	6/22/2008	1B
Wang, Mike G.	Renton, Wash.	Ordained	6/22/2008	1B
Webster, Linda E.	Box Elder, Mont.	Ordained	6/8/2008	1F
Weinberger, Brian S.	Temecula, Calif.	Ordained	11/29/2008	2C
Weis, Laurie K.	La Crosse, Wis.	Ordained	6/27/2008	5L
Weismann, Stoney	Chicago, Ill.	Ordained	6/7/2008	5A
Wendt, James A.	Marinette, Wis.	Ordained	11/16/2008	5G
Wesch, Erika L.	Doylestown, Pa.	Ordained	7/26/2008	7F
Whelan, Sean D.	North Branch, Minn.	Ordained	6/8/2008	3H
Wicklund, Brenda K.	Mora, Minn.	Ordained	9/21/2008	3E
Wilde, Kendra R.	Helena, Mont.	Ordained	7/12/2008	1F
Wilhelm, Anda L.	Gwinner, N.D.	Ordained	6/29/2008	3B
Wills, Jonathan C.	Jersey City, N.J.	Ordained	9/7/2008	7A
Wilson, D. Andrew	Pemberville, Ohio	Ordained	11/22/2008	6D
Winters, Janice C.	Logan, Ohio	Ordained	2/1/2008	6F
Wittmus, Gerald F.	Cedarville, Mich.	Ordained	1/20/2008	5G
Wohlars, Kathleen R.	Mondovi, Wis.	Ordained	6/14/2008	5H
Wolff, Beverly J.	Cushing, Iowa	Ordained	11/23/2008	5E
Woodberry, Eunice L.	Madison, Minn.	Ordained	5/10/2008	3F
Woodley, Grant J.	Grimes, Iowa	Ordained	9/14/2008	5D
Xander, Paul J.	Pottstown, Pa.	Reinstated	3/1/2008	7F
Yadeta, Guta D.	San Leandro, Calif.	Received from Ethiopian Ev. Church Mekane Yesus	1/24/2008	2A
Yarbrough, Elizabeth L.	Raleigh, N.C.	Ordained	12/7/2008	9B
Yong, Siew Fong (Andrew)	Portland, Ore.	Received from Ev. Lutheran Church in Hong Kong	2/21/2008	1E
Zimmerman, Robert F.	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Ordained	1/19/2008	8B

Zittergruen, Steven A.	Swedesburg, Iowa	Ordained	2/19/2008	5D
Zurek, Michael J.	St. John, Ind.	Ordained	11/22/2008	6C

## Appendix E to the Report of the Secretary

### Removals from the Roster of Ordained Ministers 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Reason	Date	Region/ Synod
<b>2007</b>				
Ackerman, J. Emory	San Clemente, Calif.	Deceased	10/21/2007	2C
Ahlich, Wilburn C.	Robstown, Texas	Deceased	7/17/2007	4E
Alderfer, Ralph L.	Royersford, Pa.	Deceased	12/22/2007	7F
Allan, Charles T.	Denton, Texas	Deceased	7/8/2007	4D
Alsop, Albert A.	Vista, Calif.	Deceased	3/20/2007	2C
Amundson, John C.	New Leipzig, N.D.	Resigned	8/30/2007	3A
Anderson, Carl A.	Rock Island, Ill.	Deceased	6/15/2007	5B
Anderson, Charles J.	Sequim, Wash.	Deceased	4/22/2007	1C
Anderson, Delmer T.	Harrisburg, Ore.	Deceased	7/31/2007	1E
Anderson, R. Peter	North Bend, Wash.	Deceased	8/31/2007	1B
Aranda, Carlos A.	Milwaukee, Wis.	Resigned	10/10/2007	5J
Arteaga, Rafael D.	Springfield, Va.	Resigned	2/8/2007	8G
Bak, Melinda K.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Removed	3/17/2007	3H
Bakken, Hardis C.	San Pablo, Calif.	Deceased	5/5/2007	2A
Bartlett, William C.	Lake Forest, Calif.	Removed	3/17/2007	2C
Bartley, Daniel	Palm Beach Garden, Fla.	Resigned	8/20/2007	9E
Bayless, Robert E.	Canal Winchester, Ohio	Deceased	5/21/2007	6F
Belgum, David R.	Iowa City, Iowa	Deceased	4/12/2007	5D
Benson, Leonard R.	Northfield, Minn.	Deceased	9/18/2007	3I
Berg, Alvin C.	Kissimmee, Fla.	Deceased	12/27/2007	9E
Bergh, Larry R.	Hanepepe, Hawaii	Resigned	4/1/2007	8D
Bergson, John A.	Oconomowoc, Wis.	Resigned	1/3/2007	5J
Bergstresser, Paul W.	Orlando, Fla.	Deceased	6/17/2007	9E
Berner, Homer W.	Bellevue, Wash.	Deceased	6/1/2007	1B
Berthelsen, Robert O.	Lincoln, Neb.	Deceased	12/1/2007	4A
Best, Raymond C.	Greensboro, N.C.	Deceased	11/25/2007	9B
Billnitzer, Harold R.	Perrysburg, Ohio	Deceased	1/24/2007	6D
Bjerke, Virgil F.	Seal Beach, Calif.	Deceased	12/19/2007	2C
Blain, Christopher J.	Mankato, Minn.	Resigned	5/31/2007	3I
Boe, Dwight J.	Boulder, Colo.	Deceased	3/8/2007	2E
Bollinger, Larry M.	Sarasota, Fla.	Removed	10/8/2007	9B
Borgen, Theodore N. Jr.	Mazomanie, Wis.	Deceased	9/21/2007	5K
Borger, Carl A.	Lemoyne, Pa.	Deceased	8/28/2007	8D

Bornemann, Peter	Webster, N.Y.	Deceased	5/6/2007	7D
Bowen, Norman A.	Norwalk, Ohio	Deceased	5/22/2007	6D
Boyer, Arthur C.	Oakwood, Va.	Deceased	7/12/2007	8G
Brady, James P.	Carlsbad, Calif.	Deceased	3/22/2007	6F
Britten, Diana L.	Twin Rocks, Pa.	Removed	7/14/2007	8A
Bronstad, David C.	Omaha, Neb.	Deceased	10/1/2007	4A
Brown, Henry K.	Crofton, Md.	Deceased	1/20/2007	8F
Brown, Kevin G.	Fairwater, Wis.	Resigned	1/12/2007	5I
Brown, William M.	Williamsport, Md.	Deceased	3/15/2007	8F
Brubaker, G. Gary	Indiana, Pa.	Deceased	10/10/2007	8B
Brundage, Victoria C.	Greendale, Wis.	Resigned	6/27/2007	5J
Bruneer, John M.	Fresno, Calif.	Deceased	10/17/2007	2A
Bruninga, Clarence L.	Waterford, Conn.	Deceased	11/15/2007	7B
Bryant, Kent E.	Rapid City, S.D.	Resigned	1/7/2007	3C
Burns, Walter M.	St. Joseph, Mo.	Deceased	5/9/2007	4B
Burwa, Gail	Fanwood, N.J.	Removed	10/8/2007	7C
Busdeker, Marlyn C.	Mansfield, Ohio	Deceased	5/12/2007	6D
Cain, Barrett R.	Cleveland, Ohio	Removed	10/8/2007	2E
Caldwell, Robert C.	Ord, Neb.	Deceased	11/12/2007	4A
Campbell, E. Ellsworth	Mansfield, Ohio	Deceased	6/27/2007	2D
Carlson, John N.	Urbandale, Iowa	Deceased	1/18/2007	5D
Carter, Vernon E.	Cambridge, Mass.	Deceased	8/21/2007	7B
Chan, Ka-Yiu	Naperville, Ill.	Removed	10/8/2007	5A
Cholke, Robert W.	Voorhees, N.J.	Deceased	4/25/2007	7A
Clare, R. Donald	Deland, Fla.	Deceased	3/17/2007	9E
Cook, Michael A.	Deltaville, Va.	Removed	3/27/2007	7B
Cox, John A.	Columbus, Ohio	Deceased	1/12/2007	6F
Creadick, Richard G.	Pompton Plains, N.J.	Deceased	12/31/2007	7A
Dahlberg, Christian F.	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Deceased	10/23/2007	8B
Daly, Alexander J. Jr.	Marietta, Ga.	Deceased	3/10/2007	9D
Darrah, John B.	Seattle, Wash.	Deceased	3/30/2007	1B
Dasher, Robert L.	Arden, N.C.	Deceased	4/10/2007	9C
Deffenbaugh, Eric P.	Olathe, Kan.	Resigned	1/6/2007	4B
Delzell, Daniel W.	Papillion, Neb.	Resigned	5/4/2007	4A
Diemer, H. Karl	Marinette, Wis.	Deceased	7/12/2007	5I
Dierk, Henry E.	Clark, N.J.	Deceased	1/21/2007	7A
Dolton, Delmer I.	Dallas, Texas	Deceased	12/25/2007	4D
Dudde, William A.	Arden, N.C.	Deceased	10/1/2007	9B
Durst, Raymond W.	Proctor, Minn.	Deceased	1/20/2007	4E
Eckert, Russell A.	Summerfield, N.C.	Deceased	7/24/2007	9B
Eeman, Carl G.	St. Louis Park, Minn.	Resigned	2/23/2007	3G
Ellefson, Charles T.	New Rockford, N.D.	Deceased	7/27/2007	3B

Emerson, John R.	Fontanelle, Iowa	Removed	6/29/2007	5E
Ericksen, Alan E.	Bowie, Md.	Deceased	11/25/2007	8G
Erickson, Paul E.	Champaign, Ill.	Deceased	4/3/2007	5C
Erlandson, L. Alden	Orlando, Fla.	Deceased	3/9/2007	9E
Esbjornson, Robert G.	St. Peter, Minn.	Deceased	10/26/2007	3F
Fauquet, Amy Newberry	Urbana, Ohio	Deceased	1/11/2007	6F
Fedde, Robert H.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Resigned	8/16/2007	3C
Fischer, Theodore L.	Telford, Pa.	Deceased	4/23/2007	7F
Flathmann, Albert E. Jr.	Hallettsville, Texas	Deceased	9/2/2007	4E
Flatt, Donald C.	Dubuque, Iowa	Deceased	10/6/2007	5F
Framstad, Waldemar	Marinette, Wis.	Deceased	6/14/2007	5G
Freberg, Dale E.	Menomonie, Wis.	Resigned	1/12/2007	5H
Freseman, Richard D.	Mount Vernon, Ohio	Deceased	8/10/2007	6F
Fricke, Bernhard	Livermore, Calif.	Removed	3/31/2007	2A
Fritch, Mark A.	Asheville, N.C.	Resigned	5/24/2007	7E
Garcia, Carlos B.	Downey, Calif.	Deceased	3/10/2007	2B
Garred, Willard R.	Des Moines, Iowa	Deceased	11/30/2007	5D
Gjelten, Ernest A.	Tumwater, Wash.	Deceased	8/11/2007	1C
Glaeske, Larry C.	Noonan, N.D.	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	8/1/2007	3A
Goldsworthy, John W.	Emmaus, Pa.	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	12/9/2007	7E
Golz, Friedhelm	Merced, Calif.	Removed	10/9/2007	2A
Goodrich, Allen L.	Mohawk, Mich.	Deceased	2/15/2007	5G
Gornitzka, A. Reuben	Edina, Minn.	Deceased	2/11/2007	2D
Gravrock, Howard C.	Red Wing, Minn.	Deceased	3/25/2007	3I
Griesse, Robert L.	Golden Valley, Minn.	Deceased	9/8/2007	7B
Gritzke, Warren W.	Nantucket, Mass.	Deceased	8/10/2007	5C
Gronlund, Robert B.	West Palm Beach, Fla.	Deceased	9/9/2007	9E
Grosc, LaVern K.	Lincoln, Neb.	Deceased	7/28/2007	4A
Grosenbacher, Clifford C.	Victoria, Texas	Deceased	1/16/2007	4E
Guillory, J. Kevin	Timonium, Md.	Removed	4/9/2007	8F
Gullickson, James A.	Inver Grove Heights, Minn.	Resigned	6/30/2007	3G
Guttu, Lyle R.	Staten Island, N.Y.	Deceased	12/16/2007	7C
Gyle, Francis G.	Elkton, Fla.	Deceased	1/18/2007	9E
Hackenberg, Willard I.	Upper Darby, Pa.	Deceased	10/10/2007	7F
Hackmann, Augustus	Baltimore, Md.	Deceased	12/20/2007	8F
Haertel, Charles W.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	11/20/2007	3I
Hafermann, Henry H.	Rantoul, Ill.	Deceased	10/29/2007	5C
Halvorson, John V.	San Antonio, Texas	Deceased	10/2/2007	4D
Hellwig, Mary Z.	St. Louis, Mo.	Resigned	9/10/2007	4B
Hendricks, John W.	Jensen Beach, Fla.	Deceased	1/2/2007	9D

Herbon, Herbert L.	East Jordan, Mich.	Deceased	5/18/2007	6B
Herr, Wangkao J.	St. Paul, Minn.	Removed	3/17/2007	3H
Hess, Winfried R.	New York, N.Y.	Removed	10/8/2007	7C
Hilpert, Theodore W.	Lebanon, Tenn.	Removed	1/26/2007	9D
Hintz, Waldemar G.	Seattle, Wash.	Deceased	6/26/2007	1B
Hodum, Kenneth J.	Milbank, S.D.	Deceased	5/10/2007	3C
Hoefler, Erich A.	Tempe, Ariz.	Deceased	7/23/2007	2D
Hoeger, August J. Jr.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	5/24/2007	3C
Hoffmeyer, Ralph W. Sr.	Brunswick, Ga.	Deceased	9/12/2007	9D
Hogie, Julie K.	Coon Rapids, Minn.	Resigned	5/3/2007	5A
Hoh, Pamela J.	Schenectady, N.Y.	Removed	12/31/2007	7D
Hollar, Jerry L.	Salisbury, N.C.	Deceased	9/14/2007	9B
Hope, Thomas B.	Seattle, Wash.	Removed	10/8/2007	8G
Horn, Henry E.	Cambridge, Mass.	Deceased	1/29/2007	7B
Houck, Linford D.	Plant City, Fla.	Resigned	9/15/2007	9E
Hove, Scott K.	Henderson, Nev.	Removed	2/24/2007	2D
Howell, Charles W.	Bristol, Tenn.	Deceased	11/20/2007	9A
Hunsberger, David L.	Narvon, Pa.	Deceased	12/30/2007	8D
Ismir, Samih A.	Fort Collins, Colo.	Deceased	1/25/2007	3A
Jacobson, Carl D.	Salem, Ohio	Resigned	11/7/2007	6E
Jarvis, Wayne L.	Kerrville, Texas	Deceased	11/20/2007	4E
Jarvis-Schroeder, Jennifer	Springfield, Ohio	Resigned	8/31/2007	3I
Jasch, Stephen R.	Grinnell, Iowa	Deceased	1/22/2007	5D
Jensen, Andrew G.	Lincoln, Neb.	Deceased	3/2/2007	4A
Jensen, Gary W.	Kent, Wash.	Resigned	7/30/2007	1B
Jensen, Gilbert A.	Fairfield, Calif.	Deceased	4/2/2007	2A
Jimenez, Manuel F.	Islas Canarias	Deceased	9/30/2007	9F
Johnson, Eldred P.	Turtle Lake, N.D.	Deceased	3/26/2007	3A
Johnson, Ernest R.	Centralia, Wash.	Deceased	1/23/2007	1C
Johnson, Marvin D.	Rockford, Ill.	Deceased	3/13/2007	5B
Johnson, William L.	Akron, Ohio	Deceased	10/27/2007	6E
Kabele, Martin G.	Shawnee Mission, Kan.	Deceased	3/21/2007	4B
Kangas, Henry R.	Ontonagon, Mich.	Deceased	4/23/2007	5G
Karlstad, Alfred M.	Selma, Calif.	Deceased	6/19/2007	2A
Kasper, Deborah L.	Torrance, Calif.	Removed	7/1/2007	3G
Kearse, Barbara A.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Deceased	8/22/2007	7C
Keip, Dennis R.	West Palm Beach, Fla.	Removed	2/16/2007	9E
Kerschmar, Charles K.	Bethlehem, Pa.	Deceased	3/20/2007	7E
Kimbauer, Elli M.	Crescent City, Calif.	Removed	10/9/2007	2A
Kindschuh, Eugene H.	Warren, Ore.	Deceased	10/26/2007	1E
Knudsen, Richard I.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	7/10/2007	3G
Knudten, Richard D.	Mequon, Wis.	Deceased	5/12/2007	5J

Knutson, Selmer C.	Rochester, Minn.	Deceased	3/11/2007	5H
Koenig, Daryl D.	New Braunfels, Texas	Deceased	5/31/2007	4E
Koester, Joyce L.	Austin, Texas	Removed	8/29/2007	7D
Kvamme, Kristen H.	Decorah, Iowa	Deceased	2/9/2007	5F
Lackey, Jacob L.	Charlotte, N.C.	Deceased	8/26/2007	9B
Lambert, Joseph A.	Webster City, Iowa	Resigned	7/9/2007	5F
Lapp, Marvin D.	Ryder, N.D.	Deceased	1/21/2007	3A
Larsen, Robert W.	Ammon, Idaho	Deceased	6/8/2007	1D
Larson, Scott S.	West Seneca, N.Y.	Removed	5/1/2007	7D
Larson, Walter O.	La Crosse, Wis.	Deceased	2/15/2007	5L
Lassen, Manfred J.	Oberlin, Ohio	Deceased	12/10/2007	6E
Laurell, Paul A.	Norton, Mass.	Deceased	5/3/2007	7B
Lawrence, Roger S.	Georgetown, Ohio	Deceased	9/13/2007	6F
Lehman, Herman A.	Stoughton, Wis.	Deceased	1/4/2007	5A
Logan, John D.	Boiling Springs, Pa.	Deceased	3/14/2007	8D
Lynn, David W.	Thornton, Colo.	Deceased	6/19/2007	9E
Madland, Herman T.	Burnsville, Minn.	Deceased	1/4/2007	3H
Maland, Timothy R.	Eagan, Minn.	Deceased	9/28/2007	3G
Malfatti, John W.	Kissimmee, Fla.	Deceased	3/23/2007	9E
Marohn, Donald R.	San Diego, Calif	Deceased	9/3/2007	2C
Martinez, Margarita	Carolina, Puerto Rico	Deceased	3/11/2007	9F
Mattheis, Albert H.	Litchville, N.D.	Deceased	1/2/2007	3B
Mayer, Joel H.	Payson, Ariz.	Deceased	1/31/2007	2D
McCulloch, Ron A.	Lake Oswego, Ore.	Removed	5/17/2007	1E
Mees, Walter H.	San Gabriel, Calif.	Deceased	6/30/2007	2B
Melbye, David H.	Libertyville, Ill.	Deceased	11/20/2007	5A
Merkel, Jeffrey A.	Fairbanks, Alaska	Removed	6/10/2007	1A
Meyer, Gilbert J.	Wausau, Wis.	Deceased	6/6/2007	5I
Mitchell, Jane	Red Deer, Alberta	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	11/1/2007	2E
Molldrem, Ariel R.	Moorhead, Minn.	Deceased	11/5/2007	3D
Moore, Ronald S.	San Leandro, Calif.	Resigned	8/27/2007	2A
Moorhead, Gerald E.	Martinsburg, Pa.	Deceased	11/4/2007	8C
Morin, Elaine M.	North Providence, R.I.	Removed	5/1/2007	7B
Morrill, John C. II	Gettysburg, Pa.	Resigned	4/2/2007	8D
Morton, Wallace E. Sr.	Clemson, S.C.	Deceased	4/12/2007	9B
Moskowitz, Robert A.	Wooster, Ohio	Removed	5/19/2007	6E
Mouland, Cyril J.	Northford, Conn.	Deceased	11/14/2007	7B
Mua, Naw-Karl	Oakdale, Minn.	Removed	3/17/2007	3H
Myers, Howard W.	Cookeville, Tenn.	Deceased	12/28/2007	6F
Neibacher, Albert L. Jr.	Eagan, Minn.	Deceased	1/6/2007	3G
Nelson, Allen C.	Rock Island, Ill.	Deceased	4/22/2007	5D



Nelson, James A.	Palm Harbor, Fla.	Deceased	2/10/2007	9E
Nelson, Norman B.	Tillamook, Ore.	Deceased	6/5/2007	1E
Nelson, Robert G.	Loveland, Colo.	Deceased	10/7/2007	2E
Ness, Terje	Webster, Minn.	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	5/1/2007	3I
Nielsen, Mark R.	Mundelein, Ill.	Removed	10/8/2007	5A
Nitschke, Dennis R.	Sierra Vista, Ariz.	Resigned	8/28/2007	2D
O'Hara, Ilze M.	Glen Head, N.Y.	Removed	10/8/2007	7C
Odmark, Gordon N.	Barnegat, N.J.	Deceased	8/6/2007	7A
Ofsdahl, Donald C.	Garden Ridge, Texas	Resigned	5/14/2007	4E
Ohlmann, Timothy G.	Joplin, Mo.	Resigned	2/2/2007	4B
Okland, Theodore S.	La Grande, Ore.	Deceased	9/3/2007	1E
Oman, Lyman F.	Severna Park, Md.	Deceased	3/10/2007	5H
Pailen, Donald	Detroit, Mich.	Resigned	9/30/2007	6A
Pederson, Lee D.	Davenport, N.D.	Deceased	10/19/2007	3B
Persaud, Krishen A.	Sioux City, Iowa	Deceased	4/30/2007	5E
Person, Thad S.	Lolo, Mont.	Removed	10/9/2007	1F
Peterson, Harry L.	Faribault, Minn.	Deceased	9/19/2007	3I
Peterson, Ordell W.	Rock Island, Ill.	Deceased	2/17/2007	5B
Pickelhaupt, F. Richard	St. Clair Shores, Mich.	Deceased	11/10/2007	6A
Rank, Ramona Soto	Portland, Ore.	Deceased	1/12/2007	1E
Rappold, William G.	Altoona, Pa.	Deceased	3/6/2007	8C
Rehl, Thomas E.	Land O'Lakes, Fla.	Deceased	2/12/2007	9E
Reidy, Philip L.	Brunswick, Maine	Resigned	10/1/2007	7B
Reihman, Susan E.	Coralville, Iowa	Resigned	3/30/2007	5D
Riley, Bruce	Tracy, Calif.	Removed	4/1/2007	2A
Rimmer, J. Paul	Newton, N.C.	Deceased	4/29/2007	9B
Ringo, Herbert R.	Seattle, Wash.	Deceased	10/25/2007	1B
Rismiller, Robert H.	Redmond, Wash.	Deceased	4/13/2007	1B
Rizer, Kurt L.	Vancouver, Wash.	Deceased	1/3/2007	1E
Roberts, Lance J.	Negaunee, Mich.	Deceased	6/24/2007	5G
Roberts, Thomas C.	Wapakoneta, Ohio	Deceased	7/8/2007	6D
Rodriguez, Victor M.	Ocala, Fla.	Deceased	6/17/2007	9E
Rogers, Charles W.	Port Clinton, Ohio	Deceased	4/28/2007	6D
Romeis, David H.	Walnut Creek, Calif.	Deceased	5/16/2007	2A
Rose-Kamprath, Peter J.	Scottsdale, Ariz.	Removed	4/21/2007	6D
Rudisill, Lester E.	Ephrata, Pa.	Deceased	10/23/2007	8D
Rush, Linda W.	Chelan, Wash.	Resigned	10/1/2007	1C
Russell, Patrick III	Westlake Village, Calif.	Deceased	1/26/2007	7F
Saffen, Wayne E.	Manteca, Calif.	Deceased	8/18/2007	2A
Sahl, Thomas J.	Beatrice, Neb.	Removed	10/12/2007	3C

Sanborn, John B.	Shrewsbury, Vt.	Deceased	8/10/2007	7B
Schahczenski, Mark H.	Marinette, Wis.	Removed	9/10/2007	5G
Schalkhauser, Erhard H.	East Lansing, Mich.	Deceased	1/31/2007	6B
Schmeling, Bradley E.	Atlanta, Ga.	Removed	7/2/2007	9D
Schmidt, Hugo G. Jr.	Winchester, Va.	Deceased	5/9/2007	9A
Schmidt, J. Edward	Gaithersburg, Md.	Deceased	10/27/2007	8G
Schrader, David L. Sr.	Shippensburg, Pa.	Deceased	12/16/2007	8F
Schultz Rothermel, Michael C.	Kenmore, Wash.	Resigned	11/28/2007	1B
Schultz, Gustav H.	Berkeley, Calif.	Deceased	12/3/2007	2A
Scott, Carol L.	Inglewood, Calif.	Deceased	9/25/2007	2B
Sebastian, Richard A.	Guyton, Ga.	Resigned	7/2/2007	9D
Seboldt, Roland H. A.	Edina, Minn.	Deceased	2/24/2007	3G
Serbe, George C. Jr.	Modesto, Calif.	Deceased	12/16/2007	9E
Shaft, Jearald J.	Shawnee Mission, Kan.	Deceased	2/18/2007	4B
Shealy, Wallace H.	Shreveport, La.	Resigned	2/16/2007	4D
Sheets, Robert J. Jr.	Deptford, N.J.	Deceased	4/12/2007	7A
Shen, Joel Hui-Tsu	Tacoma, Wash.	Deceased	6/20/2007	1C
Siedem, John M.	Ruskin, Fla.	Deceased	12/13/2007	9E
Simane, Michael R.	Smithsburg, Md.	Removed	5/5/2007	8F
Simerman, Kurt A.	Leo, Ind.	Deceased	11/7/2007	6C
Skibsrud, Alvin O.	Fargo, N.D.	Deceased	4/14/2007	1F
Smith, Louis C.	Riverside, Calif.	Deceased	9/5/2007	2C
Smith, Paul H.	Timonium, Md.	Deceased	8/29/2007	8F
Smithson, Paul C.	Port Angeles, Wash.	Resigned	10/1/2007	1C
Solberg, Charles M.	Red Wing, Minn.	Deceased	3/26/2007	3I
Solberg, Oliver S.	Appleton, Wis.	Deceased	1/8/2007	5I
Sorenson, Robert L.	Grand Marais, Minn.	Deceased	1/17/2007	3E
Sovik, Ansgar	Northfield, Minn.	Deceased	1/19/2007	3I
Spake, Eric A.	Sioux City, Iowa	Resigned	11/30/2007	5H
Spangler, Ernest A.	Mantua, N.J.	Deceased	2/16/2007	7A
Spaulding, Kent E.	Tacoma, Wash.	Deceased	7/14/2007	1C
Spitler, Kenneth C.	Fort Mill, S.C.	Removed	11/26/2007	9C
Spitz, Thomas	Port Washington, N.Y.	Deceased	11/2/2007	7C
Sponheim, Donald M.	Apple Valley, Minn.	Deceased	10/5/2007	3H
Stauffer, S. Anita	Melrose Park, Ill.	Deceased	6/26/2007	5A
Stave, Deborah Gulbro	Alamogordo, N.M.	Removed	1/20/2007	3B
Stine, Mires C.	Gilbertsville, Pa.	Deceased	7/27/2007	7E
Stroup, R. Paul	Orrville, Ohio	Deceased	12/14/2007	6E
Stuempfle, Herman G. Jr.	Gettysburg, Pa.	Deceased	3/12/2007	8D
Summer, R. Richard	Boring, Ore.	Deceased	12/24/2007	1E
Sundby, Gerald D.	Everett, Wash.	Deceased	7/31/2007	1B
Swanson, Roland H.	Redmond, Wash.	Deceased	1/8/2007	1B
Swartzfager, George K.	Wooster, Ohio	Deceased	12/9/2007	6E
Swidzinski, Larry A.	Butler, Pa.	Deceased	3/12/2007	8B

Tang, Paul	Skokie, Ill.	Deceased	2/24/2007	5A
Tassler, Michael E.	Las Cruces, N.M.	Resigned	9/10/2007	8G
Tengbom, Daniel E.	Kennewick, Wash.	Removed	3/1/2007	1D
Tengesdal, Peter N.	Poulsbo, Wash.	Deceased	11/21/2007	1C
Tollefson, E. Duane	Alexandria, Minn.	Deceased	3/17/2007	3D
Tomsuden, Henry L.	Waltham, Mass.	Deceased	5/13/2007	7B
Touhsaent, Wilson E.	Naples, Fla.	Deceased	10/7/2007	7E
Tschudin, Dell B.	Papillion, Neb.	Removed	10/8/2007	4A
Tungseth, Erling M.	Cambridge, Minn.	Deceased	7/21/2007	3G
Ulvilden, Richard G.	Decorah, Iowa	Deceased	12/9/2007	5H
Van Gaasbeek, Tuula E.	Louisville, Ky.	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	12/1/2007	6C
Van Scoy, Rennix L.	Toledo, Ohio	Deceased	3/1/2007	6D
VandeWalle, Mary Jo	South Haven, Mich.	Removed	12/1/2007	6B
Vetter, Ernest W.	Gresham, Ore.	Deceased	5/8/2007	1E
Vineyard, Constance M.	Woodinville, Wash.	Resigned	1/2/2007	1B
von Waldow, H. Eberhard	Glenshaw, Pa.	Deceased	12/15/2007	8B
Wagner, Donald E.	Cupertino, Calif.	Deceased	2/8/2007	2A
Wake, William B.	Richmond, Va.	Deceased	7/11/2007	9A
Wallace, G. Bradford	Laurel, Md.	Deceased	1/13/2007	8D
Wartluft, David J.	Robesonia, Pa.	Deceased	7/9/2007	7E
Wendland, Mark J.	Glenville, Minn.	Resigned	4/16/2007	3I
Werner, Carl A.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Deceased	3/5/2007	7E
Wessinger, John W.	Chapin, S.C.	Deceased	12/19/2007	9C
Wetzel, Larry T.	Bethlehem, Pa.	Resigned	1/31/2007	7E
White, Robert J.	Toledo, Ohio	Resigned	10/18/2007	6D
Whitson, L. Stanley	Westminster, Md.	Deceased	3/6/2007	8F
Wieseman, Beth E.	Westland, Mich.	Deceased	8/26/2007	6A
Wietzke, Walter R.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	1/13/2007	3G
Wingard, Henry S.	Myrtle Beach, S.C.	Resigned	2/24/2007	9C
Wittman, Walter E.	Downers Grove, Ill.	Deceased	12/16/2007	5A
Woita, Steven R.	Creston, Ill.	Resigned	6/7/2007	5B
Wright, John E.	Olympia, Wash.	Resigned	11/15/2007	2C
Wuestefeld, Gustav A.	Collingswood, N.J.	Deceased	5/10/2007	7A
Ylvisaker, David N.	League City, Texas	Deceased	9/1/2007	6C
Yoder, Keith D.	Reading, Pa.	Removed	3/1/2007	7E
Youngdale, Kermit E.	Brainerd, Minn.	Deceased	4/21/2007	3E
Zatroch, Shirley W.	New Brighton, Minn.	Removed	3/17/2007	3H
Ziegert, Ann	Oak Park, Ill.	Resigned	12/15/2007	5B
Zimmerman, Kenneth W.	Mechanicsburg, Pa.	Deceased	4/22/2007	8D

Zinger, Don H.	Urbandale, Iowa	Deceased	9/18/2007	5D
Zoltner, William J.	Gahanna, Ohio	Deceased	9/18/2007	6F

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Aanestad, Ragnvald S.	Federal Way, Wash.	Deceased	11/14/2008	3B
Acer, Alfred C.	Eatontown, N.J.	Deceased	6/13/2008	7A
Andersen, Rudolf C.	Ontario, Calif.	Deceased	10/24/2008	2C
Anderson, Paul E.	Duluth, Ga.	Deceased	10/25/2008	9E
Anderson, R. Barry	Starbuck, Minn.	Removed	11/20/2008	3F
Anderson, William A.	Waco, Texas	Deceased	1/18/2008	4D
Andrae, Hans O.	Jeannette, Pa.	Resigned	1/20/2008	8B
Aubrey, David G.	Bellevue, Wash.	Removed	10/4/2008	1C
Baker, Curtis W.	Sagerton, Texas	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	4/20/2008	4D
Baldwin, H. Burnell	Litchfield, Minn.	Deceased	10/30/2008	3F
Barber, Robert E.	North Miami, Fla.	Removed	12/13/2008	9E
Bargmann, Jens G.	Annapolis, Md.	Resigned	1/1/2008	8F
Bergman, T. Robert	Temecula, Calif.	Deceased	12/29/2008	2C
Biemiller, Harry L. Jr.	North Fort Myers, Fla.	Deceased	12/25/2008	9E
Bileck, Gregor	Pine Grove, Pa.	Removed	7/14/2008	7E
Bileck, Liddy J.	Pine Grove, Pa.	Removed	7/1/2008	7E
Bloomquist, Carl W.	East Greenwich, R.I.	Deceased	1/17/2008	7B
Boeschen, Jane L.	Tekamah, Neb.	Deceased	4/30/2008	4A
Bomgren, Jonathan K.	Farmington Hills, Mich.	Deceased	3/30/2008	6A
Boschee, Gary M.	Essex, Iowa	Resigned	3/1/2008	5D
Boyer, Carroll L.	Boonsboro, Md.	Deceased	6/22/2008	8F
Boyer, Merle W.	Kenosha, Wis.	Deceased	7/16/2008	5J
Braaten, Conrad S.	Sun City, Ariz.	Deceased	12/11/2008	2D
Brown, Perry L.	Roseville, Minn.	Deceased	2/5/2008	5F
Brunschcen, David E.	Evergreen, Colo.	Deceased	10/4/2008	2E
Buechler, Robert A.	Starkweather, N.D.	Resigned	1/31/2008	3B
Bundy, Glenn L.	Commanche, Texas	Deceased	7/6/2008	4D
Carlson, William E.	Accident, Md.	Deceased	11/1/2008	8H
Carlstrom, R. Edward	Phoenix, Ariz.	Deceased	12/18/2008	2D
Caspar, Theodore R.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	2/28/2008	7B
Cassell, Robert E.	Lumberton, Texas	Deceased	1/11/2008	6F
Castor, David L.	Cary, N.C.	Deceased	5/4/2008	9B
Caton, James L. II	Clarksburg, W.Va.	Resigned	11/14/2008	8H
Charles, Todd H.	San Francisco, Calif.	Removed	10/4/2008	3C
Ciesielski, Donald G.	El Paso, Texas	Deceased	3/30/2008	2E
Clark, Robert R.	Middletown, Pa.	Deceased	5/16/2008	8E
Clark, Terry D.	Virginia Beach, Va.	Deceased	2/17/2008	9A
Coffey, John W. Jr.	Klamath Falls, Ore.	Deceased	10/18/2008	1E

Cohen, M. Liselotte	Amsterdam, N.Y.	Resigned	5/1/2008	7D
Cope, Allan F.	San Antonio, Texas	Deceased	12/26/2008	4E
Crissman, Dennis E.	Mifflintown, Pa.	Removed	4/29/2008	8E
Czigan, Terry K.	Kissimmee, Fla.	Removed	12/13/2008	9E
Danforth, Rick C.	Bellevue, Neb.	Resigned	4/21/2008	4B
Davies, Jack D.	Concord, Calif.	Deceased	6/25/2008	2A
Davis, James W.	Catonsville, Md.	Deceased	4/4/2008	8F
Davis, Raymond E. Jr.	Savannah, Ga.	Deceased	4/4/2008	9D
Dawson, Paul F.	Kenosha, Wis.	Deceased	10/19/2008	5J
DeGreen, Christopher C.	Helena, Ala.	Resigned	1/6/2008	9D
DeMars, David D.	Willmar, Minn.	Resigned	4/29/2008	3F
Dierks, Roger C.	De Witt, Iowa	Deceased	7/17/2008	6C
Doxey, Robert E.	East Aurora, N.Y.	Deceased	11/7/2008	7D
Drum, Harold A.	Conover, N.C.	Deceased	12/9/2008	9B
Edlen, Robert G.	Rockford, Ill.	Deceased	9/23/2008	5B
Edsell, Robert W. Sr.	Mooreville, N.C.	Deceased	11/5/2008	9B
Eichner, Myron A.	Colorado Springs, Colo.	Deceased	12/7/2008	2E
Eisenbraun, Helmuth T.	Smithville, Mo.	Resigned	6/16/2008	4B
Elvemo, Ann Christin	Tromsø, Norway	Resigned	9/15/2008	3E
Evavold, Curtis G.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Removed	10/4/2008	3E
Fibranz, Michael J.	McPherson, Kan.	Deceased	4/16/2008	4B
Fisher, Donald J.	Dana Point, Calif.	Deceased	5/7/2008	2C
Forsberg, Paul O.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	5/8/2008	3G
Frazier, Vernon F.	Laguna Woods, Calif.	Deceased	1/9/2008	2C
Furreboe, Robert J.	Arlington Heights, Ill.	Deceased	3/23/2008	5A
Gabel, Edward P.	Flanagan, Ill.	Deceased	6/22/2008	5C
Gabel, Gary R.	Ivanhoe, Minn.	Deceased	12/16/2008	3F
Gensmer, Deborah M.	Bloomington, Minn.	Removed	10/4/2008	6A
Giffin, Dale R.	Canfield, Ohio	Resigned	11/16/2008	6E
Gilberts, Ernest O.	Milwaukee, Wis.	Deceased	4/8/2008	5J
Gilbertson, Edward A.	Pierre, S.D.	Deceased	10/17/2008	3C
Gold, Victor Roland	Oakland, Calif.	Deceased	9/17/2008	2A
González Gómez, Hildegardo	Escondido, Calif.	Resigned	4/15/2008	2C
Graff, Robert L.	Lakeville, Minn.	Resigned	6/13/2008	9B
Greene, Marvin E.	Boise, Idaho	Deceased	11/20/2008	1D
Gregerson, William A.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Deceased	4/8/2008	3C
Greninger, Reed A.	Fairfax, Va.	Deceased	1/16/2008	7C
Grevenow, Howard O.	Columbus, Ohio	Deceased	9/15/2008	6F
Griffeth, Francis C.	Marion, Iowa	Deceased	9/6/2008	5D
Griffith, Perry B.	Anna Maria, Fla.	Deceased	1/19/2008	9E
Gross, Scott C.	Cranberry Twp, Pa.	Resigned	1/24/2008	8B

Gummere, Rebecca J.	Sugar Grove, N.C.	Resigned	5/20/2008	9B
Gunnerson, Charles M.	Everett, Wash.	Deceased	11/13/2008	1B
Gustafson, Alvar W.	New Britain, Conn.	Deceased	4/9/2008	7B
Hadfield, Richard L.	Carlisle, Pa.	Deceased	2/1/2008	8D
Hagen, Roy P.	Goshen, Ind.	Deceased	6/19/2008	3H
Handeland, Larry L.	Pleasanton, Texas	Deceased	9/10/2008	4E
Hanna, Kamal J.	Cabot, Pa.	Deceased	3/10/2008	8B
Hansen, Allan D.	Silverton, Ore.	Deceased	11/14/2008	1E
Hanson, Anders B.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	7/14/2008	3G
Hanson, Edward R.	Pittsfield, Mass.	Deceased	9/20/2008	7B
Hanson, Steven M.	Bakersfield, Calif.	Deceased	8/26/2008	2B
Harding, Beverly J.	Browns Mills, N.J.	Deceased	3/5/2008	7A
Haslage, Robert P.	Stuart, Fla.	Deceased	12/28/2008	9E
Haygeman, E. Will	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Deceased	6/20/2008	3C
Helmick, Kimberly A.	Fort Dodge, Iowa	Resigned	11/2/2008	5E
Henry, Mark W.	Salisbury, Md.	Deceased	8/26/2008	8F
Hiller, Michael T.	San Francisco, Calif.	Removed	12/6/2008	2A
Himmelman, Donald R.	Palm Harbor, Fla.	Deceased	8/24/2008	9E
Hintermeyer, Vernon A.	Burnsville, Minn.	Deceased	5/9/2008	3G
Hoiland, Theol S.	Tacoma, Wash.	Deceased	8/3/2008	1C
Holmquist, Peter A. M.	Stockton, Calif.	Removed	7/25/2008	2A
Houser, J. Raymond Jr.	Aliquippa, Pa.	Deceased	7/18/2008	8B
Huke, Merlyn O.	Bella Vista, Ark.	Deceased	7/18/2008	3C
Hulstrand, Eric J.	Eden Prairie, Minn.	Resigned	4/15/2008	3G
Jackson, Elder W.	St. Peter, Minn.	Deceased	11/29/2008	3F
Jacobs, Vernon F.	Omaha, Neb.	Deceased	7/13/2008	4A
Jacobson, Erling A.	Sun City, Ariz.	Deceased	9/4/2008	2D
Jeffs, William George	Waldport, Ore.	Deceased	12/15/2008	1E
Jensen, Russell P.	Santa Maria, Calif.	Deceased	9/27/2008	3G
Jetty, John G.	Mesa, Ariz.	Deceased	11/30/2008	2D
Johnson, A. R. Herbert	El Cajon, Calif.	Deceased	10/15/2008	2C
Johnson, Ernest M.	Blooming Prairie, Minn.	Deceased	8/20/2008	3I
Johnson, Helen M.	Appleton, Wis.	Removed	9/28/2008	5L
Johnson, Keith P.	Melbourne, Fla.	Deceased	4/18/2008	9E
Johnson, Lester C.	Escalon, Calif.	Deceased	3/2/2008	2A
Johnson, Luther M.	Denver, Colo.	Deceased	10/5/2008	2E
Johnson, Nils Jr.	Kutztown, Pa.	Deceased	9/26/2008	7E
Johnson, Oscar E.	Iowa City, Iowa	Deceased	8/17/2008	5D
Johnson, Richard	Neenah, Wis.	Deceased	11/16/2008	5I
Johnson, Waldo S.	Wausau, Wis.	Deceased	7/6/2008	5I
Jones, Vernon F.	London, Ohio	Deceased	4/29/2008	6F
Jorgensen, Karen M.	Henniker, N.H.	Removed	10/4/2008	7B

Karlen, Marloe H.	Lancaster, Ohio	Deceased	4/25/2008	6F
Kaste, Steven E.	Cadott, Wis.	Resigned	7/23/2008	5H
Kasten, Edward W.	Seattle, Wash.	Deceased	8/9/2008	1B
Kelling, Rudy A.	Brenham, Texas	Deceased	5/14/2008	4F
Kennedy, John L.	Westerville, Ohio	Deceased	6/8/2008	6F
Kenosian, Mary L.	Eau Claire, Wis.	Resigned	2/4/2008	5F
Kern, Charles M.	Macungie, Pa.	Deceased	6/21/2008	7E
Keyser, Albert W.	St. Petersburg, Fla.	Deceased	12/11/2008	9E
Kleckley, Russell C.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Resigned	1/1/2008	9C
Kleingartner, Connie	Chicago, Ill.	Deceased	8/21/2008	5H
Kleintop, Arthur W. Jr.	Bethlehem, Pa.	Deceased	4/11/2008	7E
Knudsen, Stephen B.	Las Vegas, Nev.	Deceased	12/6/2008	2D
Koehler, Walter C. Jr.	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Deceased	9/6/2008	8B
Kokenda, Paul F.	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Deceased	1/19/2008	8B
Koones, James D.	Coopersburg, Pa.	Removed	6/28/2008	7E
Kukkonen, Walter J.	Roseville, Minn.	Deceased	7/2/2008	2D
Landdeck, Fred J.	Las Cruces, N.M.	Deceased	12/10/2008	2E
Lang, Robert W.	Thor, Iowa	Deceased	11/17/2008	5E
Langehough, John O.	Sun City, Ariz.	Deceased	3/15/2008	2D
Lantz, Robert B.	Annapolis, Md.	Deceased	7/5/2008	8F
Lauchnor, Mark A.	New Holland, Pa.	Deceased	7/26/2008	7E
Lazareth, William H.	Bar Harbor, Maine	Deceased	2/23/2008	7C
Leas, Stanley J.	Tampa, Fla.	Deceased	9/19/2008	9E
Lee, Otis A.	Clinton, Wash.	Deceased	3/31/2008	1B
Lee, Randall R.	Evanston, Ill.	Resigned	8/13/2008	5A
Leonard, Ralph S.	Greenfield, Wis.	Deceased	12/13/2008	5J
Lerseth, Mark J.	Richmond, Ind.	Resigned	6/1/2008	6C
Lindberg, Laurel V.	Edina, Minn.	Deceased	11/8/2008	3G
Lingle, James L. Jr.	Decatur, Ga.	Removed	5/2/2008	9D
Lofgren, Richard E.	Fridley, Minn.	Deceased	12/17/2008	3G
Long, George R. Jr.	Glens Falls, N.Y.	Deceased	4/23/2008	7B
Lowe, Arthur H.	Victoria, Texas	Resigned	3/8/2008	4E
Lund, David J.	Kenmore, Wash.	Resigned	7/1/2008	1B
Lusk, Rufus S. III	Baltimore, Md.	Removed	8/5/2008	8F
Lutness, Magnus P.	Bismarck, N.D.	Deceased	1/28/2008	3A
MacAdam, Thomas L.	Pahrump, Nev.	Deceased	10/9/2008	2D
MacMurphy, Charles B.	Mooresville, N.C.	Deceased	9/26/2008	9B
Magnuson, Roger J.	Woodland Park, Colo.	Deceased	6/9/2008	2E
Mahan, Stephen R.	Mahtomedi, Minn.	Deceased	3/11/2008	3H
Malkewitz, Walter E.	Clinton, Iowa	Resigned	7/11/2008	5D
Marolla, Vincent E.	West Bend, Wis.	Resigned	7/9/2008	5J
Marshall, Robert J.	Allentown, Pa.	Deceased	12/22/2008	7E
Martell, Earl A.	Goodland, Kan.	Deceased	6/2/2008	4A

Martin, William H.	Jasper, Ga.	Deceased	9/21/2008	9D
Mathsen, Raymond M.	Surprise, Ariz.	Deceased	9/4/2008	1C
Mattheis, Amy Jo	Stockton, Calif.	Removed	7/25/2008	2A
McCallister, Connie L.	Mendota Heights, Minn.	Removed	10/4/2008	3I
McConomy-Wallace, Deborah	Collegeville, Pa.	Removed	10/4/2008	7F
McCullough, John B.	Aiken, S.C.	Deceased	8/22/2008	9C
McDowell, John P.	Brooksville, Fla.	Deceased	5/7/2008	9E
McMillan, Don F.	Portland, Ore.	Resigned	10/21/2008	2D
McVicker, Eugene R.	Mount Airy, Md.	Deceased	11/1/2008	8D
Meier, Ann G.	Clinton, S.C.	Deceased	3/14/2008	9C
Melander, Rochelle Y.	Milwaukee, Wis.	Resigned	12/31/2008	5J
Melchert, Elmer	Perrysburg, Ohio	Deceased	10/15/2008	6D
Mengers, Gerhardt E.	Alliance, Ohio	Deceased	8/11/2008	6E
Meyers, C. Warren	Anacortes, Wash.	Deceased	2/27/2008	2C
Michelfelder, Robert L.	Urbana, Ohio	Deceased	3/11/2008	6F
Miller, Gordon R.	Fort Collins, Colo.	Deceased	3/23/2008	2E
Miller, Ivan H.	Brookfield, Wis.	Deceased	8/28/2008	5G
Miller, Robert M. A. L.	State College, Pa.	Deceased	7/9/2008	8C
Miller, Wilbur D.	Goshen, Ind.	Deceased	7/13/2008	6C
Minnich-Sadler, Karen K.	Gardners, Pa.	Resigned	3/3/2008	8D
Mitchell, James S.	Grand Junction, Colo.	Deceased	12/15/2008	6E
Moehring, Theodore F.	Zelienople, Pa.	Deceased	7/6/2008	8B
Monson, Paul O.	Edina, Minn.	Deceased	10/28/2008	3G
Morelock, Kenneth E.	East Point, Ga.	Deceased	10/31/2008	9D
Muenich, George R. III	Brooklyn, N.Y.	Resigned	11/24/2008	7C
Neilssen, Robert T.	Cresco, Pa.	Deceased	9/27/2008	7C
Nelson, Arnold H.	Holt, Mich.	Deceased	8/30/2008	9E
Nickel, Henry C.	Schererville, Ind.	Deceased	1/25/2008	6C
Nicolai, John H.	Bismarck, N.D.	Deceased	10/7/2008	3A
Niedenthal, Morris J.	Chicago, Ill.	Deceased	2/8/2008	5L
Oesterlin, William M.	Greensburg, Pa.	Deceased	11/14/2008	8B
Opem, P. Frederick	Brookfield, Wis.	Deceased	8/2/2008	5J
Pelikan, Theodore	Olmsted Falls, Ohio	Deceased	5/5/2008	6E
Peters, Lyle E.	Des Moines, Iowa	Deceased	9/14/2008	5D
Petersen, Claude T.	Lithonia, Ga.	Deceased	5/7/2008	9D
Petersen, Gordon H.	Colorado Springs, Colo.	Deceased	1/17/2008	2E
Peterson, Gary D.	Red Wing, Minn.	Deceased	7/11/2008	3I
Peterson, James E.	Bloomington, Minn.	Deceased	9/26/2008	3G
Peterson, Luther E.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Deceased	10/20/2008	3G
Peterson, Melissa K.	Fairfax, Va.	Removed	10/4/2008	8G
Pilger, Peter L.	Canton, Ohio	Removed	7/8/2008	6E
Pilgrim, Walter E.	Steilacoom, Wash.	Deceased	10/27/2008	1C



Pittavino, Robert G.	Smithton, Pa.	Deceased	10/27/2008	8B
Podolak, J. Joseph	Victoria, Texas	Deceased	7/17/2008	4E
Powell, Richard W. II	Toledo, Ohio	Resigned	1/14/2008	6D
Power, Donald B.	Zelienople, Pa.	Deceased	7/17/2008	8B
Pretsch, Ernest P.	Orlando, Fla.	Deceased	2/18/2008	9E
Pretz, John C. Jr.	Lititz, Pa.	Deceased	2/16/2008	8D
Putnins, Eduards	Napa, Calif.	Deceased	12/25/2008	2A
Rains, Robert L.	Fosston, Minn.	Deceased	12/15/2008	3D
Ramsey, Elling E.	Sacramento, Calif.	Deceased	2/6/2008	2A
Rasmussen, Peter R.	Lanark, Ill.	Deceased	1/29/2008	5B
Reagan, Thomas R.	Blackduck, Minn.	Removed	4/19/2008	3F
Reimherr, Otto	Rockville, Md.	Deceased	9/15/2008	8E
Reinsch, Leland J.	South Saint Paul, Minn.	Removed	1/17/2008	3H
Reitz, John O.	Belfair, Wash.	Deceased	9/10/2008	1D
Ressmeyer, Henry F.	Greenport, N.Y.	Deceased	7/28/2008	7C
Retzlaff, Ronald E.	Rochester, Mich.	Deceased	12/22/2008	6A
Reumann, John H. P.	Lafayette Hill, Pa.	Deceased	6/6/2008	7F
Ricard, R. Delano	Prosperity, S.C.	Deceased	1/7/2008	9C
Richter, Carl D.	Albion, Ind.	Deceased	12/23/2008	6C
Rieke, Robert V.	Bellingham, Wash.	Deceased	8/28/2008	1B
Rinaldi, Albert J.	Lakeview, N.Y.	Resigned	3/9/2008	7D
Rinderknecht, Joseph F.	Cleveland, Ohio	Resigned	12/8/2008	6E
Risch, Daniel R.	Racine, Wis.	Resigned	2/17/2008	5J
Roberson, Marton J.	Hampstead, Md.	Deceased	12/17/2008	8F
Rolander, Oscar R.	Seattle, Wash.	Deceased	4/10/2008	1B
Romig, Fred L.	Altoona, Pa.	Deceased	4/15/2008	8C
Rueter, Alvin C.	Blair, Neb.	Deceased	3/21/2008	3G
Sachs, Glenn W.	Juneau, Alaska	Deceased	3/8/2008	1A
Salmon, Ann J.	Buffalo, N.Y.	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	9/1/2008	7D
Scarvie, Walter B. Jr.	Grand Marais, Minn.	Deceased	2/13/2008	5J
Schlueter, Thomas R.	Arlington, Texas	Resigned	10/1/2008	4D
Schmidt, Maurice A.	Edina, Minn.	Deceased	11/6/2008	3G
Schmutzler, Carl Heinrich Axel	Mountain Home, Ark.	Deceased	4/6/2008	7F
Schreiber, John H.	Grosse Pointe Woods, Mich.	Deceased	8/16/2008	6A
Schularick, W. Joseph Jr.	Montevideo, Minn.	Resigned	1/13/2008	3F
Schumacher, Donald S.	Badger, S.D.	Deceased	7/9/2008	3C
Seltzer, C. Philip	Fallston, Md.	Deceased	4/1/2008	6F
Sheie, Carl T.	Andover, Minn.	Deceased	11/19/2008	3G
Showalter, Clyde E.	Coarsegold, Calif.	Deceased	4/3/2008	2B
Shriner, Stephen L.	Bowler, Wis.	Deceased	1/12/2008	5I
Simone, A. Armond	Cherry Valley, Ill.	Deceased	2/3/2008	5B
Smeby, R. Carsten	Edina, Minn.	Deceased	4/16/2008	3G

Smith, David L.	Beavertown, Pa.	Resigned	1/2/2008	8E
Smith, Jack E.	Cherryville, N.C.	Deceased	10/5/2008	9B
Smith, Randolph W.	Pensacola, Fla.	Removed	10/11/2008	3D
Smith, Wray C.	Mansfield, Ohio	Deceased	10/10/2008	6E
Snobeck, Phillip E.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Deceased	8/23/2008	3C
Snowden, Barry L.	Winter Springs, Fla.	Deceased	7/27/2008	9E
Snyder, David L.	Burlington, N.J.	Resigned	2/24/2008	7B
Spencer, Thomas M.	Miami, Fla.	Deceased	12/11/2008	6E
Springer, Henry G.	York, Pa.	Deceased	8/26/2008	8D
Staub, Charles E.	Millsboro, Del.	Deceased	3/16/2008	8D
Steffens, George E.	Selma, Calif.	Deceased	12/13/2008	2A
Steinhauer, Charles R.	Langhorne, Pa.	Deceased	11/15/2008	7F
Stenberg, Alvin L.	Moorhead, Minn.	Deceased	6/23/2008	3B
Stevenson, Frank L.	Muncie, Ind.	Deceased	1/22/2008	6C
Stolz, Paul C.	Oak Park, Ill.	Deceased	3/30/2008	5A
Stotik, Karl J.	Portland, Ore.	Deceased	3/22/2008	4F
Striegel, Leslie J.	Fort Collins, Colo.	Removed	2/8/2008	4A
Striegel, Nick J.	Fort Collins, Colo.	Removed	2/8/2008	4A
Swanson, Clifford J.	Northfield, Minn.	Deceased	7/12/2008	3G
Swanson, Reuben T.	Fort Collins, Colo.	Deceased	10/3/2008	4A
Swanson, Russell E.	Sun City, Ariz.	Deceased	1/15/2008	2D
Swendseid, M. Douglas	Edina, Minn.	Deceased	1/24/2008	3G
Swenson, Paul N.	Little Canada, Minn.	Deceased	8/25/2008	3H
Sylvester, James R.	Titusville, Fla.	Deceased	7/8/2008	9E
Tellock, Roger L.	Clintonville, Wis.	Deceased	9/25/2008	5I
Thalman, Norman J.	Livermore, Calif.	Deceased	6/4/2008	2A
Thies, Robert D.	Shelby, Mich.	Deceased	1/19/2008	6B
Thronson, Carmen O.	Winona, Minn.	Deceased	1/28/2008	5J
Timm, Michelle L.	Red Wing, Minn.	Resigned	9/6/2008	3I
Tjostem, Paul M.	Steele, N.D.	Removed	4/8/2008	3A
Tobaben, Herbert W.	Winston-Salem, N.C.	Deceased	7/8/2008	7F
Tolo, Paul G.	Peoria, Ill.	Deceased	9/29/2008	5C
Tormala, Wilbert H.	Lantana, Fla.	Deceased	4/7/2008	9E
Trump, Paul A.	Las Vegas, Nev.	Deceased	11/22/2008	8D
Vangerud, Richard D.	Waite Park, Minn.	Deceased	9/5/2008	3F
Vargo, James S.	Traverse City, Mich.	Removed	1/15/2008	6B
Vorhes, Arthur M.	Eau Claire, Wis.	Deceased	4/13/2008	5H
Walden, Edward G.	Bowling Green, Ohio	Deceased	3/6/2008	6D
Warrenburg, Benjamin J.	Clifton, Texas	Deceased	5/16/2008	4D
Waylander, Gregg A.	Montevideo, Minn.	Resigned	4/19/2008	3F
Weber, Ronald R.	Janesville, Wis.	Removed	10/4/2008	5K
Wentzien, Robert H.	Shishmaref, Alaska	Deceased	10/12/2008	1A

Wenzel, August E.	Seguin, Texas	Deceased	5/5/2008	4E
West, Robert A.	Denver, Colo.	Deceased	11/27/2008	2E
Wigtil, Norval R.	Oswego, Ill.	Deceased	9/25/2008	5B
Will, Bradley J.	Traverse City, Mich.	Removed	3/1/2008	6B
Wills, Jack L. Jr.	Poland, Ohio	Resigned	10/31/2008	6E
Wingo, Arthur W.	Portsmouth, N.H.	Deceased	6/22/2008	7B
Wittenberg, Virgil O.	Grove City, Ohio	Deceased	3/5/2008	6F
Wolf, Max H.	Arlington Heights, Ill.	Deceased	8/2/2008	5A
Wolff, Wallace J.	Lincoln, Neb.	Deceased	11/20/2008	4A
Yergey, Ronald C.	Allentown, Pa.	Resigned	4/20/2008	7E
Youngquist, Gerald L.	Monmouth, Ill.	Deceased	3/23/2008	5B
Zenker, Alton	Hot Springs Village, Ark.	Deceased	11/12/2008	5C
Ziems, Paula J.	Superior, Wis.	Resigned	12/5/2008	5H

## Appendix F to the Report of the Secretary

### Additions to the Roster of Associates in Ministry 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Admitted	Date	Region/ Synod
<b>2007</b>				
Atteberry, Jane E.	Belvidere, Ill.	Commissioned	6/15/2007	5B
Bloodworth, Diane S.	Del City, Okla.	Commissioned	8/26/2007	4C
Bonina, Pamela R.	Emmaus, Pa.	Commissioned	4/15/2007	7E
Buckwalter, Karen	Hanover, Pa.	Commissioned	5/4/2007	8D
Bunger, Jessica R.	Niantic, Conn.	Commissioned	6/8/2007	7B
Christians, Neil A.	Charlotte, N.C.	Commissioned	4/14/2007	9B
Cordray, Nicholas D.	Chappell, Neb.	Commissioned	3/11/2007	4A
Fiore, Joyce C.	Clifton Park, N.Y.	Commissioned	9/29/2007	7D
Gagliano, Gloriann A.	Waukesha, Wis.	Commissioned	5/10/2007	5J
Garcia, Raul III	Maple Grove, Minn.	Commissioned	11/10/2007	3G
Gemmer, Thomas C.	Naples, Fla.	Commissioned	12/9/2007	9E
Glista, Patsy A.	Clinton, N.Y.	Commissioned	12/16/2007	7D
Grue, Anita M.	Madison, Wis.	Commissioned	2/25/2007	5K
Hammerlind, Sandra S.	St. Paul, Minn.	Commissioned	11/5/2007	3H
Hjelmberg, Wendy A.	Moose Lake, Minn.	Commissioned	9/23/2007	3E
Hughes, Valerie A.	Durham, N.C.	Commissioned	9/16/2007	9B
Kuehl, Erin Miller	Verona, Wis.	Commissioned	1/15/2007	5K
Maresco, Sabine	Gresham, Ore.	Commissioned	5/17/2007	1E
Marone, Susan R.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Commissioned	9/16/2007	3C
Martin, Elizabeth R.	Belvidere, Ill.	Commissioned	6/15/2007	5B
Melang, Karen	Fremont, Neb.	Reinstated	5/26/2007	4A

Prechel, Lynne L.	Garden Grove, Calif.	Commissioned	10/28/2007	2C
Prefes-Arenz, Marie L.	North Lakewood, Wash.	Commissioned	7/15/2007	1B
Roberts, Debra Brut	Prospect, Pa.	Commissioned	4/29/2007	8B
Simpkins, Melody Roberson	Knoxville, Tenn.	Commissioned	1/6/2007	9D
Sisson, Brenda Jo	Sterling, Ill.	Commissioned	1/7/2007	5B
Sletto, Thomas A.	Des Moines, Iowa	Commissioned	7/1/2007	5D
Smith, Angela C.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Commissioned	6/24/2007	3C
Smith, Judith H.	Stafford, Va.	Commissioned	11/11/2007	9A
Trice, Michael R.	Chicago, Ill.	Commissioned	9/1/2007	2E
Troisi, Stacey Lynn Nyitrai	Columbia, S.C.	Commissioned	5/31/2007	9C
Voves, Pamela J.	Glen Ellyn, Ill.	Commissioned	6/9/2007	5A
Young, Connie Sue	Salisbury, N.C.	Commissioned	6/1/2007	9B
Zarfos, Tammie Ann	Newcastle, Wash.	Commissioned	11/11/2007	1B

## 2008

Barr, Lindsay S.	Winchester, Va.	Commissioned	6/7/2008	9A
Borgstadt, Rita K.	Ralston, Neb.	Commissioned	6/7/2008	4A
Ells, Brooke R.	Lakeside, Mont.	Commissioned	3/30/2008	1F
Emerson, Leah A.	Laguna Niguel, Calif.	Commissioned	11/30/2008	2C
Frantz, Jennifer S.	Columbus, Ohio	Commissioned	7/20/2008	6F
Gehl, Gerry T.	Concord, N.C.	Commissioned	5/4/2008	9B
Gilbert, Staci G.	Greenwood, S.C.	Commissioned	6/29/2008	9C
Hendricks Wilkens, Mary Marlene	Alcester, S.D.	Commissioned	8/24/2008	3C
Huth, Michelle J.	Mechanicsburg, Pa.	Commissioned	6/29/2008	8D
Jabre, Patricia E. W.	Richmond, Va.	Commissioned	6/29/2008	9A
Jahn, Amy L.	Allentown, Pa.	Commissioned	5/11/2008	7E
King, Maureen (Molly)	Cardington, Ohio	Commissioned	4/19/2008	6D
Kruse, Sherie A.	West Bend, Wis.	Commissioned	1/6/2008	5J
Lawrence, William A.	Moorestown, N.J.	Commissioned	12/21/2008	7A
More, Andrew F.	Columbia, S.C.	Commissioned	6/1/2008	9C
Polilli, Patsy A.	Coatesville, Pa.	Commissioned	2/29/2008	7F
Priestaf, Margaret E.	Taylor, Mich.	Commissioned	6/22/2008	6A
Schulz, Rebekah G.	St. Paul, Minn.	Commissioned	5/4/2008	3H
Shaw, Joyce F.	Florence, S.C.	Commissioned	5/11/2008	9C
Starego, Reylene A.	Brick, N.J.	Commissioned	3/2/2008	7A
Steketee, Bonnie L.	Sterling Heights, Mich.	Commissioned	5/4/2008	6A
Swanson, Gloria J.	Burnsville, Minn.	Commissioned	9/28/2008	3H
Swonger, Joanne M.	Bismarck, N.D.	Reinstated	9/15/2008	3A
Thistle, Paula S.	Annapolis, Md.	Commissioned	4/6/2008	8F
Troutman, Amanda A.	Greenville, S.C.	Commissioned	7/20/2008	9C
Vytlacil, Clarianna G.	Racine, Wis.	Commissioned	3/30/2008	5J
West, Tammy Jones	Salisbury, N.C.	Commissioned	6/6/2008	9B
Young, Marcia D.	Le Mars, Iowa	Commissioned	9/28/2008	5E

## Appendix G to the Report of the Secretary

### Removals from the Roster of Associates in Ministry 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Reason	Date	Region/ Synod
<b>2007</b>				
Anderson, Harold W.	Bloomington, Minn.	Deceased	5/13/2007	3G
Anderson, Joshua J.	Hanover, N.H.	Removed	4/30/2007	7B
Berthold, Mary E.	Clara City, Minn.	Removed	11/21/2007	3D
Coler, John W.	Fargo, N.D.	Resigned	8/14/2007	3B
Dennis, Amy M.	Marion, Ohio	Deceased	3/29/2007	6D
Giese, Joan M.	Butler, Pa.	Removed	10/8/2007	8B
Hingst, Chris H.	Springfield, Mo.	Resigned	12/12/2007	4B
Hohensee, Lula K.	Claremont, Calif.	Deceased	1/3/2007	2C
Hopfer, Norma C.	San Francisco, Calif.	Deceased	8/25/2007	2A
Jones, Stella	Downing, Wis.	Deceased	3/28/2007	5H
Kruger, Emma	Waverly, Iowa	Deceased	8/17/2007	5F
Lettenmaier, Kris	Coaldale, Colo.	Removed	10/8/2007	2E
Lund, Susan J.	Salem, Ore.	Removed	10/26/2007	1E
Oswald, Glenn C.	Martinsville, N.J.	Removed	9/25/2007	7D
Prim, Juanita R.	Galion, Ohio	Deceased	1/3/2007	6D
Robinson, Gladys O.	Milwaukee, Wis.	Deceased	12/29/2007	5J
Santeford, Dawn E.	Mesa, Ariz.	Resigned	6/19/2007	2D
Sattler, VeeAnn S.	Englewood, Colo.	Removed	10/8/2007	1D
Schmidt, Udo	Alhambra, Calif.	Removed	9/15/2007	2B
Severino, Jean W.	Williston Park, N.Y.	Removed	1/1/2007	7C
Spruth, Lorraine M.	Colorado Springs, Colo.	Deceased	5/5/2007	2E
Vairus, Susan M.	Marinette, Wis.	Removed	10/8/2007	5G
Wartner, Gail C.	Claremont, N.C.	Removed	10/1/2007	9B
Weiss, Dorothy L.	Austin, Texas	Deceased	3/15/2007	4E
Wenger, Margaret S.	Hicksville, N.Y.	Resigned	3/16/2007	7C
Wenger, Paul F.	Hicksville, N.Y.	Resigned	3/16/2007	7C
Westfield, Patricia A.	St. Petersburg, Fla.	Deceased	7/5/2007	9E
Wilson, Larry D. Jr.	Columbus, Neb.	Removed	10/8/2007	4A
Wise, Anabel	Portland, Ore.	Deceased	7/11/2007	2D
Zeitler, Mary H.	Zelienople, Pa.	Deceased	4/23/2007	8B
<b>2008</b>				
Clayton, Mary A.	Cibolo, Texas	Removed	10/4/2008	4E
Elkin, Donna Z.	WilliamSPORT, Pa.	Resigned	2/11/2008	8E
Felde, Marjorie	Viroqua, Wis.	Deceased	12/20/2008	5L
Fingalson, Jean A. M.	Moorhead, Minn.	Deceased	3/14/2008	3D
Geer, Mary Lou	San Antonio, Texas	Removed	10/4/2008	4E
Heide Kuessow, Betty A.	Kenosha, Wis.	Deceased	12/24/2008	5J

Holt, Kimberly R.	Holly Springs, N.C.	Deceased	1/9/2008	9B
Hubler, Jennifer L.	Fort Worth, Texas	Removed	9/23/2008	8E
Hulstrand, Pamela K.	Eden Prairie, Minn.	Resigned	4/15/2008	3G
Johnson, Sandra	Waverly, Iowa	Deceased	7/18/2008	5F
Kleiter, Betty	Anaheim, Calif.	Deceased	8/24/2008	2C
Kretzmann, F. Carl	Lititz, Pa.	Deceased	10/12/2008	8D
Lutjen, Raymond	Prairie Village, Kan.	Deceased	10/28/2008	5D
Meier, Edith Wagner	Davenport, Iowa	Deceased	2/6/2008	5D
Melton, Louise	Wilmington, Del.	Deceased	9/28/2008	3B
Moore, Cynthia H.	Georgetown, S.C.	Deceased	6/7/2008	9C
Moskowitz, Susanne R.	Wooster, Ohio	Removed	3/17/2008	6E
Paden, Maudy R.	Vermilion, Ohio	Resigned	11/2/2008	6E
Ressmeyer, Ruth B.	Greenport, N.Y.	Deceased	10/26/2008	7C
Reuss, Audrey M.	Waverly, Iowa	Resigned	8/6/2008	5F
Rike, Tonya R.	Lititz, Pa.	Removed	12/16/2008	8D
Schatz, Scherelene L.	Morrisville, Pa.	Removed	3/13/2008	7E
Schmidt, Frances M.	Jamestown, N.D.	Deceased	3/14/2008	3B
Smedstad, Gladys	New London, Minn.	Deceased	1/8/2008	3F
Spong, Doris H.	Chanhasen, Minn.	Deceased	7/26/2008	3G
Stewart, Cathryn R.	Florence, S.C.	Resigned	9/14/2008	9C
Wright, William W.	Columbus, Ohio	Deceased	9/19/2008	6F

## Appendix H to the Report of the Secretary

### Additions to the Roster of Deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Date of Consecration	Region/ Synod
<b>2007</b>			
Hovis, Joyce V.	Shrewsbury, Pa.	5/4/2007	8D
Lindquist, Amy M.	St. Paul, Minn.	5/6/2007	3H
Thorne, Margaret E.	Blue Bell, Pa.	12/1/2007	7F
<b>2008</b>			
Anderson, Krista M.	Mazatlán, Sinaloa, Mexico	8/10/2008	3H
Stauffer, Marilyn H.	Columbia, S.C.	4/10/2008	9C
Williams, Shana Palm	Willmar, Minn.	11/22/2008	3D

## Appendix I to the Report of the Secretary

### Removals from the Roster of Deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Reason	Date	Region/ Synod
<b>2007</b>				
Widmeyer, W. Jean	Estevan, Saskatchewan	Transferred to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	8/15/2007	4A
<b>2008</b>				
Hoover, Janet M.	Powell, Ohio	Deceased	8/13/2008	7E
Wedman, Linda L.	Bridgewater, Nova Scotia	Deceased	4/23/2008	7F

## Appendix J to the Report of the Secretary

### Additions to the Roster of Diaconal Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Date of Consecration	Region/ Synod
<b>2007</b>			
Bennett, George E. Jr.	Gettysburg, Pa.	5/4/2007	8D
Bonn, Kathleen L.	Freeland, Mich.	9/15/2007	6B
Brooks, Kelly L.	Allentown, Pa.	9/2/2007	7E
Cherry, Jan Dronberger	Seattle, Wash.	10/21/2007	1B
Combs, Marvin G.	Santa Ana, Calif.	6/3/2007	2C
Fessler, Rosalie	Fort Collins, Colo.	10/14/2007	2E
Gerth, Karen E.	Green Bay, Wis.	4/22/2007	5I
Gullickson, Kristi Lee	Sioux Falls, S.D.	3/11/2007	3C
Hartman, Amy L.	Minneapolis, Minn.	1/28/2007	3G
Helfer, Melissa A.	Westminster, Md.	11/17/2007	8F
Hurni, Maria K.	San Antonio, Texas	9/30/2007	4E
Kane, Pat	Cedar Rapids, Iowa	1/20/2007	5D
Kolowe, Rebecca Hanson	Harleysville, Pa.	11/4/2007	7F
Prim, Harry Severs	Columbia, S.C.	1/14/2007	9C
Reback, Sandra D.	Elk Grove Village, Ill.	12/9/2007	5A
Schacht, Jeffrey Eric	Bloomington, Ind.	3/25/2007	6C
Smith, Blaire P.	Erie, Pa.	6/8/2007	8A
Smith, Heather R.	Erie, Pa.	6/8/2007	8A
Smith, Linda H.	Milwaukie, Ore.	10/28/2007	1E
Stegelman, Julie A.	Goshen, Ind.	10/28/2007	6C
Storey, Kathleen	Baltimore, Md.	1/27/2007	8F
Wagner, Anna M.	Des Moines, Wash.	6/16/2007	1B
Ward, Troy F.	Bellingham, Wash.	9/9/2007	1B

Watson-Hill, Lisa K.	Arnold, Md.	6/24/2007	8F
Wise, James Henry	Hummelstown, Pa.	5/4/2007	8D
Zawaski, Linda S.	Kutztown, Pa.	11/4/2007	7E
Zeile, Karen J.	Ortonville, Mich.	8/19/2007	6A

## 2008

Black, Mary E.	Denver, Colo.	12/13/2008	2E
Broestl, Howard E.	Longmont, Colo.	12/21/2008	2E
Chida, M. Anne	Ballwin, Mo.	2/2/2008	4B
Garrison, Kathy A.	Fairfax, Va.	11/22/2008	8G
Janssen Keenan, Angela	Charlotte, N.C.	2/17/2008	9B
Mauro, Augustus G.	Elizabethtown, Pa.	1/18/2008	8D
Ranker, Cynthia Uhl	Reisterstown, Md.	2/17/2008	8F
Roos, Jamie L.	Union, N.J.	3/15/2008	7A
Roscoe, Marsha L.	Hummelstown, Pa.	6/20/2008	8D
Smith, Charles F.	Newport News, Va.	12/6/2008	9A
Talbot, Shirley B.	St Louis, Mo.	12/29/2008	4B
Vuyksteke, Peggy H.	Capac, Mich.	4/27/2008	6A

## Appendix K to the Report of the Secretary

### Removal from the Roster of Diaconal Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2007-2008

Name	City/State	Reason	Date	Region/ Synod
<b>2008</b>				
White, Karen Sue	Columbus, Ohio	Removed	10/4/2008	6F

## Appendix L to the Report of the Secretary

### Congregations Received, Removed, Consolidated, Disbanded, Merged, or Withdrawn 2007-2008

Congregations received, removed, consolidated, disbanded, merged, or withdrawn prior to 2007 but not previously reported in minutes of churchwide assemblies are included in this list. The ELCA congregation identification number (in parentheses) follows the name of each congregation.

The process for *withdrawal* of a congregation is specified by constitutional provisions 9.62. and 9.71. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

“Merged” is defined as involving a congregation giving up its separate identity and uniting with an already existing congregation (i.e., being *merged* into an existing congregation).



“Consolidated” is defined as involving two or more congregations that join together to become a new entity with a new name and a new congregation identification number (i.e., the congregations are *consolidated* to form a new congregation).

## 2007-2008

State/City	Congregation and Congregation Number	Region/ Synod	Action	Date
<b>Alabama</b>				
Birmingham	Christ the King (07479)	9D	Withdrawn	1/19/2008
<b>Arizona</b>				
Prescott	American (13938)	2D	Withdrawn	9/14/2008
Surprise	Desert Streams Lutheran Church (30632)	2D	Received	6/7/2007
Tucson	Abounding Grace Church (30771)	2D	Received	10/28/2007
Tucson	Lutheran Church of the King (05001)	2D	Consolidated with Trinity (30524) to form Abounding Grace Church (30771)	10/28/2007
Tucson	Trinity (30524)	2D	Consolidated with Lutheran Church of the King (05001) to form Abounding Grace Church (30771)	10/28/2007
<b>California</b>				
Chowchilla	Trinity (20005)	2A	Withdrawn	3/4/2007
Fremont	Good Shepherd (13838)	2A	Disbanded	1/22/2007
Los Angeles	Eagle Rock Lutheran Church (30767)	2B	Received	5/31/2007
Simi Valley	Our Redeemer (05079)	2B	Merged into Shepherd of the Valley (13997)	10/27/2008
Truckee	Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church (30544)	2A	Received	4/25/2008
<b>Colorado</b>				
Pine	Risen Lord (30483)	2E	Received	4/1/2007
<b>Florida</b>				
Hudson	All Saints (07734)	9E	Consolidated with First (01763), Immanuel (16108), Joyful Spirit (07567), and King of Glory (01707) to form Spirit of Grace Lutheran Church (30813)	10/5/2008
New Port Richey	First (01763)	9E	Consolidated with All Saints (07734), Immanuel (16108), Joyful Spirit (07567), and King of Glory (01707) to form Spirit of Grace Lutheran Church (30813)	10/5/2008

New Port Richey	Immanuel (16108)	9E	Consolidated with All Saints (07734), First (01763), Joyful Spirit (07567), and King of Glory (01707) to form Spirit of Grace Lutheran Church (30813)	10/5/2008
New Port Richey	Joyful Spirit (07567)	9E	Consolidated with All Saints (07734), First (01763), Immanuel (16108), and King of Glory (01707) to form Spirit of Grace Lutheran Church (30813)	10/5/2008
New Port Richey	King of Glory (01707)	9E	Consolidated with All Saints (07734), First (01763), Immanuel (16108), and Joyful Spirit (07567) to form Spirit of Grace Lutheran Church (30813)	10/5/2008
New Port Richey	Spirit of Grace Lutheran Church (30813)	9E	Received	10/5/2008
North Miami	Good Shepherd (10441)	9E	Withdrawn	12/7/2008
St. Petersburg	Garden of Peace (10501)	9E	Consolidated with Holy Comforter (01775) to form Paradise Lutheran Church (30810)	7/13/2008
Treasure Island	Holy Comforter (01775)	9E	Consolidated with Garden of Peace (10501) to form Paradise Lutheran Church (30810)	7/13/2008
Treasure Island	Paradise Lutheran Church (30810)	9E	Received	7/13/2008

**Iowa**

Earlville	Immanuel (10941)	5F	Disbanded	8/10/2008
McCallsburg	Bethany (11056)	5F	Removed	3/29/2008
Ringsted	St. John (02519)	5E	Consolidated with St. Paul (11118) to form United Lutheran Church (30760)	7/8/2007
Ringsted	St. Paul (11118)	5E	Consolidated with St. John (02519) to form United Lutheran Church (30760)	7/8/2007
Ringsted	United Lutheran Church (30760)	5E	Received	6/10/2007
Sergeant Bluff	Spirit of Life Lutheran Church (30574)	5E	Received	4/27/2007

**Illinois**

Chicago	Iglesia Luterana La Sagrada Familia (30214)	5A	Disbanded	3/11/2007
Chicago	Light of Christ (30480)	5A	Disbanded	7/16/2007
Chicago	Mission of Christ Ev. (30657)	5A	Consolidated with United in Christ (30250) to form United Mission of Christ (30765)	5/27/2007
Chicago	North Austin (01892)	5A	Disbanded	9/10/2007

Chicago	United in Christ (30250)	5A	Consolidated with Mission of Christ Ev. (30657) to form United Mission of Christ (30765)	5/27/2007
Chicago	United Mission of Christ Lutheran Church (30765)	5A	Received	5/27/2007
Rockford	Faith (01995)	5B	Consolidated with Messiah (01998) to form United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rockford (30764)	4/21/2007
Rockford	Messiah (01998)	5B	Consolidated with Faith (01995) to form United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rockford (30764)	4/21/2007
Rockford	United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rockford (30764)	5B	Received	4/21/2007

**Indiana**

Evansville	Grace (20073)	6C	Consolidated with Peace (10651) to form Grace and Peace (30766)	8/26/2007
Evansville	Grace and Peace Lutheran Church (30766)	6C	Received	9/1/2007
Evansville	Peace (10651)	6C	Consolidated with Grace (20073) to form Grace and Peace (30766)	8/26/2007
Gas City	Grace (02269)	6C	Consolidated with St. John (10714) to form Resurrection (30733)	2/5/2007
Marion	Resurrection Lutheran Church (30733)	6C	Received	2/5/2007
Marion	St. John (10714)	6C	Consolidated with Grace (02269) to form Resurrection (30733)	2/5/2007
Washington	Good Shepherd (10813)	6C	Withdrawn	3/24/2007

**Kentucky**

Bowling Green	Spirit of Hope (30050)	6C	Disbanded	4/1/2007
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**Michigan**

Lake Ann	Advent Lutheran Church (30694)	6B	Received	5/20/2007
Macomb	Community of Hope (30420)	6A	Disbanded	5/17/2008
Pontiac	Good Samaritan Lutheran Church (30772)	6A	Received	10/14/2007
Pontiac	Grace (20131)	6A	Consolidated with Mount Hope (11348) to form Good Samaritan (30772)	10/1/2007
Pontiac	Mount Hope (11348)	6A	Consolidated with Grace (20131) to form Good Samaritan (30772)	10/1/2007
Redford	Good Shepherd (02798)	6A	Disbanded	1/31/2007
White Lake	Christ of the Lakes (02774)	6A	Merged into Calvary (02752)	7/13/2008

**Minnesota**

Blaine	Resurrection (11855)	3G	Disbanded	12/31/2007
Clarkfield	Israel (12031)	3F	Disbanded	12/23/2007
Duluth	Augustana (02922)	3E	Withdrawn	5/30/2008
Duluth	Waters of Life Lutheran Church (30730)	3E	Received	4/27/2008
Halstad	East Marsh River (11546)	3D	Withdrawn	2/10/2008
Hector	St. John (12091)	3F	Disbanded	11/23/2008
Kensington	Solem (12108)	3D	Disbanded	6/22/2008
Mendota Heights	Royal Redeemer (11931)	3H	Merged into Amazing Grace (16241)	3/25/2007
Minneapolis	Bethel (03017)	3G	Disbanded	4/13/2008
Minneapolis	Emanuel (03021)	3G	Consolidated with Holy Triune (11837), and St. Paul's (11861) to form Northeast Community (30751)	4/29/2007
Minneapolis	Epiphany (03135)	3G	Disbanded	8/24/2008
Minneapolis	Holy Triune (11837)	3G	Consolidated with Emanuel (03021), and St. Paul's (11861) to form Northeast Community (30751)	4/29/2007
Minneapolis	Lebanon (03143)	3G	Withdrawn	12/7/2007
Minneapolis	Northeast Community Lutheran Church (30751)	3G	Received	4/30/2007
Minneapolis	Our Redeemer (11849)	3G	Merged into Minnehaha Communion (11843)	1/14/2008
Minneapolis	St. Paul's (11861)	3G	Consolidated with Emanuel (03021), and Holy Triune (11837) to form Northeast Community (30751)	4/29/2007
Minneapolis	Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls (03157)	3G	Withdrawn	3/13/2008
Minneapolis	Victory (11867)	3G	Disbanded	12/3/2007
Rothsay	Hamar (11640)	3D	Consolidated with Our Savior (16311) to form New Life (30774)	1/9/2008
Rothsay	New Life Lutheran Church (30774)	3D	Received	1/9/2008
Rothsay	Our Savior (16311)	3D	Consolidated with Hamar (11640) to form New Life (30774)	1/9/2008

**Missouri**

Creve Coeur	Chinese Lutheran Church St. Louis (30479)	4B	Received	6/7/2008
Kansas City	Fountain of Hope Lutheran Fellowship (16338)	4B	Disbanded	12/8/2008
Rolla	Hope Lutheran Church (90159)	4B	Received	6/7/2008

**Montana**

Lindsay	Deer Creek (13429)	1F	Disbanded	7/31/2007
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**Nebraska**

Lincoln	All Saints (20173)	4A	Disbanded	6/29/2008
Lincoln	Lord of Life Evangelical (30271)	4A	Disbanded	3/25/2007

**Nevada**

Las Vegas	Living Springs Lutheran Church (30608)	2D	Received	6/7/2007
Las Vegas	New Hope (30471)	2D	Merged into Good Samaritan (07493)	7/1/2007

**New Hampshire**

Newington	Immanuel Indonesian Lutheran Church (30755)	7B	Received	5/20/2007
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**New Jersey**

Barneгат	Joy (30042)	7A	Disbanded	6/24/2007
Camden	Bridge of Peace Community Church, ELCA (30512)	7A	Received	5/20/2007
Camden	New Life (07685)	7A	Disbanded	11/17/2007
Hamilton	Bethel (03727)	7A	Disbanded	11/18/2007
Mount Ephraim	Spirit of Hope (30383)	7A	Disbanded	2/24/2008

**New York**

Bayside	Good Shepherd (03959)	7C	Disbanded	1/7/2007
Brooklyn	Bethany (10305)	7C	Disbanded	11/26/2008
Brooklyn	St. Peter (03884)	7C	Disbanded	3/2/2008
Hudson	St. John's (06971)	7D	Disbanded	3/30/2008
Richmond Hill	St. Pauls Evangelical (20214)	7C	Disbanded	3/11/2007

**North Carolina**

Southern Shores	Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church (30759)	9B	Received	3/10/2007
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**North Dakota**

Egeland	Lakeview (12309)	3B	Withdrawn	1/31/2008
Glenfield	Glenfield (12349)	3B	Disbanded	1/27/2007
Harvey	Trinity Bethany (12370)	3A	Withdrawn	6/15/2008
McGregor	Our Savior (12664)	3A	Disbanded	12/31/2007
Mott	Trinity (12678)	3A	Withdrawn	7/27/2008
New Leipzig	Immanuel (12683)	3A	Withdrawn	8/26/2007
Niagara	Lom (12488)	3B	Disbanded	9/16/2007
Starkweather	Trinity-Bergen (12516)	3B	Withdrawn	1/31/2008

**Ohio**

Columbus	St. Matthew (13143)	6F	Disbanded	4/22/2007
Greenville	Grace (13196)	6F	Disbanded	11/2/2008
Homerville	New Horizons Lutheran Church (30776)	6E	Received	2/1/2008
Homerville	Zion (13206)	6E	Consolidated with Mount Zion (13303) to form New Horizons (30776)	1/1/2008

North Olmsted	St. Andrew (07181)	6E	Merged into Prince of Peace (04506)	1/6/2008
Spencer	Mount Zion (13303)	6E	Consolidated with Zion (13206) to form New Horizons (30776)	1/1/2008
Springfield	Hope (07453)	6F	Disbanded	1/6/2008
Wooster	East Union (04450)	6E	Withdrawn	4/20/2008
<b>Pennsylvania</b>				
Chalfont	St. James (00671)	7F	Disbanded	2/25/2007
Easton	St. Peter (00478)	7E	Disbanded	6/30/2008
Elizabethville	Salem (01259)	8D	Withdrawn	9/21/2008
Fairless Hills	Emmaus Road Lutheran Church (30804)	7F	Received	3/2/2008
Fairless Hills	Trinity Evangelical (00638)	7F	Consolidated with Christ (00641) to form Emmaus Road (30804)	3/2/2008
Greensburg	Holy Trinity (06502)	8B	Disbanded	12/31/2007
Harrisburg	Redeemer (01107)	8D	Disbanded	6/30/2008
Harrison City	Penn-Zion's Lutheran Church (30750)	8B	Received	1/27/2007
Harrison City	Zion (06505)	8B	Consolidated with Penn Evangelical (06524) to form Penn-Zion's (30750)	1/27/2007
Johnstown	St. John (05532)	7G	Disbanded	6/3/2007
Levittown	Christ (00641)	7F	Consolidated with Trinity Evangelical (00638) to form Emmaus Road (30804)	3/2/2008
Millerstown	St. Matthew (01407)	8D	Withdrawn	4/21/2007
Mount Holly Springs	Evangelical (01012)	8D	Disbanded	5/6/2007
Penn	Penn Evangelical (06524)	8B	Consolidated with Zion (06505) to form Penn-Zion's (30750)	1/27/2007
Philadelphia	Epiphany (00721)	7F	Disbanded	4/14/2007
Philadelphia	Redeemer (20250)	7F	Consolidated with Trinity (10465) to form Saints United (30809)	6/8/2008
Philadelphia	Saints United Lutheran Church (30809)	7F	Received	6/8/2008
Philadelphia	Trinity (10465)	7F	Consolidated with Redeemer (20250) to form Saints United (30809)	6/8/2008
Pitcairn	St. Paul's (06579)	8B	Disbanded	5/20/2007
Pittsburgh	St. Luke Memorial (06647)	8B	Merged into Trinity (06560)	3/23/2008
Stewartstown	St. Paul (01399)	8D	Withdrawn	4/21/2007
Wellsboro	Hope (20275)	8E	Disbanded	4/29/2007
Whitehall	St. Paul (00611)	7E	Disbanded	5/4/2008

Windber	First (01148)	8C	Consolidated with Grace (01142) and Mount Zion (01143) to form Good Shepherd (30728)	1/1/2007
Windber	Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (30728)	8C	Received	1/1/2007
Windber	Grace (01142)	8C	Consolidated with First (01148) and Mount Zion (01143) to form Good Shepherd (30728)	1/1/2007
Windber	Mount Zion (01143)	8C	Consolidated with First (01148) and Grace (01142) to form Good Shepherd (30728)	1/1/2007
York	Emmanuel (01332)	8D	Disbanded	6/17/2007
<b>South Carolina</b>				
Columbia	Trinity (05584)	9C	Disbanded	9/9/2007
Orangeburg	New Creation (30186)	9C	Disbanded	8/1/2008
<b>South Dakota</b>				
Pierpont	Skudesnes (13669)	3C	Withdrawn	10/12/2008
<b>Texas</b>				
Arlington	Prince of Peace (14052)	4D	Withdrawn	10/1/2008
Corpus Christi	Abiding Savior (14097)	4E	Disbanded	11/16/2008
El Campo	First (05889)	4F	Withdrawn	3/30/2008
El Paso	Shepherd of the Valley (16131)	2E	Disbanded	1/6/2008
George West	St. Paul (05891)	4E	Withdrawn	5/30/2008
Houston	Lamb of God (07555)	4F	Disbanded	10/31/2008
Houston	Park Place (14160)	4F	Disbanded	10/31/2007
Leander	Living Water Lutheran Church (30565)	4E	Received	6/10/2007
The Woodlands	Joyful Life Church Lutheran Church (30662)	4F	Received	5/31/2007
<b>Virginia</b>				
Roanoke	St. Paul (06153)	9A	Withdrawn	1/20/2007
<b>Washington</b>				
Raymond	Our Savior (12956)	1C	Disbanded	9/28/2008
Seattle	Calvary (04936)	1B	Merged into Our Redeemer's (04944)	3/9/2008
Seattle	Crown (12974)	1B	Disbanded	7/20/2008
<b>Wisconsin</b>				
Milwaukee	Cristo Rey (90175)	5J	Disbanded	2/1/2008
Milwaukee	King of Kings (06730)	5J	Disbanded	10/26/2008
Tigerton	Immanuel (14572)	5I	Withdrawn	12/19/2008
<b>Wyoming</b>				
Basin	Peace (90155)	1F	Received	6/1/2007

## Exhibit E

# Report of the Treasurer

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## Part One: Work of the Office

### Statement of Purpose

The treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) proposes policy and oversees the implementation, within such policies, of the financial, accounting, audit, banking, investment, property, information technology, and building management systems of the churchwide organization. In addition to serving as the executive officer for the Office of the Treasurer, the treasurer serves as president of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. The duties and responsibilities of the treasurer are explicitly defined in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, provision 13.50. and following, with additional responsibilities related to the operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA found in provision 17.50. and following.

### Report of Work 2007–2009

In the last biennium, the staff of the Office of the Treasurer (OT) has concentrated efforts on aligning the work of the unit and its sections with the needs of the organization, implementing best practices related to information technology and data security, planning for an upgrade of the general ledger system, and maintaining a strong internal control structure. A new area of emphasis has been the development of finance and accounting resources for synods and congregations.

### Internal Controls

Internal auditing continues to work with operations and systems of the churchwide organization to ensure proper control, safety, and security. Some recent efforts are outlined below.

*Data Security:* A series of three workshops tailored to the needs of congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization was developed and presented to churchwide staff and to gatherings of synod vice presidents and administrators.

*Policy and Procedure Controls:* All policies and procedures are reviewed annually. This review is completed by the end of September in preparation for the external auditor's review and testing at both the entity and account level.

*Information Technology:* Internal audit has worked with Information Technology in a number of areas, including review of procedures, resource and capacity planning, change management, development of performance indicators, business continuity planning, and review of new system(s) scope and specification documentation.

*Regional Audits:* The implementation of a Regional Office Audit Program has led to the strengthening of controls governing each of these regions, especially in the area of controls over bank accounts and segregation of duties. Four regional reviews were completed in 2008, with another three planned in 2009.

*Critical Vendors Review:* A program was designed and implemented to identify the churchwide organization's critical vendors and to obtain and review their SAS 70 auditing standards reports to ensure that the vendors' internal controls are adequate and appropriate.



## **Accounting System Update**

The accounting system used by the churchwide organization is being updated to a Web-based system. Staff has been engaged in planning and preparing for the conversion by participating in best practices interviews with representatives of the service provider, reviewing current operations, evaluating the impact of the upgrade on our practices and procedures, and identifying reporting needs. Various user groups have been formed and are meeting on a bi-weekly basis to ensure a smooth transition to the new system in August 2009.

## **Support to Units**

The Office of the Treasurer strives continually to enhance the service and financial information provided to the units of the churchwide organization. Some enhancements made over the past six months include the following:

*Credit Card Review:* An additional corporate card program has been established for travel to certain parts of the world to improve acceptance and for certain ELCA events to improve administrative efficiency.

*Credit Card Merchant Gateway:* A vendor relationship has been established that will greatly ease use of credit cards as an option for donors and eliminate multiple entries into the accounting system.

*Youth Gathering Support:* Accounting for the ELCA Youth Gathering has been centralized in the Office of the Treasurer. New procedures and reports have been developed in cooperation with the Youth Gathering staff that will greatly facilitate the financial management of this event, including an online registration process, three-year budget report, and a vendor report that monitors receipt, status, and pending payments.

*Cross-Training:* Staff completed a cross-training process to enhance the unit's ability to provide service without interruption.

*Budget Planning and Tracking:* A new budget planning worksheet that shows three prior years of actual expenses was developed for use by program directors to help units more accurately prepare detailed budgets. Also created were standard reports that capture key information on variances and fund balances in order to facilitate efficient quarterly budget reviews with each churchwide unit.

*Automation:* A new system was developed that decreases invoice processing time for United Parcel Service (UPS) bills from the previous four–six hours down to ten minutes. This process codes journal entries to the proper accounts, produces check requests for payments of invoices, and sends e-mails to units informing them of their UPS charges. Also created were automatic journals, e-mail notification, and an online approval process for users of Publishing Services.

*Workshops:* The Office of the Treasurer provided a series of learning opportunities for all staff in the Lutheran Center. The 25 workshops in 2008 covered 17 different topics. Certificates were issued to staff members who attended, and they are eligible for continuing education credits.

## **Review of Banking Fees and Services**

A comprehensive review of banking fees and services was completed. As a result, the banking relationship with Northern Trust was terminated, and certain services provided by Harris Bank were expanded. Lower banking fees were achieved as well as an increase in the uncommitted line of credit, along with a new committed line of credit in the amount of \$10 million. Given the state of the economy and changes in the banking system, it was determined

that an unsecured line of credit was no longer sufficient to meet any unanticipated, short-term cash flow needs as called for in the cash management policy. There have been no recent draws on the line of credit.

### **Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding**

One of the recommendations in the report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding is that the churchwide organization provide expanded acknowledgment of local giving. While the Office of the Treasurer can only report on income received for churchwide ministries, the office has worked to enhance reporting to synods so that they have better information on both the unrestricted and designated gifts that are given for churchwide ministries through the synod and directly to the churchwide organization. Examples of designated gifts include gifts for the World Hunger appeal and Disaster Response. A comprehensive report of congregational giving, both direct and indirect, is now provided for synods twice a year.

The missing component in the reporting is mission-support income by congregations. OT continues to encourage synods to move to using the Synod Remittance Advice System, so that mission-support income by congregation can be captured and automatically uploaded to the Raiser's Edge system. In addition to allowing for expanded reporting capacity, use of this system would decrease staff time in processing information and would increase accuracy. Thirty-six synods currently use this system.

### **Finance and Accounting Resources for Synods and Congregations**

Resources have been developed and provided on the [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) Web site that will assist synods and congregations in their financial management and oversight. Resources available on the Web pages for the Office of the Treasurer include the following:

*Synod Audit Committee Charter (Model):* Audit committees are being required to take an increasingly important role in the financial management and oversight of any organization. The model Audit Committee Charter can be used by synods that are in the process of establishing a formal Audit Committee and need to define the committee's responsibilities.

*Synod Treasurer Position Description (Model):* Synods may use this position description when electing a treasurer or when they need to define the roles a treasurer will play. Job descriptions for synod officers can be useful during times of transition within the synod.

*Synod and Congregational Guidelines for Internal Controls Best Practices:* In order to exercise good stewardship and care of the resources entrusted to them, each synod and congregation should establish and maintain good internal control and accounting policies. These documents describe major financial activities and related best practices that will assist the synod or congregation in establishing its own systems.

*Contingency Planning for Synods and Congregations:* In response to requests for assistance in responding to economic uncertainty, a resource that addressed budget contingency planning was created and sent to the synodical bishops, treasurers, and vice presidents in December 2008. It included two documents intended as reference tools: "Basic Components of Budget Contingency Planning," and "Budget Prioritization Criteria Tool." A similar document later was created for congregations.

*"Administration Matters" Newsletter:* This bi-monthly, electronic newsletter was launched in January 2009. It was developed for all church leaders with an interest in financial, legal, tax, and general administrative issues. This newsletter is a collaborative project of the Office of the Treasurer, the Office of the Secretary, Communication Services, and Synodical

Relations. Other churchwide units participate in providing content. Church leaders wishing to subscribe free of charge can do so online at [www.elca.org/adminmatters](http://www.elca.org/adminmatters).

*Congregational Audit Guide:* This comprehensive guide addresses questions ranging from who can perform a congregational audit to what an audit plan encompasses.

*Congregational Treasurers Financial and Accounting Guide:* This guide for treasurers and bookkeepers reviews responsibilities of the congregational treasurer, the chart of accounts, financial reporting, and more.

*Data Security Presentation:* A growing concern in this society is the issue of data security. Entities that collect, store, and communicate information have a responsibility to those who provide their information to keep it secure. This presentation provides an explanation of Personal Identity Information (PII) and how to keep data secure at many levels.

*Church Administrative Software:* Provides a list of companies that offer fund accounting and other non-profit administrative software.

## **IT Assessment and Leadership Transition**

The Office of the Treasurer conducted an assessment of the information technology (IT) function of the churchwide organization in early 2008. The assessment included an analysis of the skills that should be sought in the next executive for this section. Mr. Jonathan Beyer was hired as the new executive for information technology in Spring 2008 and brings excellent technology and management skills to the work. A significant portion of his work over the course of the first year has been in implementing key components of the IT assessment recommendations. A report on the IT section's work is found in Section III, Part 3 of the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*.

## **Major Directions 2009–2011**

Major directions that will receive the attention of staff of the Office of the Treasurer over the next biennium are the following:

- Coordinate and participate in a review of the structure, governance, and funding of the Foundation of the ELCA.
- Provide for an external audit of information technology systems controls, followed by implementation of any resulting recommendations.
- Complete the process of upgrading the general ledger system, including analyzing work flow, adjusting process documentation, and testing controls.
- Review cost allocation for services to churchwide units and separately incorporated units in order to improve information about the full cost of programs and to apply a more uniform accounting methodology across units.
- Review processes and staffing structure of the Office of the Treasurer to ensure that the office is operating at maximum efficiency.

## **Part Two: 2007 and 2008 Financial Report**

### **Audited Financial Report for Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008**

The consolidated, audited financial statements for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) for the years ending January 31, 2008, and January 31, 2009, can be found in the appendices of this report. These statements include all administrative, program, and service units of the churchwide organization that are not separately incorporated, as well as the

Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. The reports include a consolidating schedule by fund of General Operating Funds, the Endowment Fund, and the Deferred Gift Fund.

It has been determined that the post-retirement medical obligation included in the audited financial statements of the churchwide organization in prior years is properly reflected on the financial statements of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA, a separately incorporated unit that is not part of the churchwide consolidated financial statements. The January 31, 2007, and January 31, 2008, unrestricted net asset balances have been restated to reflect this adjustment, resulting in a \$90.9 million increase in net assets. This restatement has no impact on the plan for funding of the obligation or on the provision of benefits to retirees.

**Operating Results for Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008**

The current operating results for the biennium, reported exclusive of the Endowment and Deferred Gift Funds and non-operational, pre-audit adjusting entries, were positive.

Total current fund operating income for the churchwide organization increased in 2007 by \$0.4 million to \$83.3 million, and grew in 2008 to \$83.4 million, resulting in five consecutive years of increasing income. Income from congregations in the form of mission support increased by \$0.5 million to \$66.1 million in 2007 and then decreased to \$65.3 million in 2008. The 2008 decrease was 1.3% compared to the prior fiscal year, all of which decline occurred in January 2009. Other major categories of income included investment income, missionary-sponsorship support, bequest and trust income, endowment income distributions, and grants.

Operating expenses amounted to \$80.8 million in 2007 and \$80.2 million in 2008, as compared to \$79.9 million in 2006. There were no additional allocations made by the Church Council for designated purposes. Net operating income for the 2007 and 2008 fiscal years amounted to \$2.5 million and \$3.2 million, respectively.

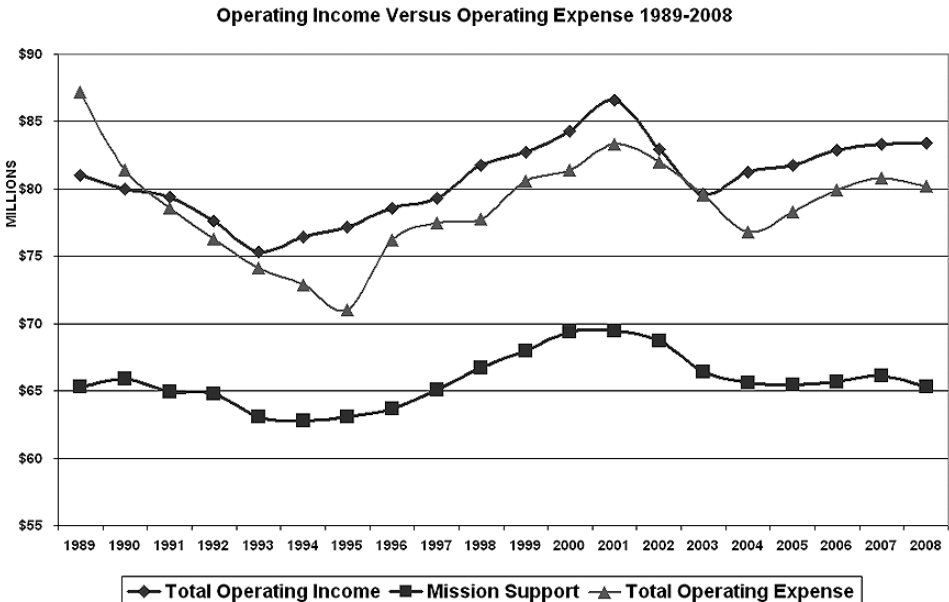


Figure 1. Operating Income Versus Operating Expense 1989-2008

## World Hunger Appeal

Giving to the general World Hunger Appeal grew to \$21.3 million in 2007, an increase of \$2.1 million, and further increased to \$21.4 million in 2008, an increase of \$0.1 million over the prior year; there was thus a cumulative total of \$4.3 million in additional World Hunger revenue as compared to the last biennium. Income in 2008 was particularly impacted by an extraordinarily high level of bequest income, \$3.9 million.

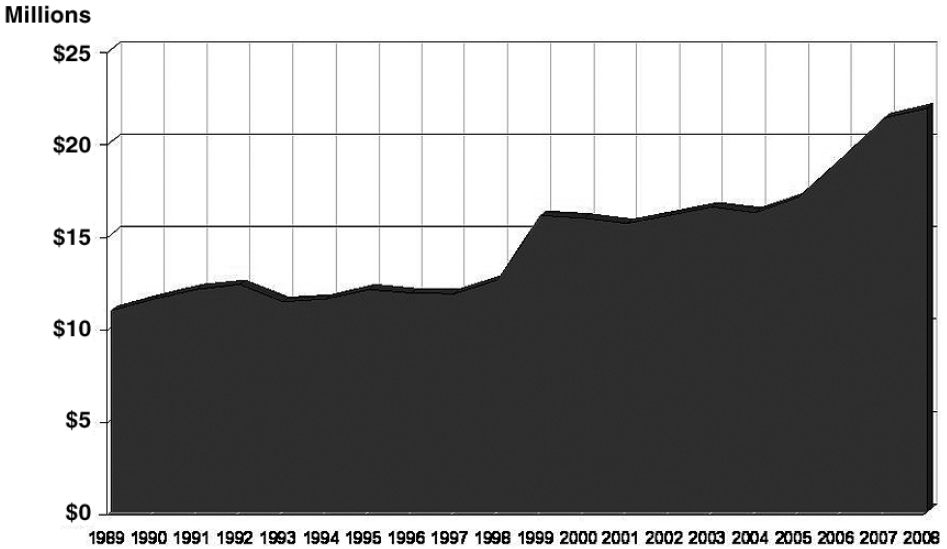


Figure 2. World Hunger Appeal Giving, 1989–2008

## Conclusion

Notwithstanding the positive results for the biennium in both current funds and World Hunger revenue, the broad economic downturn has put stress on ELCA congregations, synods, and other related institutions and agencies. In the final two months of the biennium, the impact of the economy began to be reflected in the churchwide organization's financial results, as well. We anticipate a continuing impact in 2009 that will necessitate careful monitoring of revenue and spending, as well as contingency planning.

I am thankful for the steadfast generosity and stewardship of the members of this church, who make possible the breadth of ministries that are carried out every day across the globe. I am grateful also for the privilege of serving as treasurer of this church.

**Part Three:  
Report of the Treasurer to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly**

Good morning! It is a joy to be here in Minneapolis with you for this Churchwide Assembly. I want to begin by thanking you for your willingness to serve this church as a voting member. It is a privilege to have this opportunity to report to you on the financial status of our churchwide organization.

The churchwide organization completed fiscal years 2007 and 2008 with revenue exceeding expense in its current budgeted operations. I will be sharing with you some slides that contain very condensed highlights of these results. The full consolidated and audited financial statements reflect consolidating entries and additional data and footnotes and are included in the Churchwide Assembly materials, Section II, Report of the Treasurer, Part 2, Exhibit A.

<b>Current Operating Funds Summary of Revenue and Expenses (in millions)</b>			
	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Total Revenue	\$ 83.4	\$83.3	\$ .1
Total Expense	80.2	80.8	.6
Net Revenue	\$ 3.2	\$ 2.5	\$ .7

This first slide portrays total revenue and expense numbers for 2007 and 2008 and the variance between years. In the variance columns, un-bracketed numbers are favorable; any bracketed numbers would be unfavorable.

As noted on the first line, revenue available for current operations increased from \$83.3 million in 2007 to \$83.4 million in 2008—a slight favorable variance or increase of \$.1 million. This was the fifth consecutive year of increases in total operating revenue.

Next, operating expenses of approximately \$80.2 million in 2008 reflect a decrease of \$0.6 million from 2007. These expenses were favorable to the operating budget in both years, meaning expenses were kept within the approved spending levels.

Revenue minus expense resulted in a positive variance of approximately \$2.5 million in 2007 and \$3.2 million in 2008. Net revenue in excess of expense—a positive bottom line—is important to us financially because it builds cash reserves, which help us maintain liquidity, cover capital expenditure needs, and respond to new mission opportunities not anticipated in the normal operating budget, as well as encouraging careful budget planning and controlled spending.

Next, let’s look a little closer at the revenue side of the revenue-expense equation.

Mission-support income—that is, the unrestricted income from congregations through synods, to the churchwide organization—declined from \$66.1 million in 2007 to \$65.3 million in 2008, a decrease of \$842,000 or 1.3 percent. This was the first decrease in mission-support income since 2005.

Other categories of revenue, which in 2008 represented about 21 percent of total revenue available for current operations, increased from 2007 by \$0.9 million.

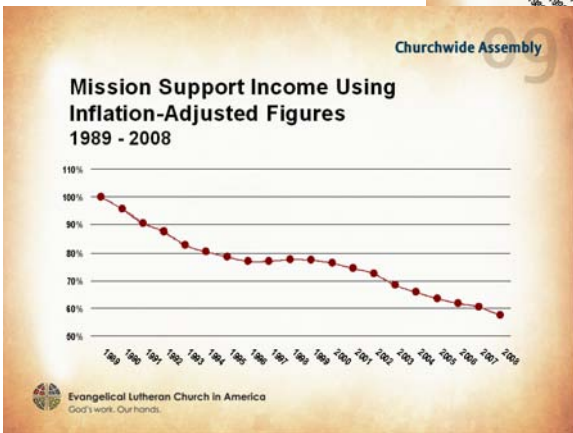
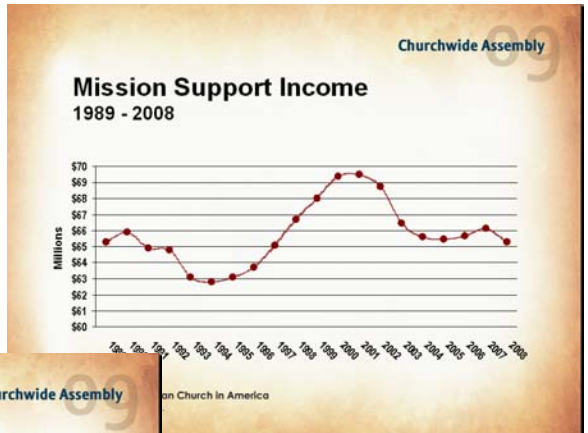
## Current Fund Revenue

	2008 <u>Actuals</u>	2007 <u>Actuals</u>	Variances <u>From Prior Yr</u>
Mission Support	\$65,286,926	\$66,129,117	(\$842,191)
Missionary Sponsorship	\$3,772,404	\$3,828,427	(\$56,023)
Bequests and Trusts	\$5,020,323	\$2,331,007	\$2,689,316
Investment Income	\$1,297,328	\$2,730,165	(\$1,432,837)
Endowment	\$2,561,898	\$2,212,487	\$349,411
MIF	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$0
Vision for Mission	\$1,052,162	\$1,211,077	(\$158,915)
Other	\$2,917,547	\$3,362,733	(\$445,186)

Most of this favorable balance came in the area of bequest and trust income which was over \$5 million, and \$2.5 million greater than the amount normally anticipated in the annual operating budget.

The other notable variance was in investment income, which was down \$1.4 million from a historical peak in 2007. The decrease was a result of lower levels of restricted funds and a decrease in interest rates on short-term investments.

Mission-support income continues to be the core component for funding churchwide ministries. Mission-support income in 2007 exceeded mission-support levels for the three years prior, with growth continuing into 2008. However, it decreased in the final quarter to close the 2008 fiscal year down over \$800,000 from 2007. Total mission-support income in 2008 was roughly equal to mission-support



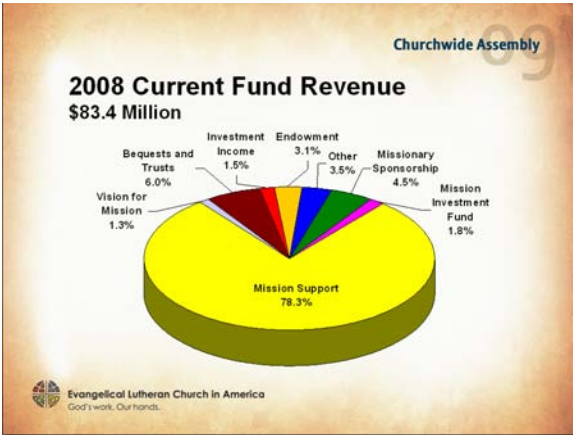
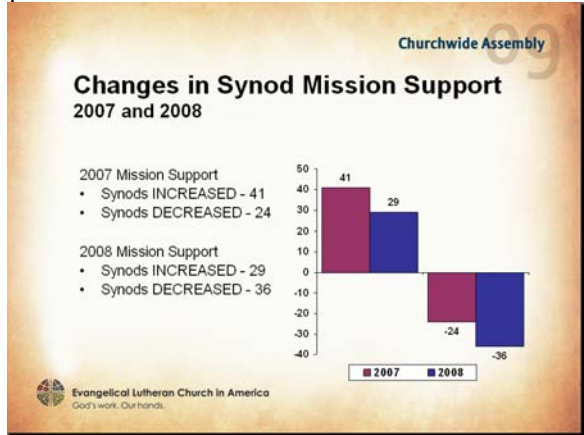
income received in 1989, the first year depicted on this chart.

While the amount of mission-support dollars received in 1989 is roughly equal to the 2008 mission-support total, the inflation-adjusted value of those dollars has significantly changed over the past 20 years. This next slide shows the impact over time on the operations, programs, and

partners supported through mission-support income. Since 1989, the adjusted value of mission-support income has decreased about 42 percent.

The next slide also looks more closely at trends in mission-support income. As shown here, in 2007, 41 synods increased the dollar amount of their mission-support dollars shared with the churchwide organization as compared to the prior year . . .

. . . while in 2008, the number of synods that increased their mission-support sharing was down, with 29 synods increasing mission support and the majority, 36 synods, decreasing mission-support contributions as compared to the prior year, in total dollar terms.

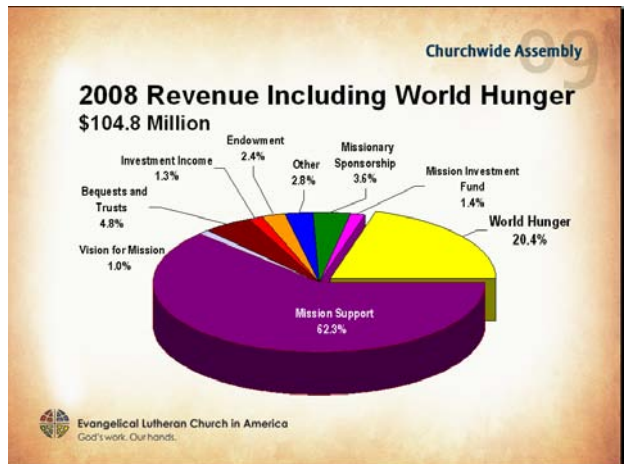


The next slide illustrates the percentage of income received in 2008 by major source, beginning with mission support. Mission support represented approximately 78 percent of current revenue available for current expenses in 2008. Other major sources of current revenue included:

- Bequest and Trust Income — \$5.0 million or 6% of total current revenue;
- Missionary Sponsorship — almost \$3.8 million or 4.5%;
- Endowment income — \$2.6 million;

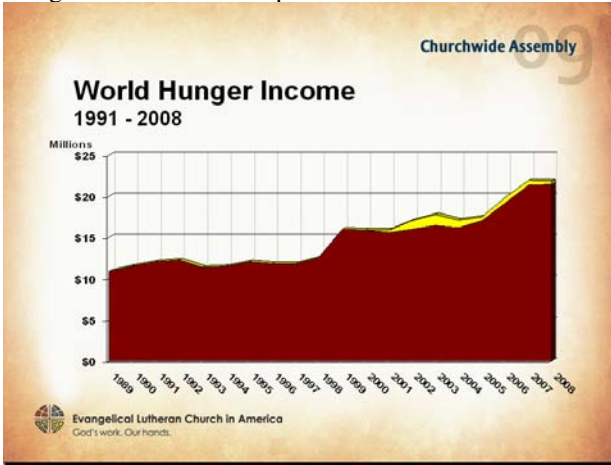
- Mission Investment Fund support for new congregation starts — \$1.5 million;
- Investment Income — \$1.3 million;
- Vision for Mission appeal — \$1.1 million; and
- Other income of about \$2.9 million.

I'd like to report next on the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Because this is restricted income, World Hunger is not part of the current operating revenue and expense but is instead budgeted and accounted for separately. When combined with our current income, the total income received for





budgeted programs of the churchwide organization was \$104.8 million. Of this total, World Hunger income was 20.4 percent.



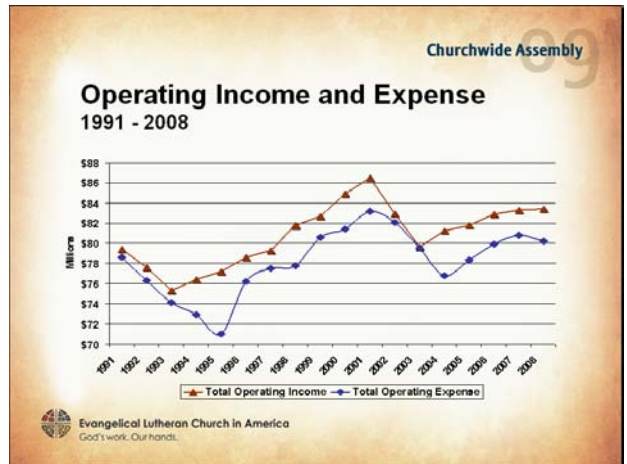
I'm pleased to share that the past four years have seen consecutive record income levels for the ELCA World Hunger appeal. In 2007, contributions to the ELCA general World Hunger Appeal reached \$21.3 million, an increase of \$2.1 million over the 2006 level. In 2008, income for World Hunger increased again, slightly, to a new high of \$21.4 million, driven largely by an extraordinarily high level of gifts from bequests and trusts for World Hunger of \$3.9 million, as compared to anticipated income

from this source of \$0.5 million.

An additional \$1.0 million was received over the two-year period for the "Stand with Africa" campaign.

Thank you for your consistent and generous support for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Because of our members' generosity, through current gifts, and by remembering World Hunger in their wills and estate plans, we have been able to respond in significant ways to those in need.

We have looked at both the income and expense side of our operating results. This next chart gives some perspective on our operating results over time. Here, operating revenue is compared with expense on an annual basis since 1991—with the gap between the two lines representing surplus or deficit. The goal is to operate as much as possible with a modest surplus each year. This has been accomplished for the last 18 years.



While the overall financial results for the biennium were positive, it's important to note that our congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization were not immune to the impact of the economic downturn. For the churchwide organization, the economy began to noticeably affect income in the final two months of the fiscal year. Most affected were mission-support income, which prior to December had been ahead of the prior year, and World Hunger income, where the final two months saw sizeable decreases in the amount of gifts received. Because of the high level of World Hunger income from bequests and through spending controls on the current

income side, deficit spending was avoided. However, income projections were necessarily adjusted, resulting in a reduction in budget plans for 2009 and 2010.

So, how are we doing in fiscal year 2009? During the first five months of the current fiscal year, we have continued to experience the impact of the economy on giving. The largest decreases on a comparative monthly basis were seen between December 2008 and April 2009. Since then, income has been stable with mission-support income for May and June 2009 actually slightly favorable to the same months in 2008.

At the end of the five-month period, mission support is down \$1.3 million or 5.2 percent from the same period in 2008, but right on budget with a \$95,000 or 0.4 percent positive variance.

For the five months ended June 30, 2009, total revenue available to cover current budgeted expenses has decreased \$2.7 million or 8.0 percent from the same period in 2008, but is favorable to budget by \$0.3 million or 1.0 percent. Expenses are within budget, resulting in a modest seasonal deficit that is favorable to budget expectations.

Total contributions to the ELCA general World Hunger Appeal in the first five months were unfavorable to the same five-month period in fiscal 2008 by \$1.0 million. A reduction in the receipt of bequest and trust income of \$0.6 million was the primary unfavorable variance. Gifts submitted through synods for World Hunger were also unfavorable to 2008 by \$0.4 million.

Of course, it's important to note that these are interim period results and the financial picture could change considerably by year-end.

During these times of higher economic instability, the churchwide organization is committed to:

- Closely monitoring income estimates and making adjustments as advisable;
- Increasing communications and consultations with synods in order to more accurately estimate and plan for any changes in income;
- Developing contingency plans in order to respond quickly to any income reductions;
- Consulting with partners, to the degree possible, on the impact of changes in financial support levels; and
- Reviewing operations, programs, and structures to ensure maximum efficiency.

Careful planning and monitoring are essential to steward the resources entrusted to us by ELCA members and to continue to provide critical support on your behalf to ELCA ministries across this church and beyond. Your support makes these ministries possible, and I give thanks for your continued generosity.

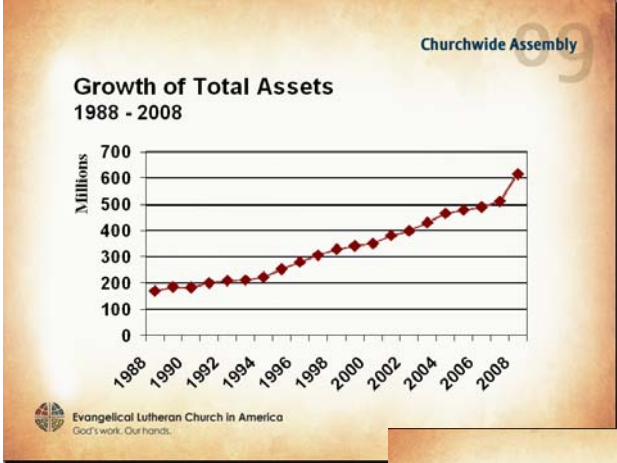
## **Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA**

I would like to turn now to an update on the financial performance and operations of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. The audited financial statements are included in the Churchwide Assembly materials, Section III, pages 15–26. The *2008 Annual Report for the Mission Investment Fund* (MIF) is included in your assembly packet and gives a summarized report of the 2008 results. I will again focus my comments on some broad highlights.

Thanks to the participation of ELCA members, congregations, synods, and ELCA-related ministries, the Mission Investment Fund experienced significant growth in 2007 and 2008.

While financial institutions around the world were affected by the housing crisis and the precipitous downturn of the financial markets, the Mission Investment Fund continued to grow and expand the reach of its work across this church. Prudent management and a conservative investment policy have served the Mission Investment Fund well during the past two years of economic turmoil. In fact, over the nearly 100-year history of the Mission Investment Fund and

its predecessors, the Fund has always paid investors their principal and interest in accordance with the terms of the investment.

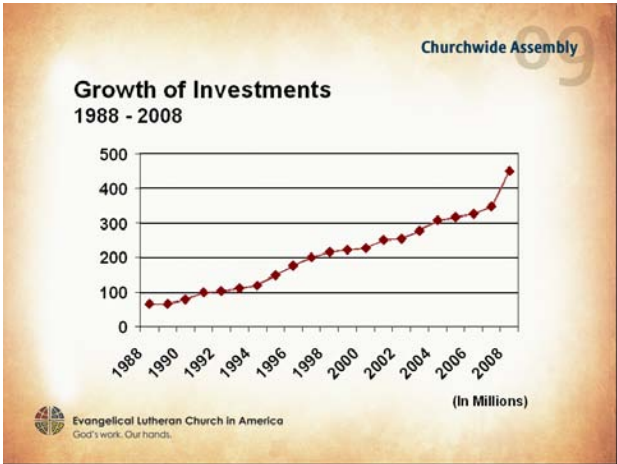
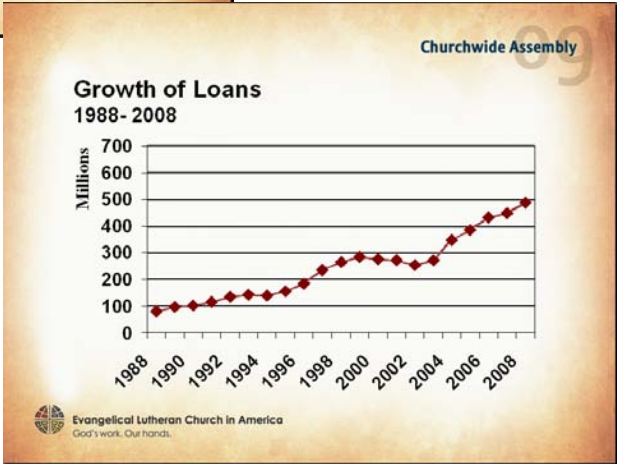


The fund's total assets have grown over the years, from \$171 million in 1988 to \$491 million in 2006. During the last two years, the Fund has realized an additional \$126 million in growth to reach \$617 million in total assets at the end of 2008.

Net assets, or equity, at the end of 2008 was \$163 million. This is over five times the amount required by regulators, which means additional security for Mission Investment Fund investors.

The next slide focuses on our loan portfolio. Here you see a historical picture of loan growth since the inception of the ELCA. In 1988, the loan balance was \$81 million. At year-end 2008, the fund had in place 797 loans totaling \$489 million with ELCA congregations and ministries.

There was a net increase of 89 loans and \$105 million for the two-year period since December 2006. Over the course of the two years, 205 new loans were approved with a total disbursement of \$218 million.



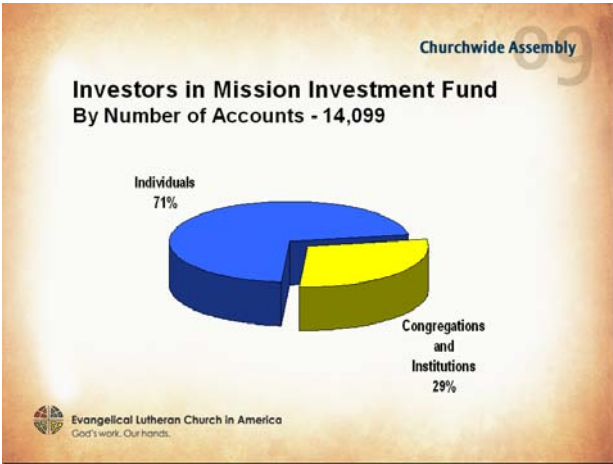
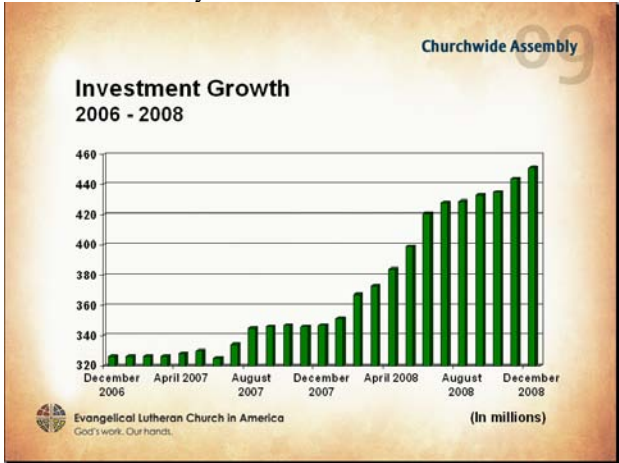
At year-end 2008, the fund also held \$24.0 million in real estate for new-start congregations, primarily land for future building construction. By purchasing land for new-start ministries, we assure that property will be available for a young congregation when it is ready to build.

Loans to ELCA congregations and ministries are made possible by investment obligations that are purchased by ELCA members, congregations, synods, and other ELCA-related ministries. On this

slide, you see the growth of investment obligations from the beginning of the ELCA, starting at \$66 million in 1988 and growing to \$451 million today.

2007 was a year of significant growth, and 2008 was a year of unprecedented growth for the Mission Investment Fund in the area of investment obligations. Total investment obligations increased more than \$125 million—or almost 40 percent—from December 31, 2006, to December 31, 2008.

During the two years, the number of investors increased to 14,099, a net growth of 3,000, of which 2,800 are individuals vs. institutions or congregations.



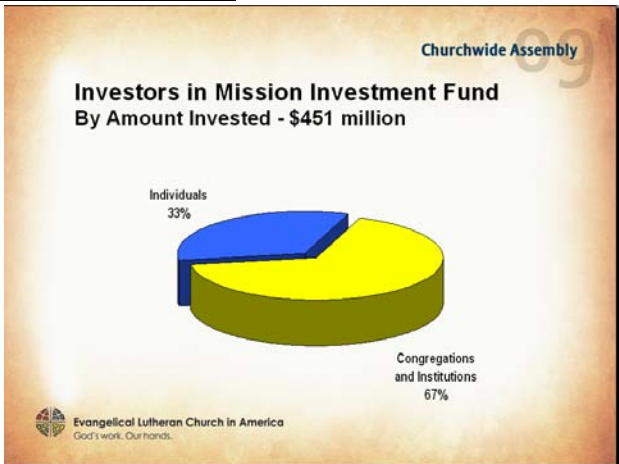
Almost 71 percent of our investors are individuals, but congregations and institutions are significant partners in this ministry, accounting for 67 percent of the investment dollars.

We celebrate today that nearly all of the synods of the ELCA and one in three congregations have an MIF investment. We look forward to serving an even greater portion of the millions of ELCA members who are potential individual investors. The Mission Investment Fund is well-positioned for success

in what continues to be an uncertain economic environment.

Now I would like to touch briefly on some of the initiatives that the Mission Investment Fund has undertaken in the last biennium.

A key initiative has been to focus on building awareness of the Mission Investment Fund and strengthening partnerships with ministries throughout the church. We developed new resources and introduced a new advertising campaign around the ELCA tag line



“God’s work. Our hands.” Building on the ELCA’s campaign, each ad in the MIF campaign has an image that includes a cross and tells the story of a ministry that was assisted by a Mission Investment Fund loan.

Another important initiative is one that we began in 2007 when MIF announced a \$1.5 million matching grant over three years to the Fund for Leaders to establish the MIF Mission Developer Scholarship Fund. The resulting endowment will provide scholarship assistance to eligible students enrolled in a qualified mission developer program at any of the eight ELCA seminaries.

Through this scholarship, MIF enables the development of pastors who will lead our outreach efforts in the coming years. It is at the core of the Mission Investment Fund’s ministry—supporting the growth of this church. The fund’s total assets have grown over the years, from \$171 million in 1988 to \$491 million in 2006. During the last two years, the Fund has realized an additional \$126 million in growth to reach \$617 million in total assets at the end of 2008.

MIF has six church building consultants and two architects deployed throughout the country to help guide congregations through the entire building process, from conception through construction. These services include help with creating building designs that support the mission of the congregation and developing financial plans to support the building process. The Mission Investment Fund consultants have also become LEED certified to assist congregations to implement “green” strategies to improve building efficiency and stewardship of the environment.

Another key partnership has involved the ELCA Youth Gathering. The Mission Investment Fund handled all of the registration payments for the recently concluded Youth Gathering. And for the past two gatherings, we have provided a service center at which youth leaders could cash checks on their congregation’s MIF accounts. This has proven to be a great convenience for those who have used it.

I want to thank the many individuals and ministries that are participating in the Fund for your confidence and support and to invite those who haven’t yet joined us in this ministry to participate.

I will conclude this report with a brief video that tells the Mission Investment Fund’s story and shows how the fund is helping ELCA ministries to share God’s boundless love with the world. But before that, let me say once again, what a privilege it has been to serve these past seven years as ELCA treasurer. Thank you for your support, your prayers, and your partnership in this ministry that we share together as members of the ELCA.

# Appendix A to the Report of the Treasurer: 2007 ELCA Financial Statements

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
January 31, 2008 and 2007

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EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
January 31, 2008 and 2007





Crowe, Chizek and Company, LLC  
 Member of the Crowe Group

REPORT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

Board of Directors and Shareholders  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
 Churchwide Administrative Offices

We have audited the accompanying consolidated statement of financial position of the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Church) as of January 31, 2008, and the related consolidated statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended. These consolidated financial statements are the responsibility of the Church's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit. The prior year summarized comparative information has been derived from the Church's 2007 financial statements and, in our report dated June 1, 2007, we expressed an unqualified opinion on those financial statements.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As discussed in Note 1 to the financial statements, the financial statements being presented are only for the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and do not include the assets, liabilities and net assets, and the revenue and expenses of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that are recorded in the accounts of the other organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements are not intended to present the financial position of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2008, or the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2008, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated June 3, 2008 on our consideration of the Church's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be considered in assessing results of our audit.

Our audit was made for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The supplementary information as of and for the year ended January 31, 2008 on pages 30 and 31, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The prior year summarized comparative information presented in the consolidated schedules of expenses by object has been derived from the Church's 2007 financial statements and, in our report dated June 1, 2007, we expressed an unqualified opinion on those financial statements.

As discussed in Note 12 to the financial statements, the Church adopted FASB Statement No. 158, *Employers' Accounting for Defined Benefit Pension and Other Post-Retirement Plans*. The adoption of this accounting principle resulted in a reduction to Church unrestricted net assets of approximately \$12.5 million.

*Crowe Chizek & Company, LLC*  
 Crowe Chizek and Company LLC

Chicago, Illinois  
 June 3, 2008



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
January 31, 2008 and with comparative totals for 2007

	2008	2007
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 13,300,465	\$ 18,984,085
Cash and securities held as collateral for securities loaned (Note 20)	56,698,760	72,133,881
Payable under securities loan agreements (Note 20)	(56,698,760)	(72,133,881)
Accounts receivable (Note 2)	13,822,642	16,058,094
Due from related organizations	430,153	-
Interest receivable	1,303,576	1,991,085
Investments (Note 3)	574,634,215	545,906,815
Prepaid expenses and other assets	6,220,742	6,766,735
Mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed, net (Note 4)	2,238,831	2,481,795
Overseas church construction loans (Note 5)	725,584	552,322
Property, furniture, and equipment, net (Note 6)	30,088,669	27,425,945
Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	18,618,882	17,246,110
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 663,383,759</b>	<b>\$ 637,515,006</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 6,171,856	\$ 6,446,461
Deferred revenue	2,175,774	2,183,475
Due to related organizations	-	332,922
Annuities payable (Note 8)	114,483,354	117,274,641
Funds held for others	183,152,787	163,407,823
Note payable (Note 7)	7,655,768	9,888,246
Postretirement health care benefits (Note 12)	90,900,361	81,349,362
Funds held for others in perpetuity	40,037,108	32,634,678
Other liabilities	2,237,968	1,973,678
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>446,814,976</b>	<b>414,997,486</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		
Unrestricted (Note 21)	(19,129,693)	(17,709,020)
Temporarily restricted (Note 22)	101,080,540	111,351,445
Permanently restricted (Note 23)	134,617,936	128,875,095
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>216,568,783</b>	<b>222,517,520</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 663,383,759</b>	<b>\$ 637,515,006</b>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES  
Year ended January 31, 2008, with comparative totals for 2007

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	2008 Total	2007 Total
Contributed revenue	\$ 66,129,117	\$ 19,597,449	\$ -	\$ 85,726,566	\$ 65,664,031
World Hunger Appeal	-	-	-	-	18,911,255
Missionary sponsorship	3,833,303	3,018,238	-	6,851,541	3,852,113
Disaster relief	1,211,475	706,374	-	1,917,849	4,997,608
United Way	310,041	4,420,385	584,116	5,314,542	3,237,507
Donations	3,004,041	4,420,385	6,560,082	11,984,508	11,004,324
Endowment contributions	1,508,663	45,000	-	1,553,663	1,506,785
Mission investment fund	2,347,411	2,459,886	-	4,807,297	4,497,128
Bequests, trusts, and residuums	1,897,028	3,530,238	-	5,427,266	5,248,273
Other gifts	78,249,356	38,571,516	7,124,158	123,945,030	125,504,135
<b>Total contributed support</b>	<b>78,249,356</b>	<b>38,571,516</b>	<b>7,124,158</b>	<b>123,945,030</b>	<b>125,504,135</b>
Other revenue	8,437,324	2,093,000	666	10,531,010	5,909,845
Realized gains (losses)	43,019,346	18,202,778	-	61,222,124	6,838,280
Unrealized gains (losses)	(1,449,606)	(23,285,318)	(488,049)	(25,192,973)	11,937,427
Change in market value of beneficial interests	1,904,757	-	1,302,659	3,207,416	1,918,039
Retiree officers' revenue	9,132,857	283,496	(913,427)	9,502,926	62,590
Change in split interest agreements	847,825	-	-	847,825	16,730,431
Service and other revenue	1,130,100	-	-	1,130,100	1,130,100
Lease income	61,526	-	61,325	122,851	133,207
Revenue from investments	1,658,468	(2,706,014)	(6,430)	(1,053,976)	46,054,384
<b>Total other revenue</b>	<b>43,534,816</b>	<b>(3,309,846)</b>	<b>(208,100)</b>	<b>40,016,870</b>	<b>88,262,177</b>
<b>Net assets released from restrictions</b>	<b>43,534,816</b>	<b>(3,309,846)</b>	<b>(208,100)</b>	<b>40,016,870</b>	<b>(23,762)</b>
Expiration of program restrictions	-	-	-	-	-
Note 16	-	-	-	-	-
Expiration of time restrictions	-	-	-	-	-
Income expended from	2,263,199	(2,263,199)	-	-	-
Investments held in perpetuity	-	2,838	(2,838)	-	-
Change in program restrictions	45,298,015	(45,298,463)	(210,659)	(2,760,107)	(2,760)
Net assets released from restrictions	<b>45,298,015</b>	<b>(45,298,463)</b>	<b>(210,659)</b>	<b>(2,760,107)</b>	<b>(2,760)</b>
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>185,983,897</b>	<b>(9,929,861)</b>	<b>6,916,207</b>	<b>182,969,643</b>	<b>171,534,292</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Program services					
Evangelical Outreach and Missions	22,028,193	-	-	22,028,193	21,761,240
World Hunger Appeal	38,411,085	-	-	38,411,085	36,051,073
Global Ministries	1,708,740	-	-	1,708,740	1,708,740
Multicultural Ministries	23,465,239	-	-	23,465,239	23,465,045
Church in Society	13,604,375	-	-	13,604,375	20,066,365
Vocation and education	3,276,184	-	-	3,276,184	3,276,184
Communications services	6,586,385	-	-	6,586,385	6,586,385
Church periodicals	-	-	-	-	-
Office of the Presiding Bishop	-	-	-	-	-

(Continued)



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES  
Year ended January 31, 2008, with comparative totals for 2007

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	2008 Total	2007 Total
Expenses (Continued)					
Program services (Continued)					
Program officer expense	\$ 1,879,276	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,879,276	\$ 1,645,181
Postretirement health care benefits	(444,138)	-	-	(444,138)	(779,379)
Distribution of endowment income and other investing expenses	(159,278)	-	-	(159,278)	3,519,520
Total Program services	1,275,860	39,202	-	1,315,062	4,385,322
Management and general					
Office of the Presiding Bishop	46,854,812	39,202	-	46,894,014	13,286,235
Office of the Secretary	135,513,118	39,202	-	135,552,320	133,482,446
Office of the Secretary	2,279,231	-	-	2,279,231	3,191,448
Office of the Secretary	4,964,766	-	-	4,964,766	4,545,271
Office of the Secretary	5,572,569	-	-	5,572,569	2,531,187
Foundation	1,136,206	-	-	1,136,206	898,423
Development services	1,052,785	-	-	1,052,785	1,029,692
Total management and general	15,015,557	39,202	-	15,054,759	12,246,048
Fundraising, outreach and Cong. Ministries					
Cong. Ministries	44,973	-	-	44,973	51,818
Communication services	92,515	-	-	92,515	66,566
ELCA foundation	1,898,993	-	-	1,898,993	1,617,374
Development Services	2,892,752	-	-	2,892,752	2,829,012
Total fundraising	4,839,233	-	-	4,839,233	3,265,972
Total expenses	174,849,892	39,202	-	174,889,094	149,511,490
Net operating revenues less operating expenses	11,143,000	(9,969,663)	6,906,707	8,080,044	22,023,267
Non-operating transactions					
Redeclaration of prior year's balances (Notes 21, 22 and 23)	(7,040)	(347,598)	(1,163,866)	(1,518,504)	(3,494,922)
Transfer to reestablish endowment balances	(66,358)	46,336	-	(20,022)	-
Change in net assets prior to impact of adoption of SFAS Statement No. 158	11,069,602	(10,270,925)	5,742,841	6,541,518	18,528,345
Effect of adoption of recognition and measurement date provisions of SFAS Statement No. 158	(12,510,272)	-	-	(12,510,272)	-
Change in net assets	(1,440,670)	(10,270,925)	5,742,841	(5,968,754)	18,528,345
Net assets at beginning of year	(17,709,020)	111,361,445	128,673,695	222,517,520	203,989,175
Net assets at end of year	\$ (19,149,690)	\$ 101,090,520	\$ 134,416,536	\$ 216,548,766	\$ 222,517,520

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS  
For the year ended January 31, 2008, with summarized financial information for 2007

	2008	2007
Cash flows from operating activities		
Change in net assets	\$ (5,948,737)	\$ 18,528,345
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash from operating activities:		
Depreciation	1,668,003	1,513,919
Amortization of postretirement health care benefits transition	1,089,000	1,005,000
Effect of adoption of FASB 158 Recognition of PFRM obligation	12,510,277	-
Gain on investments, net	(26,422,246)	(29,822,718)
Recovery of losses on investments, notes, and loans	(184,234)	(245,912)
Acquisition of investments through gifts	(1,699,682)	(3,387,683)
Gifts restricted for long-term investment	(6,560,082)	(3,739,050)
Gain on interest in perpetual trusts	(1,242,785)	(2,042,785)
Change in allowance on overseas church construction loans	(18,984)	(84,234)
Change in allowance on notes	(18,794)	(37,400)
Changes in		
Accounts receivable	2,235,452	(1,949,796)
Interest receivable	687,509	(210,817)
Prepaid expenses and other assets	(1,824,653)	(1,824,653)
Deferred revenue	(274,607)	(2,860,489)
Due to related organizations	(7,701)	(3,886,007)
Postretirement health care benefits	(763,076)	(947,522)
Other liabilities	(4,048,278)	(1,132,147)
Funds held for others	258,090	381,138
Pensions	19,794,465	19,794,465
Purchases of investments	7,440,430	6,528,510
Net cash from operating activities	(2,986,050)	11,912,369
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase and acquisition of equipment	(4,330,277)	(3,237,017)
Proceeds from sale of investments for deed	1,580,000	47,627
Payments received on mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed	1,975,270	540,199
Issuance of overseas church construction loans	(153,000)	-
Payments received on overseas church construction loans	185,956	234,098
Purchase of investments	(486,771,271)	(175,817,263)
Proceeds from sale of investments	483,912,885	150,385,263
Net cash from investing activities	(147,330,887)	(62,003,265)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Proceeds from gifts restricted for long-term investment	6,560,082	3,739,050
Annuities payable	(2,791,287)	3,713,950
Payments on mortgage payable, notes payable, and capital leases	(1,233,478)	(1,644,820)
Net cash from financing activities	2,036,317	5,798,020
Decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(5,685,620)	(9,332,993)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	18,984,085	28,317,078
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	\$ 13,300,465	\$ 18,984,085
Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information		
Interest paid	\$ 345,053	\$ 412,852
Investments through gifts	1,699,682	3,387,683

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Organization:** The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Church) is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation that functions interdependently with the congregations and synods of the Church. The Church serves on behalf of and in support of the Church's members, congregations, and synods. To fulfill its purpose, the Church receives, establishes, and supports congregations and ministries necessary to carry out its mission. The Church has constituent Lutheran congregations in 65 synods throughout the United States and the Caribbean. The Church's principal source of revenue is contributions.

The ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (the Trust) was initially established on October 9, 1995 and restated on January 20, 1999 under a Restated Declaration of Trust by and between the Church and the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Endowment Fund). The Church established the Trust to allow for the collective long-term investment of funds belonging to the Church, Endowment Fund, its congregations, synods, seminaries, and other eligible affiliated entities. The Endowment Fund is the Trustee of the Trust. The ELCA Foundation, an unincorporated unit of the Church, is the administrator of the Trust. The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (the Board of Pensions), an affiliated corporation unit of the Church, is the investment advisor to the Trust.

The accompanying consolidated financial statements include all administrative and program offices and departments of the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. These financial statements do not include the accounts of organizations of the Church such as the Board of Pensions, Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Mission Investment Fund), Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, congregations, schools, cemeteries, homes, seminaries, or any other institution owned and operated by religious orders of men or women, except insofar as financial transactions have taken place between them and the Church (e.g., subsidies, loans, and deposits). These organizations may or may not be separate corporations under civil law and may or may not be under the control of the Church; however, each is an operating entity distinct from the Church, maintains separate accounts, carries on its own services and programs, and reports annually to its respective constituency.

**Basis of Presentation:** The accompanying consolidated financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting. All significant intercompany transactions between the Church and the Trust have been eliminated from the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

(Continued)

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
(Continued)

To ensure the observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of resources available, the Church maintains its financial accounts in accordance with the principles and practices of fund accounting. Fund accounting is the procedure by which resources for various purposes are classified for accounting purposes in accordance with activities or objectives of the Church.

For external reporting purposes, however, the financial statements have been prepared to focus on the organization as a whole and to present balances and transactions classified based upon the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Net assets, revenue, expenses, gains, and losses have been classified into three net asset classes based on donor-imposed restrictions. A description of each net asset class follows:

**Unrestricted** - Net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions including the carrying value of all property, furniture, and equipment. Items that affect this category of net assets include unrestricted contributions and bequests, restricted contributions and bequests whose donor-imposed restrictions were met during the fiscal year, and investment income whose use is unrestricted, as well as all expenses incurred in connection with the operations of the Church.

**Temporarily Restricted** - Net assets subject to donor-imposed restrictions that will be met either by actions of the Church or the passage of time. Items that affect this net asset category are restricted contributions, bequests, and investment income whose use is limited to specific purposes by the donor. These amounts are reclassified to unrestricted net assets when such restrictions are met or have expired.

**Permanently Restricted** - Net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions which require them to be maintained permanently by the Church. Items that affect this net asset category include gifts wherein donors stipulate that the corpus be held in perpetuity (primarily gifts for endowments and gifts solicited by the Church that will fund perpetual endowments) and only the income be made available for unrestricted or restricted purposes. The accumulated undistributed investment income on permanently restricted endowment funds is included in the temporarily restricted net assets, except for unrestricted amounts where the Church is the beneficiary, in which case it is included in unrestricted net assets.

(Continued)

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
 (Continued)

**Summarized Comparative Information:** The financial statements include certain prior-year summarized comparative information in total but not by net asset class. Such information does not include sufficient detail to constitute a presentation in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Accordingly, such information should be read in conjunction with the Church's financial statements for the year ended January 31, 2007, from which summarized information was derived.

**Cash and Cash Equivalents:** Cash and cash equivalents include investments in money market accounts, commercial paper, and other short-term investments with original maturities of three months or less from the date of purchase.

**Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts Administered by Outside Organizations:**

*Trusts in Perpetuity* - The Church has been granted a beneficial interest in various irrevocable trust accounts created under wills or deeds of trust. These trust accounts are administered and held by outside trustees. The Church records the fair value of the beneficial interest as a receivable and as revenue when documentation of the beneficial interest is received. Annual distributions of income from these trusts are recorded directly by the Church division which benefits from this interest.

*Charitable Remainder Trusts* - A charitable remainder trust is an arrangement with an outside organization in which the donor establishes and funds a trust and stipulates that specific distributions be made to a designated beneficiary or beneficiaries over the lives of the beneficiary(ies), with the remainder to be distributed to the Church upon death of the beneficiary(ies). When notified of the irrevocable interest in the trust, the Church records the present value of the fair market value of the trust's assets as a contribution receivable. Present values are calculated using a discount rate based on the applicable federal rate at the date of the trust and life expectancies unless the end dates of the trusts, in number of years, are specified. Each year, the contracts are revalued; the difference is reported as a change in the value of the split interest agreements. At death and voluntary distribution, the assets received by the Church are recognized at fair value, the contribution receivable is closed, and any remaining difference is reported as a change in the value of split interest agreements.

(Continued)

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
 (Continued)

**Investments and Related Income, Gains, and Losses:** Investments are reported at fair value, except for certain investments in real estate, which are reported at cost. Substantially all of the investments have readily determinable market values, and therefore fair value was determined using quoted market prices. Investments carried at fair value consist primarily of stocks, corporate and government obligations, publicly traded real estate securities, mortgage-backed securities, and mutual funds. The cost of securities sold is based on either the specific identification or average cost method.

Investment income, gains and losses, and any investment-related expenses are recorded as changes in unrestricted net assets in the statement of activities unless their use is temporarily or permanently restricted by explicit donor stipulations. In the absence of donor stipulations to the contrary, losses on the investment of a donor-restricted endowment fund reduce temporarily restricted net assets to the extent that donor-imposed temporary restrictions on net appreciation of the fund have not been met before the loss occurs. Any remaining loss is recorded as a reduction of unrestricted net assets. Realized and unrealized gains and losses on all Church permanently restricted endowments are being recognized in temporarily restricted net assets, except for unrealized gains and losses on deferred gifts that will provide proceeds upon death of the annuitant for a permanent endowment. The aggregate amounts of funds for which the fair value of the assets held is less than the level required by donor stipulation or law were \$20,418,143 and \$18,051,574 at December 31, 2007 and 2006, respectively. At December 31, 2007, a cumulative loss of approximately \$571,000 was reported in unrestricted net assets to re-establish underwater endowment balances in accordance with Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 124, *Accounting for Certain Investments Held by Not-for-Profit Organizations*. During the current year, approximately \$46,000 has been reclassified from unrestricted to temporarily restricted net assets.

**Property, Furniture, Equipment, and Depreciation:** Property, furniture, and equipment are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation to date. Depreciation is provided over the following useful lives on a straight-line basis:

Office building	50 years
Mission homes and apartments	25 years
Leasehold improvements	20 years
Furniture, fixtures, and equipment	10 years
Computers, software, and related components	3 years

**Funds Held for Others:** Funds held for others consist of contributions received on behalf of and other resources held for other Lutheran organizations that are separate nonconsolidated entities. The Church does not have variance powers over these funds.

(Continued)

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
(Continued)

**Vacation Pay:** The Church recognizes vacation pay expense when earned by its nonmissionary personnel. The liability for vacation pay of missionary personnel cannot be reasonably estimated and such amounts are recognized when paid.

**Revenue, Expenses, and Contributions:** Revenues are reported as increases in unrestricted net assets unless use of the related assets is limited by donor-imposed restrictions. Expenses are reported as decreases in unrestricted net assets. Gains and losses on investments and other assets or liabilities are reported as increases or decreases in unrestricted net assets unless their use is restricted by explicit donor stipulation. Expiration of temporary restrictions on net assets (i.e., the donor-stipulated purpose has been fulfilled and/or the stipulated time period has elapsed) are reported as reclassifications between applicable classes of net assets.

Contributions including unconditional promises to give, are recognized in the period received. Conditional contributions are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend are substantially met. Contributions of assets other than cash are recorded at estimated fair value. Contributions to be received after one year are discounted at an appropriate discount rate commensurate with the risk involved. Amortization of discount is recorded as additional contribution revenue in accordance with donor-imposed restrictions, if any, on the contributions.

Contributions received with donor-imposed restrictions are reported as revenue of the temporarily restricted net asset class. Contributions of land, building, and equipment without donor-imposed restrictions concerning the use of such long-lived assets are reported as revenue of the unrestricted net asset class.

**Endowment Pool Distributions:** Endowment investments are pooled and managed on the *total return* concept. When a pool is established, ownership interests are initially assigned through unitization to the pool based on the fair value of the cash and securities placed in the pool by each participant. Current fair value is used to determine the number of units allocated to additional assets placed in the pool and to value withdrawals from the pool. Distributions from the pool may be made from dividend and interest income and net realized gains. If distributions exceed the actual dividends, interest, and realized gains, the excess is distributed first from accumulated undistributed earnings then from capital. At December 31, 2007, 394 of 1,566 accounts had accumulated undistributed earnings compared to 1,086 of 1,437 accounts at December 31, 2006.

(Continued)

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
(Continued)

Distributions are made each quarter at a rate established annually by the Board of Trustees of The Endowment Fund Pooled Trust of the ELCA. The rate of distribution is established to be less than the anticipated total return of the fund. The average rates established for the calendar years 2007 and 2006 were 4.5% and 4.75% respectively. The calendar year 2007 rate is applied to the average market value of the assets in the pool as of December 31, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, and 2002. The calendar year 2006 rate is applied to the average market value of the assets in the pool as of December 31, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, and 2001.

**Income Tax:** The Church has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service indicating that it is exempt from Federal income taxes on income related to its exempt purpose under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. There were no significant unrelated business income activities during the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007.

**Use of Estimates:** The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Certain significant estimates include the liability for post-retirement healthcare benefits and the liability related to annuities payable. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

**Reclassifications:** Certain amounts presented in the 2007 statements of financial position and activities have been reclassified to conform with the 2008 presentation.

**NOTE 2 - ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**

Included in accounts receivable at January 31, 2008 and 2007 were approximately \$12,863,140 and \$12,053,560, respectively, relating to synods' contributions for mission support, world hunger appeal, missionary sponsorship, and other programs that have been collected subsequent to year end. No allowance for bad debts has been established because management considers all accounts receivable to be collectible.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
January 31, 2008 with comparative amounts for 2007

**NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS**

Investments at January 31, 2008 and 2007 consist of the following:

	2008		2007	
	Cost	Fair Value	Cost	Fair Value
Equity securities	\$ 246,747,088	\$ 271,097,534	\$ 182,224,729	\$ 247,098,807
Fixed income securities	267,972,030	283,914,359	266,977,031	274,933,864
Real estate	12,589,290	17,831,311	12,714,128	22,293,243
Mission Investment Fund	1,593,532	1,593,532	1,593,532	1,593,532
Other	137,827	397,852	47,661	47,661
	<u>\$ 529,099,419</u>	<u>\$ 574,834,215</u>	<u>\$ 463,498,789</u>	<u>\$ 545,908,815</u>

Out of the \$574,634,215 and \$545,908,815 of total investments at fair value at January 31, 2008 and 2007, \$542,943,108 and \$500,986,387 are stated at fair value determined at December 31, 2007 and 2006. The composition of the portfolio and the fair value of these investments at December 31, 2007 and 2006 are not materially different than if they were recorded as of January 31, 2008 and 2007. Of these investments, dividend and interest income are recorded net of investment-related expenses which were \$3,331,176 and \$2,440,284 as of January 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively.

The Church is a pass-through entity for investment income related to certain endowment and deferred gift investments managed and distributed by an external financial institution. In relation to these investments, there were realized gains of approximately \$762,000 and \$694,000 on temporarily restricted investments and \$1,092,000 and \$963,000 on permanently restricted investments for the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively, with offsetting increases in certain liabilities reported.

Also, unrealized losses of approximately \$1,820,000 and \$138,000 on these investments with offsetting increases in certain liabilities were reported for the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively.

Investment return shown above is net of such pass-through gains and losses.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
January 31, 2008 with comparative amounts for 2007

**NOTE 4 - MORTGAGES, NOTES, AND CONTRACTS FOR DEED**

Mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed as of January 31, are summarized as follows:

	2008		2007	
Mortgages and contracts for deed		\$ 1,095,290	\$ 1,996,893	
Notes	2.5% - 8.3%	1,416,323	967,454	
	0.0% - 9.0%	(272,782)	(482,552)	
Less allowable for doubtful accounts				
		<u>\$ 2,238,831</u>	<u>\$ 2,481,795</u>	

The balances above include a reclass of \$912,726 from mortgages to notes for 2007.

**NOTE 5 - OVERSEAS CHURCH CONSTRUCTION LOANS**

Overseas church construction loans bear interest at rates ranging from 2% to 5% and mature at various dates through January 1, 2014. The balances of overseas church construction loans outstanding as of January 31, 2008 and 2007 are \$725,584 and \$552,322, respectively.

**NOTE 6 - PROPERTY, FURNITURE, AND EQUIPMENT**

Property, furniture, and equipment are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation. Details relating to these assets as of January 31 are presented below:

	2008		2007	
Land	\$ 133,000	\$ 133,000		
Buildings and improvements	44,838,011	40,981,881		
Furniture and equipment	19,338,512	18,863,915		
	64,309,523	59,978,796		
Less accumulated depreciations	(34,220,854)	(32,552,851)		
	<u>\$ 30,088,669</u>	<u>\$ 27,425,945</u>		

Depreciation expenses for the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007 were \$1,668,003 and \$1,515,919, respectively.

(Continued)

**NOTE 8 - SPLIT INTEREST AGREEMENTS ADMINISTERED BY THE ELCA FOUNDATION** (Continued)

Upon termination of the trust, the remaining assets are given to a combination of the Church, related organizations, and other organizations with no more than 50% of the remainder going to unrelated organizations. The Church may ultimately have unrestricted use of the assets or the donor may place permanent or temporary restrictions on their use.

**Charitable Gift Annuities:** Charitable gift annuities are arrangements between a donor and the Church in which the donor contributes assets to the Church in exchange for a promise by the Church to pay a fixed amount for the life of the donor or other individuals designated by the donor. Due to state insurance regulations, the assets received are held as segregated assets. The annuity liability is a general obligation of the Church. Assets are recognized at fair value on the date of the contribution. An annuity payment liability is recognized for the present value of future cash flows expected to be paid to the donor or to the designated individual. The discount rate is the applicable federal rate on the date of the contract. The 2000 mortality tables are used to calculate the life expectancies of the annuity beneficiaries.

At the death of the donor or designated individual, the book value of the contract is distributed to the Church or related organization for unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted use depending upon the donor restrictions.

**Pooled Income Funds and Life Income Contracts:** Donors contribute assets to an investment pool and are assigned a specific number of units based on the proportion of the fair value of their contribution to the total fair value of the pooled income fund on the date of the donor's entry to the pooled fund. Until a donor's death, the donor or designated beneficiary is paid the actual ordinary income earned on the donor's units. Realized gains or losses are added to each unit's principal. Upon the donor's death, the value of the units is released to the Church or a related organization to be used as specified by the donor.

The contributed assets are recorded at fair value. A contribution is recorded at the fair value of the assets discounted for the estimated time period until the donor's death. The applicable federal rate at the date of the contribution is used for the discount rate and the 2000 mortality tables are used to calculate life expectancies. The difference between the fair value of the assets received and the revenue recognized is recorded as deferred revenue, representing the amount of the discount for future revenue.

(Continued)

**NOTE 7 - NOTE PAYABLE**

Details of the note payable as of January 31 are as follows:

	2008	2007
Note payable to Mission Investment Fund, refinanced on August 2003, with interest at 4% and monthly payments of principal and interest of \$172,964 until February 2012.		
The mortgage payable is secured by the Church's office building, which has a net book value of approximately \$16,108,440 at January 31, 2008.	\$ 7,655,768	\$ 9,388,246

Total interest expenses for the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007 were approximately \$345,053 and \$412,852, respectively, which include approximately \$343,092 and \$410,750 of interest on the note payable.

Annual principal payments on the note payable for years ending January 31 are as follows:

Year ending January 31:	Amount
2009	\$ 1,801,590
2010	1,875,860
2011	1,952,285
2012	2,026,033
	\$ 7,655,768

**NOTE 8 - SPLIT INTEREST AGREEMENTS ADMINISTERED BY THE ELCA FOUNDATION**

**Charitable Remainder Trusts:** Charitable remainder trusts are arrangements in which the donor establishes and funds a trust with specific distributions to be made to a designated beneficiary or beneficiaries over the trust's term. Obligations to the beneficiaries are limited to the trust's assets. Assets are recorded at fair value when received, and a liability is recorded for the present value of the estimated future payments to the beneficiaries. Present values are calculated using a discount rate based on the applicable federal rate at the date of the trust and the life expectancies of the beneficiaries. The 2000 mortality tables are used to calculate life expectancies unless a time restriction is specified.

(Continued)

**NOTE 8 - SPLIT INTEREST AGREEMENTS ADMINISTERED BY THE ELCA FOUNDATION (Continued)**

A summary of recorded amounts related to these arrangements as of December 31, 2007 and 2006 is as follows:

	2008	2007
Charitable remainder		
Charity trusts		
Charitable remainder	2,789,349	2,929,922
unitrusts	46,274,480	47,071,150
annuities	66,419,125	67,279,869
Pooled income		
funds	1,312,786	1,461,741
Life income	231,412	238,329
estates	231,916	261,714
	<u>1,776,113</u>	<u>1,951,784</u>
	<u>114,483,354</u>	<u>117,274,641</u>

The summary of recorded amounts listed above as of December 31, 2007 and 2006 is not materially different than if the amounts were recorded as of January 31, 2008 and 2007.

Adjustments to the liability to reflect amortization of the discount, re-evaluations of the present value of the estimated future payments to the donor or beneficiary, and changes in actuarial assumptions are recognized in the statement of activities as a change in the value of split-interest agreements in temporarily or permanently restricted net assets based on the donor's restrictions.

**NOTE 9 - RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The Church provides accounting and management services to three affiliates at no charge. An estimate of the fair value of these accounting and management services is not readily available.

In addition, the Church also provides building space to four affiliates. One affiliate has a store and office space; the store space is billed, and the office space is not. As disclosed in Note 13, the Church has entered into operating lease agreements with three of these entities, which includes the store space for one affiliate. The Church is providing unbilled rental of office space to two entities which has an estimated fair value of \$337,000 as of January 31, 2008 and \$289,000 as of January 31, 2007.

The Church does not recognize the economic substance (fair value) of the unbilled services in the financial statements as these are immaterial.

(Continued)

**NOTE 10 - DEEINED CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLAN**

Substantially all active employees of the Church are enrolled in the noncontributory defined contribution pension plan administered by the Board of Pensions. The employer contributions to the plan for the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007 were \$3,621,706 and \$3,569,956 respectively. All contributions to the plan are funded on a current basis.

**NOTE 11 - PENSION BENEFITS**

The Church has established minimum pension levels, assumed from predecessor church organizations, for certain clergy who retired prior to January 1, 1988. The Church provides funding for these minimum pension benefits to the extent that the reserves maintained by the Board of Pensions are insufficient to fund the plan. The Church's pension obligation was overfunded by \$1,963,000 and \$1,517,000 at January 31, 2008 and December 31, 2006, respectively. The Church had an increase in the over-funded Pension obligation of approximately \$416,000 for the year ended January 31, 2008 and \$280,000 for the year ended January 31, 2007. During the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007, the Church made no payments to the Board of Pensions to cover the cost of retirees' pension benefits. Employer contributions for the Pension Plan during the fiscal year ending January 31, 2009 are expected to be \$0.

During 2007, \$575,664 was paid in benefits to members and survivors under these plans. Total actuarial liability as of January 31, 2008 was \$2,878,360, and plan assets were \$4,841,517, which resulted in excess of plan assets over actuarial liabilities of \$1,963,157. The assumed long-term rate of investment return for minimum and non-contributory benefits was 7.2% and 6.0% at January 31, 2008 and December 31, 2006, respectively.

The invested assets supporting the Church's minimum pension and non-contributory pension obligations were allocated across several asset categories at December 31, 2007 and 2006. The following table shows the percent of assets in each category:

Asset Category	2007	2006
Equity securities	38.7%	34.2%
Debt securities	45.7%	42.6%
Real estate	4.6%	7.7%
Cash and short-term investments	11.0%	15.5%
Total	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

(Continued)

**NOTE 12 - POST-RETIREMENT HEALTH CARE BENEFITS (Continued)**

These subsidies are funded through trust funds set aside for that purpose and additional contributions by the ELCA and other participating employers. The ELCA contributed \$2,800,000 in fiscal 2008 and \$4,000,000 in fiscal 2007 toward the funding of these subsidies. Through the ELCA Board of Pensions, employers that participate in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program contributed \$5,323,000 and \$4,881,000 in fiscal 2008 and 2007, respectively, through a charge of 0.7% of sponsored members' defined compensation. Contributions for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2009 are expected to be \$2,500,000 from the ELCA and \$5,033,000 from participating employers.

In accordance with Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 106, *Employers' Accounting for Post-Retirement Benefits Other Than Pensions*, the Organization accrues the cost of post-retirement benefits over the employees' remaining service period. The Organization provides the disclosure pursuant to Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 132, *Employers' Disclosures about Pension and Other Post-Retirement Benefits*.

For the year ended January 31, 2008, the Organization has adopted the recognition provisions of FASB Statement No. 158, *Employers' Accounting for Defined Benefit Pension and Other Post-Retirement Plans*. This standard requires an employer to recognize the funded status of a benefit margin plan in its statement of financial position. The funded status is measured as the difference between plan assets at fair value and the accumulated post-retirement benefit obligation (APBO). The impact of the adoption of this standard resulted in an overall decrease in unrestricted net assets of approximately \$12,500,000. This decrease is primarily comprised of approximately \$7,500,000 related to unrecognized net loss and \$4,900,000 related to unrecognized postretirement healthcare benefit transition obligation.

(Continued)

**NOTE 11 - PENSION BENEFITS (Continued)**

**Investment Objective:** The primary investment objective is to meet the liabilities of the Fund. The Fund will be invested in a portfolio of stock, core fixed-income, high-yield, inflation-indexed bonds, real assets, and other investments. Volatility of market values of the Fund is of secondary concern relative to meeting current and future payments to the Fund's beneficiaries.

**Strategic Asset Allocation:** The Fund will be invested in major asset categories as follows:

Target Allocation	Allocation	Range
Equity securities	45%	30% to 60%
Debt securities	45%	25% to 65%
Real assets	10%	5% to 15%

Expected future cash flows for minimum and non-contributory pension benefits for the years ending December 31 are:

	Minimum and Non-Contributory Pension Plans
2008	\$ 457,201
2009	411,270
2010	368,259
2011	328,229
2012	291,202
2013-2017	1,002,661
	\$ 2,858,822

**NOTE 12 - POST-RETIREMENT HEALTH CARE BENEFITS**

The ELCA provides medical contribution subsidies (\$18,270,000 in fiscal 2008 and \$16,251,000 in fiscal 2007) to certain retired members with predecessor church service. These subsidies are expressed as a percentage of the monthly cost for coverage paid by eligible retirees under the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan. Subsidies are based on age or a combination of age and service. Approximately 11,000 active or retired members and spouses are eligible or potentially eligible for these subsidies.

(Continued)



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**NOTE 12 - POST-RETIREMENT HEALTH CARE BENEFITS (Continued)**

The following table presents the plan's funded status reconciled with amounts recognized in the Church's statement of financial position at January 31:

	2008	2007
Accumulated postretirement health care benefit obligation:		
Retirees	188,804,000	185,991,000
Fully eligible active participants	27,252,000	37,681,000
Other active participants	8,000	565,000
Accumulated postretirement health care benefit obligation	<u>216,064,000</u>	<u>224,235,000</u>
Plan assets at fair value, primarily bonds and equities	(125,163,639)	(130,746,919)
Accumulated postretirement health care benefit obligation in excess of plan assets	90,900,361	93,488,081
Unrecognized net loss		(6,113,719)
Unrecognized postretirement health care benefit transition obligation		(6,025,000)
Postretirement health care benefit obligation	<u>\$ 90,900,361</u>	<u>\$ 81,349,362</u>

Net periodic post-retirement health care benefit costs for the fiscal years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007 include the following components:

	2008	2007
Service cost of benefits earned	4,000	27,000
Interest on accumulated post-retirement health care benefit obligation	14,035,000	13,635,000
Amortization of postretirement health care benefit transition obligation	1,089,000	1,005,000
Actual return on plan assets	(5,922,076)	(17,903,035)
Amortization of unrecognized net (gain) or loss	(3,967,924)	11,967,035
Retiree Support Contributions	(5,233,320)	(4,881,147)
Net periodic postretirement health care benefit cost	<u>\$ (87,320)</u>	<u>\$ 3,852,853</u>

For measurement purposes as of January 31, 2008, per capita health care costs for participants under age 65 were assumed to increase 6.6% during 2007. The rate of increase was assumed to be 6.2% until 2015, reaching 6.3% in 2016 and remaining level thereafter. For participants age 65 and over, per capita health care costs were assumed to increase 7.0% during 2008. The rate of increase was assumed to decline gradually thereafter, reaching 6.7% in 2011 and remaining

(Continued)

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**NOTE 12 - POST-RETIREMENT HEALTH CARE BENEFITS (Continued)**

level until 2017, when the rate of increase is projected to decline to 6.5% and remain level thereafter. As of January 31, 2007, per capita health care costs for participants under 65 were assumed to increase 9.7% during 2006, while per capita health care costs for participants age 65 and over were assumed to increase 7.9%. The health care costs trend rate assumptions have a significant effect on the amounts reported. For example, increasing the assumed health care cost trend rates by one percentage point in each year would increase the accumulated postretirement health care benefit obligation as of January 31, 2008 by approximately \$21,306,000 and the aggregate of the service and interest cost components of net periodic post-retirement health care benefit cost for the year ended January 31, 2008 by approximately \$1,270,000.

The actuarial assumptions used to determine the accumulated post-retirement health care benefit obligations at January 31, 2008 and December 31, 2007 also include a discount rate of 6%. Likewise, actuarial assumptions used to determine fiscal 2007 and fiscal 2006 net periodic post-retirement health care benefit costs include a discount rate of 6% and an expected return on plan assets assumption of 7.0% for 2007 and 6.5% for 2006.

Expected future retiree medical subsidies for the years ending December 31 are:

	Retiree Medical Subsidy (Net of Federal Subsidy)
2008	\$ 17,449,000
2009	17,360,000
2010	17,264,000
2011	17,157,000
2012	17,049,000
2013-2017	83,720,000
	<u>\$ 169,999,000</u>

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**NOTE 12 - POST-RETIREMENT HEALTH CARE BENEFITS (Continued)**

The invested assets supporting the Church's retiree medical obligation were allocated across several asset categories at December 31, 2007 and 2006. The following table shows the percent of assets in each category:

Asset Category	2007	2006
Equity securities	45.2%	45.9%
Debt securities	46.1%	43.9%
Real estate	8.7%	9.9%
Cash and short-term investments	—	0.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

**Investment Objective:** The primary investment objective is to meet the liabilities of the Fund. Volatility of market values of the Fund is of secondary concern relative to meeting current and future payments to the Fund's beneficiaries.

**Strategic Asset Allocation:** The Fund will be invested in stocks, core fixed-income, high-yield and inflation-indexed bond, real asset, money-market, and other investments. The total Fund will invest in major asset categories as follows:

Target Allocation	Allocation	Range
Equity securities	45%	30% to 60%
Debt securities	45%	25% to 65%
Real assets	10%	5% to 15%

**NOTE 13 - LEASES**

**Lease Income:** The Church has entered into operating lease agreements with three affiliated organizations to lease a portion of its building for retail and office space. Annual base rent approximated \$64,000 for two tenants plus a pro rata share of building operating expenses as defined in the lease; the third is an open-ended rental agreement at \$12,410 per month.

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**NOTE 13 - LEASES (Continued)**

The Church has also entered into lease agreements with non-related exempt organizations to lease portions of its building for office space. The leases expire between June 30, 2009 and July 31, 2014. Minimum annual rentals under noncancelable leases for the years ending January 31 are as follows:

2009	\$ 621,000
2010	540,000
2011	304,000
2012	130,000
2013	111,000
Thereafter	55,000
	<u>\$ 1,761,000</u>

**Operating Leases:** The Church leases certain office facilities and equipment under various operating leases. The facilities' leases generally provide for renewal options and include escalator clauses based on increases in real estate taxes and operating expenses. Total rent expense for operating leases is approximately \$400,933 and \$397,000 for the years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively.

Minimum annual rental commitments under noncancelable leases for the years ending January 31 are as follows:

	Office Facilities	Office Equipment	Total
2009	\$ 65,659	\$ 209,424	\$ 275,083
2010	10,000	208,323	218,323
2011	-	208,323	208,323
2012	-	80,321	80,321
2013	-	11,565	11,565
2014 and thereafter	-	-	-
	<u>\$ 75,659</u>	<u>\$ 717,956</u>	<u>\$ 793,615</u>

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**NOTE 14 - COLLECTIONS**

The Church's art collections, which were acquired through purchases and contributions, are not recognized as assets on the statement of financial position. The collections represent a wide variety of art mediums: collage, etching, intaglio, dry point engraving, katagome, linocut, oil, serigraph/silk-screen, stained glass, watercolor, and woodcut. The art is intended to share the Gospel visually with many of the pieces having biblical references. Purchases of collection items, if any, are recorded as decreases in unrestricted net assets in the year in which the items are acquired. Contributed collection items, if any, are not reflected on the financial statements. Proceeds from de-accessions or insurance recoveries, if any, are reflected as increases in the appropriate net asset classes.

**NOTE 15 - LINE OF CREDIT**

At January 31, 2008, the Church had a \$5,000,000 unsecured line of credit with Harris Trust and Savings Bank with no termination date and borrowings under the line of credit payable on demand. Interest on outstanding borrowings is charged at the bank's prime commercial rate at January 31, 2008. There were no borrowings outstanding under this line of credit at January 31, 2008. No commitment fee is charged.

**NOTE 16 - NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS**

Net assets which were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes or by occurrence of other events specified by donors were as follows during the year ended January 31, 2008:

Satisfaction of program restrictions:	
World Hunger	\$20,976,435
Disaster Relief	17,904,314
Global Mission Programs	2,875,599
Office of the Presiding Bishop	951,610
Other programs	<u>826,658</u>
Satisfaction of program restrictions	<u>\$43,534,616</u>

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**NOTE 17 - CONCENTRATIONS OF RISK**

The Church's primary source of revenue is contributions from synods. The synod contributions are dependent upon contributions from the membership of congregations of the Church. There are nine regions comprising a total of 65 synods. The following is a summary of the contributions by synods in each of the regions during the years ended January 31:

	2008	2007
Region 1 - Northwest area	\$ 2,517,286	\$ 2,429,746
Region 2 - Northwest area	5,969,876	5,718,787
Region 3 - Northwest Mid-West area	8,637,910	8,680,149
Region 4 - Southwest Mid-West area	6,280,636	6,285,236
Region 5 - Northeast Mid-West area	13,496,818	13,425,915
Region 6 - Southeast Mid-West area	6,710,602	6,687,348
Region 7 - Northeast area	7,178,152	7,080,334
Region 8 - East area	7,887,407	7,949,109
Region 9 - Southeast area	<u>7,450,430</u>	<u>7,397,407</u>
Total synod mission support	<u>\$ 66,129,117</u>	<u>\$ 65,664,031</u>

**NOTE 18 - FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 107, *Disclosure about Fair Value of Financial Instruments*, requires all entities to disclose the fair value of financial instruments, both assets and liabilities, for which it is practicable to estimate fair value.

The Church used the following methods and assumptions to estimate the fair value of each class of financial instruments for which it is practical to estimate that value. Changes in assumptions could significantly affect the estimates.

Cash, Cash Equivalents, and Interest Receivable: The carrying amount approximates fair value because of the short maturity of these instruments.

Mortgages, Notes, Contracts for Deed: The mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed carrying values approximate fair values based on current interest rates and the present values of the estimated future cash flows.

(Continued)

**NOTE 20 - SECURITIES LOANED**

The Church has an agreement with its investment custodian to lend securities to brokers in exchange for a fee. The security lending agreement specifies that the custodian is responsible for the lending of securities and obtaining adequate collateral from the borrower. The Church receives compensation in the form of fees, or retains a portion of interest on the investment of any cash received as collateral. The Church also continues to receive interest or dividends on the securities loaned. The loans are secured by collateral at least equal, at all times, to the fair value of the securities loaned plus accrued interest. Any gain or loss in the fair value of the securities loaned that may occur during the term of the loan will accrue to the benefit of the Church.

At December 31, 2007 and 2006, investment securities with an aggregate market value of approximately \$57 million and \$72 million, respectively, were loaned to various brokers and are returnable upon demand.

The ELCA Foundation earned approximately \$233,700 in fees for the year ended December 31, 2007 and \$109,600 in fees for the year ended December 31, 2006.

**NOTE 21 - UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Unrestricted net assets consist of the following at January 31:

	2008	2007
General	\$ 49,337,787	\$ 45,602,643
Net investment in property, furniture, and equipment	22,432,901	18,037,699
Post-retirement health care benefits	(990,900,361)	(81,349,362)
	<u>\$ (19,129,693)</u>	<u>\$ (17,709,020)</u>

A review during 2007 of certain unrestricted net assets identified an error in the classification of particular endowments, resulting in a net reduction of \$7,040 to unrestricted net assets with increases to funds held for other in perpetuity.

(Continued)

**NOTE 18 - FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (Continued)**

**Overseas Church Construction Loans:** The carrying value is recognized as the principal due at January 31, 2008. The fair value is based on future payments at the nominal interest rate (ranging from 2% to 5%), discounted at the prime rate, at January 31, 2008.

**Investments:** The majority of investments in equity and debt securities have readily determinable fair values. Other investments' carrying values approximate fair values based on current interest rates and the present values of the estimated future cash flows.

**Deferred Revenue, Annuities Payable, Funds Held for Others and Funds Held for Others in Perpetuity:** The carrying value approximates the fair value as the carrying value is calculated as the present value of the estimated future cash flows, except for annuities payable, whose fair value is approximately \$118,344,000 versus a carrying value of approximately \$114,483,000.

**Mortgages and Notes Payable:** The carrying value approximates the fair value as the carrying value is calculated as the remaining amounts due on these mortgages and notes.

**NOTE 19 - FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS WITH OFF-BALANCE-SHEET RISK**

The Church is party to financial instruments with off-balance sheet risk in the normal course of its business. These instruments include financial guarantees and involve, to varying degrees, elements of credit and interest rate risk in excess of the amount recognized in the statement of financial position. The contract or notional amounts of those instruments reflect the extent of involvement the Church has in particular classes of financial instruments.

The Church's exposure to credit loss in the event of nonperformance by the other party to the financial instrument for the guarantee commitment is represented by the contractual amount of those instruments. The Church uses the same credit policies in making commitments and conditional obligations as it does for on-balance sheet instruments.

Unless noted otherwise, the Church does not require collateral or other security to support financial instruments with credit risk. The contractual amount is a reasonable estimate of the fair value. No material losses are anticipated by management as a result of these transactions.

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**NOTE 23 - PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS (Continued)**

Reviews during 2007 and 2006 of certain temporarily and permanently restricted net assets identified an error in the classification of certain of particular endowments, resulting in a net reduction of \$1,163,866 and \$2,570,954, respectively, to permanently restricted net assets with increases to funds held for others in perpetuity.

**NOTE 24 - CONTINGENCIES**

The Church is a party to litigation in various matters arising in the ordinary course of operations. Typically, the Church's insurance carriers are defending these matters. Pending litigation will be vigorously defended and, in the opinion of management, is likely resolved without any material adverse effect upon the financial statements of the Church.

**NOTE 25 - STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS NO. 158**

In September 2006, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 158 *Employers' Accounting for Defined Benefit Pension and Other Postretirement Plans*—an amendment of FASB Statements No. 87, 88, 106, and 132(R). This statement requires an employer to recognize the overfunded or underfunded status of a defined benefit post-retirement plan as an asset or liability in its statement of financial position and to recognize changes in the funded status in the year in which the changes occur through change in unrestricted net assets. Defined benefit plan assets and obligations are to be measured as of the date of the employer's fiscal year end. An employer without publicly traded equity securities is required to adopt this standard for fiscal years ending after June 15, 2007. Accordingly, the Church adopted this standard for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2008.

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**NOTE 22 - TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Temporarily restricted net assets are available for the following purposes or periods at January 31:

	2008	2007
Program-restricted:		
Disaster Relief	10,284,557	21,197,798
World Hunger	5,000,003	4,126,542
Office of the Presiding Bishop	246,748	293,861
Education and Education	2,439,098	2,776,327
Global	1,853,817	1,922,664
Biological Outreach and Congregational Mission	5,057,536	4,368,873
Church in Society	3,026,684	465,940
Other programs	28,988,596	36,113,105
	<u>72,091,944</u>	<u>75,238,340</u>
Time-restricted, expendable in subsequent years	<u>\$ 101,080,540</u>	<u>\$ 111,351,445</u>

Reviews during 2007 and 2006 of certain temporarily and permanently restricted net assets identified an error in the classification of particular endowments, resulting in a net reduction of \$347,598 and \$923,968, respectively, to temporarily restricted net assets with increases to funds held for others and funds held for others in perpetuity.

**NOTE 23 - PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Permanently restricted net assets are restricted to:

	2008	2007
Investments in perpetuity, the income from which is expendable	117,661,507	111,172,632
Deferred gifts that will provide proceeds upon death of annuitant for a permanent endowment	14,884,305	15,691,663
Paid-up life insurance policies that will provide proceeds upon death of insured for permanent endowments	<u>2,072,124</u>	<u>2,010,800</u>
	<u>\$ 134,617,936</u>	<u>\$ 128,875,095</u>

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 CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION INFORMATION BY FUND  
 January 31, 2008

	General Operating and Other Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Deferred Gift Funds	Total
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents for loan	2,626,322	3,090,335	7,583,808	13,300,465
Cash and securities held as collateral	-	-	-	-
Loans under securities agreement	-	-	56,698,760	56,698,760
Accounts receivable	13,397,234	-	(56,698,760)	(43,301,526)
Due from (to) related organizations	1,243,428	(171,569)	425,408	13,872,642
Investments	31,691,107	346,893,453	1,300,526	1,300,526
Prepaid expenses and other assets	5,345,393	2,856,455	196,047,813	974,634,215
Operating lease assets for deed, net	1,281,651	-	18,894	8,220,742
Operating lease assets for equipment, net	725,584	-	957,180	2,238,831
Property, furniture, and equipment, net	30,088,669	-	-	725,584
Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	-	17,251,240	1,367,642	30,088,669
Total assets	<u>\$ 86,399,388</u>	<u>\$ 369,925,182</u>	<u>\$ 207,059,182</u>	<u>\$ 663,383,752</u>

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

	Accounts payable	Deferred revenue	Funds held for others	Note payable	Postretirement health care benefits payable for others in perpetuity	Other liabilities	Total liabilities
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>							
Liabilities	3,690,902	11,209	176,541	-	-	2,469,743	6,171,854
Accounts payable	26,110	-	-	-	-	1,971,123	2,175,774
Deferred revenue	-	-	-	-	-	114,483,354	114,483,354
Funds held for others	-	-	130,721,224	-	-	52,405,791	183,127,015
Note payable	22,772	-	-	-	-	-	22,772
Postretirement health care benefits payable for others in perpetuity	90,900,361	-	-	40,037,108	-	-	90,900,361
Other liabilities	2,237,248	-	-	-	220	-	2,237,968
Total liabilities	<u>104,533,661</u>	<u>170,948,082</u>	<u>171,333,231</u>	<u>40,037,108</u>	<u>220</u>	<u>2,469,743</u>	<u>446,814,971</u>
Net assets	(45,730,978)	20,057,542	6,543,743	-	-	-	(19,129,693)
Unrestricted	27,596,705	59,185,932	14,397,903	-	-	-	101,080,540
Temporarily restricted	-	-	14,884,305	-	-	-	14,884,305
Permanently restricted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total net assets	<u>(18,134,273)</u>	<u>198,972,107</u>	<u>35,725,951</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>216,568,785</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 86,399,388</u>	<u>\$ 369,925,182</u>	<u>\$ 207,059,182</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 663,383,752</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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 CONSOLIDATED SCHEDULES OF EXPENSES BY OBJECT  
 Years ended January 31, 2008 and 2007

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
Financial support - grants	\$ 66,165,670	\$ 62,978,246
Compensation		
Central staff	25,029,548	24,522,534
Missionaries	3,305,461	3,267,463
Employee benefits		
Central staff	11,196,555	11,224,999
Missionaries	1,731,561	1,781,355
Retiree pension expenses	(446,128)	(295,482)
Postretirement health care benefits	12,350,999	3,519,520
Travel: staff, board, and committees	3,766,998	3,686,077
Special events	4,853,052	5,221,900
Office expenses	2,299,683	2,899,183
Printing/duplicating	3,380,001	3,679,036
Purchased services	5,090,763	7,661,379
Regional office expenses	1,878,726	1,642,101
Insurance	531,879	524,465
Investment expense	1,747,571	1,254,637
Endowment interest payments and distribution	39,527,184	10,883,531
Interest expense	345,053	412,852
Facilities and utilities	1,750,361	1,438,969
Noncapitalized equipment, repairs, and rentals	1,088,690	662,359
Depreciation	1,668,003	1,513,919
Miscellaneous	139,246	1,032,457
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$ 187,990,876</b>	<b>\$ 149,511,490</b>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.





REPORT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

Board of Directors and Shareholders
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Churchwide Administrative Offices

We have audited the accompanying consolidated statement of financial position of the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Church) as of January 31, 2009, and the related consolidated statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended. These consolidated financial statements are the responsibility of the Church's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit. The prior year summarized comparative information has been derived from the Church's 2008 financial statements, as restated, and, in our report dated June 3, 2008, we expressed an unqualified opinion on those financial statements.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As discussed in Note 1 to the financial statements, the financial statements being presented are only for the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and do not include the assets, liabilities and net assets, and the revenue and expenses of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that are recorded in the accounts of the other organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements are not intended to present the financial position of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2009, or the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2009, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Our audit was made for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The supplementary information as of and for the year ended January 31, 2009 on pages 31 and 32, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The prior year summarized comparative information presented in the consolidated schedules of expenses by object has been derived from the Church's 2008 financial statements, as restated and, in our report dated June 3, 2008, we expressed an opinion that such information was fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic 2008 financial statements taken as a whole.

As discussed in Note 11 to the financial statements, the Church determined that the Post-Retirement Medical Obligation recognized in prior years should not be recorded in the Church's consolidated statement of financial position; therefore, the prior year financial statements have been restated to reflect the reversal of this liability.

Chicago, Illinois
June 10, 2009

Crowe Horwath LLP
Crowe Horwath LLP

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
January 31, 2009 and with comparative totals for 2008

	2009	2008
		As restated
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 17,875,667	\$ 13,300,465
Cash and securities held as collateral for securities loaned (Note 20)	63,977,642	56,698,760
Payable under securities loan agreements (Note 20)	(63,977,642)	(56,698,760)
Accounts receivable (Note 2)	12,178,888	13,822,642
Due from related organizations	1,696,299	430,153
Interest receivable	1,227,268	1,303,576
Investments (Note 3)	471,376,221	574,634,215
Prepaid expenses and other assets	8,995,623	8,220,742
Mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed, net (Note 4)	2,042,545	2,238,831
Overseas church construction loans (Note 5)	956,288	725,584
Property, furniture, and equipment, net (Note 6)	29,683,427	30,088,669
Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	13,974,920	18,618,882
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 560,007,146</b>	<b>\$ 663,383,759</b>

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 7,960,357	\$ 6,171,856
Deferred revenue	6,508,269	2,175,774
Annuities payable (Note 8)	100,494,629	114,483,354
Funds held for others	148,832,644	183,152,787
Note payable (Note 7)	5,852,953	7,655,768
Funds held for others in perpetuity	28,221,033	40,037,108
Other liabilities	1,987,900	2,237,968
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>299,857,785</b>	<b>355,914,615</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		
Unrestricted (Note 21)	48,770,151	71,770,668
Temporarily restricted (Note 22)	73,310,092	101,080,540
Permanently restricted (Note 23)	138,069,118	134,617,936
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>260,149,361</b>	<b>307,469,144</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 560,007,146</b>	<b>\$ 663,383,759</b>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES  
Year ended January 31, 2009, with comparative totals for 2008

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	2009 Total	2008 Total, as restated
<b>Contributed revenue</b>					
Synod mission support (Note 17)	\$ 65,286,926	\$ 17,638,641	\$ -	\$ 82,925,567	\$ 66,129,117
World Hunger Appeal	3,772,404	4,165,330	-	7,937,734	19,597,449
Missionary sponsorship	1,052,162	330,726	-	1,382,888	3,835,303
Disaster relief	590,783	60,509	-	651,292	3,018,238
Income tax (refunds)	1,521,420	-	-	1,521,420	1,270,490
Donations	1,000,000	2,283,262	-	3,283,262	1,270,490
Bequests, trusts, and residuums	1,518,312	-	-	1,518,312	1,270,490
Employment contributions	901,907	-	-	901,907	1,270,490
Mission Investment Fund	1,539,865	-	-	1,539,865	11,290,508
Requests, trusts, and residuums	1,581,929	-	-	1,581,929	1,553,723
Grants, trusts, and residuums	4,216,393	-	-	4,216,393	4,807,297
Bequests, trusts, and residuums	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000	5,803,736
Other gifts	1,335,269	3,510,368	4,654,337	9,500,000	3,427,706
Total contributed support	79,396,021	42,275,692	11,910,402	133,582,115	123,935,106
<b>Other revenue</b>					
Dividend and interest income	9,366,870	98,681	577	9,466,128	10,531,010
Realized gains (loss)	(23,866,328)	(4,642,763)	(4,733,461)	(33,242,552)	61,222,124
Unrealized loss	(4,844,812)	-	-	(4,844,812)	(25,192,973)
Change in market value of beneficial interest	1,518,312	-	-	1,518,312	-
Residual income	196,208	-	-	196,208	1,309,469
Change in split interest agreements	9,480,920	-	491,152	9,972,072	1,904,737
Services and other revenue	901,907	-	-	901,907	(629,931)
Lease income	51,800	-	38,035	89,835	847,825
Miscellaneous income	(7,391,131)	(40,347,824)	(6,439,220)	(54,178,175)	105,288
Total other revenue	33,362,922	(33,362,922)	-	-	-
<b>Net assets released from restrictions</b>					
Satisfaction of program restrictions (Note 16)	-	-	-	-	-
Expiration of time restrictions	10,798,570	-	-	10,798,570	-
Distribution in excess of current year income	2,886,054	-	-	2,886,054	-
Income earned from investments held in perpetuity	47,147,546	-	-	47,147,546	-
Net assets released from restrictions	61,632,170	-	-	61,632,170	-
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>119,152,436</b>	<b>(45,216,725)</b>	<b>3,451,182</b>	<b>77,386,893</b>	<b>187,960,643</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
<b>Program services</b>					
Evangelical Outreach and Cong. Mission	22,013,808	-	-	22,013,808	22,039,193
Global Mission	38,651,963	-	-	38,651,963	38,411,055
Multicultural Ministries	1,618,300	-	-	1,618,300	1,708,740
Church in Society	12,786,770	-	-	12,786,770	23,403,239
World Hunger Appeal	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
Communication Services	3,905,869	-	-	3,905,869	3,809,699
Church Periodical	3,775,238	-	-	3,775,238	3,726,184
Office of the Presiding Bishop	6,402,613	-	-	6,402,613	6,586,385

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES  
Year ended January 31, 2009, with comparative totals for 2008

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	2009 Total	2008 Total, as restated
<b>Expenses (Continued)</b>					
Program services (Continued)					
Organizational expense	\$ 1,718,163	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,718,163	\$ 1,878,726
Benefit expense	1,253,939	-	-	1,253,939	(446,128)
Retirement expense	2,500,000	-	-	2,500,000	2,800,000
Postretirement health care benefits	-	-	-	-	-
Distribution of endowment income and other investing expenses	(923,087)	44,403	-	(878,684)	40,994,614
Total program services	108,174,463	44,403	-	108,218,866	158,318,082
Management and general					
Office of the Presiding Bishop	1,698,011	-	-	1,698,011	2,279,231
Office of the Treasurer	4,801,224	-	-	4,801,224	4,984,766
Office of the Secretary	2,681,191	-	-	2,681,191	5,572,569
Foundation	1,669,370	-	-	1,669,370	1,136,206
Development services	391,222	-	-	391,222	1,062,783
Total management and general	11,341,018	-	-	11,341,018	15,015,552
Fundraising					
Evangelical Outreach and Cong. Ministries	46,639	-	-	46,639	44,073
Cong. Ministries Services	96,705	-	-	96,705	92,515
ELCA Foundation	1,715,854	-	-	1,715,854	1,898,993
Development Services	3,287,594	-	-	3,287,594	2,269,757
Total fundraising	5,146,792	-	-	5,146,792	4,306,238
Total expenses	124,663,273	44,403	-	124,707,676	177,639,872
Net operating revenues less operating expenses	(5,509,837)	(45,286,128)	3,451,182	(47,319,783)	5,120,766
Nonoperating transactions:					
Redistribution of prior year's balances (Notes 21, 22 and 23)	-	-	-	-	(1,518,504)
Transfer to reestablish endowment balances (Note 24)	(17,430,680)	(7,490,680)	-	(24,921,360)	-
Change in net assets	(23,000,517)	(52,776,808)	3,451,182	(47,319,783)	3,602,262
Net assets at beginning of year as previously reported	71,770,668	101,080,540	134,617,936	307,469,144	222,317,520
Prior Period adjustment (Note 11)	-	-	-	-	81,349,362
Net assets at beginning of year, as restated	71,770,668	101,080,540	134,617,936	307,469,144	303,666,882
Net assets at end of year	\$ 48,770,151	\$ 73,310,092	\$ 138,069,118	\$ 260,149,360	\$ 307,269,144

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS  
Year ended January 31, 2009, with comparative totals for 2008

	2009	2008, as restated
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Change in net assets	\$ (47,319,783)	\$ 3,602,262
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash from operating activities:		
Depreciation	1,630,179	1,668,003
Loss (gain) on investments, net	146,269,924	(26,423,247)
Recoveries of losses on investments, notes, and loans	(184,233)	(184,233)
Acquisition of investments through gifts	(2,624,343)	(1,609,682)
Gifts restricted for long-term investment	(11,339,865)	(6,560,082)
Loss (gain) on beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	4,643,962	(1,272,772)
Currency exchange loss (gain) on overseas loan	51,235	(18,984)
Increase in allowance on notes	3,100	(18,794)
Changes in:		
Accounts receivable	1,643,754	2,235,452
Interest receivable	76,308	687,509
Prepaid expenses and other assets	(774,883)	(1,451,583)
Accounts payable	1,788,501	(274,607)
Deferred revenue	4,332,495	(7,701)
Due to related organizations	(1,266,146)	(763,076)
Other liabilities	(250,088)	258,090
Funds held for others	(34,320,143)	19,744,965
Funds held for others in perpetuity	(11,816,073)	7,402,130
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	50,726,151	(2,986,050)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Purchase and acquisition of equipment	(1,224,937)	(4,330,727)
Payments (issuance) of mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed	2,455	(1,550,000)
Payments received on mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed	190,731	1,975,270
Issuance of overseas church construction loans	(377,252)	(153,000)
Payments received on overseas church construction loans	95,313	182,956
Purchase of investments	(102,743,519)	(486,771,271)
Proceeds from sale of investments	62,355,932	485,912,885
Net cash used in investing activities	(41,701,227)	(4,733,887)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Proceeds from gifts restricted for long-term investment	11,339,865	6,560,082
Annuities payable	(13,988,725)	(2,791,287)
Payments on mortgage payable, notes payable, and capital leases	(1,802,815)	(1,732,478)
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	(4,451,675)	2,036,317
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	4,575,202	(5,683,620)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	13,300,465	18,984,085
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	\$ 17,875,667	\$ 13,300,465
Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information		
Interest paid	\$ 272,756	\$ 345,053
Gifts of investments	2,624,343	1,609,682

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Organization:** The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Church) is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation that functions interdependently with the congregations and synods of the Church. The Church serves on behalf of and in support of the Church's members, congregations, and synods. To fulfill its purpose, the Church receives, establishes, and supports congregations and ministries necessary to carry out its mission. The Church has constituent Lutheran congregations in 65 synods throughout the United States and the Caribbean. The Church's principal source of revenue is from contributions.

The ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (the Trust) was initially established on October 9, 1995 and restated on January 20, 1999 under a Restated Declaration of Trust by and between the Church and the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Endowment Fund or the Trustee). The Church established the Trust to allow for the collective long-term investment of funds belonging to the Church, Endowment Fund, its congregations, synods, seminaries, and other eligible affiliated entities. The Endowment Fund is the trustee of the Trust. The ELCA Foundation, an unincorporated unit of the Church, is the administrator of the Trust. The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (the Board of Pensions), an affiliated corporation unit of the Church, is the investment advisor to the Trust.

The accompanying consolidated financial statements include all administrative and program offices and departments of the Churchwide Administrative Offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. These financial statements do not include the accounts of organizations of the Church such as the Board of Pensions, Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Mission Investment Fund), Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, congregations, schools, cemeteries, homes, seminaries, or any other institution owned and operated by religious orders of men or women, except insofar as financial transactions have taken place between them and the Church (e.g., subsidies, loans, and deposits). These organizations may or may not be separate corporations under civil law and may or may not be under the control of the Church; however, each is an operating entity distinct from the Church, maintains separate accounts, carries on its own services and programs, and reports annually to its respective constituency.

**Basis of Presentation:** The accompanying consolidated financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting. All significant intercompany transactions between the Church and the Trust have been eliminated from the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

To ensure the observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of resources available, the Church maintains its financial accounts in accordance with the principles and practices of fund accounting. Fund accounting is the procedure by which resources for various purposes are classified for accounting purposes in accordance with activities or objectives of the Church.

(Continued)

7.

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
(Continued)

For external reporting purposes, however, the financial statements have been prepared to focus on the organization as a whole and to present balances and transactions classified based upon the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Net assets, revenue, expenses, gains, and losses have been classified into three net asset classes based on donor-imposed restrictions. A description of each net asset class follows:

**Unrestricted** - Net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions including the carrying value of all property, furniture, and equipment. Items that affect this category of net assets include unrestricted contributions and bequests, restricted contributions and bequests whose donor-imposed restrictions were met during the fiscal year, and investment income whose use is unrestricted, as well as all expenses incurred in connection with the operations of the Church. Consistent with past policy, certain temporarily restricted contributions are classified as unrestricted because they are fully expended in the current year. Certain funds, generally set aside by church council action, function as endowments and are included in unrestricted net assets.

**Temporarily Restricted** - Net assets subject to donor-imposed restrictions that will be met either by actions of the Church or the passage of time. Items that affect this net asset category are restricted contributions, bequests, and investment income whose use is limited to specific purposes by the donor. These amounts are reclassified to unrestricted net assets when such restrictions are met or have expired.

**Permanently Restricted** - Net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions which require them to be maintained permanently by the Church. Items that affect this net asset category include gifts wherein donors stipulate that the corpus be held in perpetuity (primarily gifts for endowments and gifts solicited by the Church that will fund perpetual endowments) and only the income be made available for unrestricted or restricted purposes. The accumulated undistributed investment income on permanently restricted endowment funds is included in the temporarily restricted net assets, except for unrestricted amounts where the Church is the beneficiary, in which case it is included in unrestricted net assets.

**Summarized Comparative Information:** The financial statements include certain prior-year summarized comparative information in total, as restated, but not by net asset class. Please see Note 11 to the financial statements for information on the restatement of prior year information. Such information does not include sufficient detail to constitute a presentation in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Accordingly, such information should be read in conjunction with the Church's financial statements for the year ended January 31, 2008, and Note 11, from which summarized information was derived.

(Continued)

8.

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
 (Continued)

**Cash and Cash Equivalents:** Cash and cash equivalents include investments in money market accounts, commercial paper, and other short-term investments with original maturities of three months or less from the date of purchase.

**Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts Administered by Outside Organizations:**

*Trusts in Perpetuity* - The Church has been granted a beneficial interest in various irrevocable trust accounts created under wills or deeds of trust. These trust accounts are administered and held by outside trustees. The Church records the fair value of the beneficial interest as a receivable and as revenue when documentation of the beneficial interest is received. Annual distributions of income from these trusts are recorded directly by the Church division which benefits from this interest.

*Charitable Remainder Trusts* - A charitable remainder trust is an arrangement with an outside organization in which the donor establishes and funds a trust and stipulates that specific distributions be made to a designated beneficiary or beneficiaries over the life of the beneficiary(ies), with the remainder to be distributed to the Church upon death of the beneficiary(ies). When notified of the irrevocable interest in the trust, the Church records the present value of the fair market value of the trust's assets as a contribution receivable. Present values are calculated using a discount rate based on the applicable federal rate at the date of the trust and life expectancies unless the end dates of the trusts, in number of years, are specified. Each year, the contracts are revalued; the difference is reported as a change in the value of the split interest agreements. At death and voluntary distribution, the assets received by the Church are recognized at fair value, the contribution receivable is closed, and any remaining difference is reported as a change in the value of split interest agreements.

**Investments and Related Income, Gains, and Losses:** Investments are reported at fair value, except for certain investments in real estate, which are reported at cost. Investments carried at fair value consist primarily of stocks, corporate and government obligations, publicly traded real estate securities, mortgage-backed securities, and mutual funds. The cost of securities sold is based on either the specific identification or average-cost method. Investment income, gains and losses, and any investment-related expenses are recorded as changes in unrestricted net assets in the statement of activities unless their use is temporarily or permanently restricted by explicit donor stipulations.

(Continued)

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
 (Continued)

**Property, Furniture, Equipment, and Depreciation:** Property, furniture, and equipment are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation to date. Depreciation is provided over the following useful lives on a straight-line basis:

Office building	50 years
Mission homes and apartments	25 years
Building improvements	20 years
Furniture, fixtures, and equipment	10 years
Computers, software, and related components	3 years

**Funds Held for Others:** Funds held for others consist of contributions received on behalf of and other resources held for other Lutheran organizations that are separate nonconsolidated entities. The Church does not have variance powers over these funds.

**Vacation Pay:** The Church recognizes vacation pay expense when earned by its nonmissionary personnel. The liability for vacation pay of missionary personnel cannot be reasonably estimated and such amounts are recognized when paid.

**Revenue, Expenses, and Contributions:** Revenues are reported as increases in unrestricted net assets unless use of the related assets is limited by donor-imposed restrictions. Expenses are reported as decreases in unrestricted net assets. Gains and losses on investments and other assets or liabilities are reported as increases or decreases in unrestricted net assets unless their use is restricted by explicit donor stipulation. Expiration of temporary restrictions on net assets (i.e., the donor-stipulated purpose has been fulfilled and/or the stipulated time period has elapsed) are reported as reclassifications between applicable classes of net assets.

Contributions, including unconditional promises to give, are recognized in the period received. Conditional contributions are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend are substantially met. Contributions of assets other than cash are recorded at estimated fair value. Contributions to be received after one year are discounted at an appropriate discount rate commensurate with the risk involved. Amortization of discount is recorded as additional contribution revenue in accordance with donor-imposed restrictions, if any, on the contributions.

Contributions received with donor-imposed restrictions are reported as revenue of the temporarily restricted net asset class. Contributions of land, building, and equipment without donor-imposed restrictions concerning the use of such long-lived assets are reported as revenue of the unrestricted net asset class.

(Continued)

**NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**  
 (Continued)

**Endowment Pool Unitization:** Endowment investments are pooled and managed on the *total return* concept. When a pool is established, ownership interests are initially assigned through unitization to the pool based on the fair value of the cash and securities placed in the pool by each participant. Current fair value is used to determine the number of units allocated to additional assets placed in the pool and to value withdrawals from the pool.

**Income Tax:** The Church has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service indicating that it is exempt from Federal income taxes on income related to its exempt purpose under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. There were no significant unrelated business income activities during the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008.

**Use of Estimates:** The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. A significant estimate is the liability related to annuities payable. Actual results could differ from estimates.

**Adoption of New Accounting Standards:** In 2006, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 157, *Fair Value Measurements* (SFAS No. 157). SFAS No. 157 defines fair value, provides enhanced guidance for using fair value to measure assets and liabilities under current U.S. GAAP standards, and expands the disclosure of the methods used and the effect of fair value measurements on earnings. This Standard is effective for financial statements issued for fiscal years beginning after November 15, 2007. Accordingly, the ELCA adopted applicable portions of this standard for the year ended January 31, 2009.

In 2008, FASB issued Staff Position No. 117-1, *Endowments of Not-for-Profit Organizations: Net Asset Classification of Funds Subject to an Enacted Version of the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act, and Enhanced Disclosures for All Endowment Funds* (FSP FAS 117-1). FSP FAS 117-1 provides guidance on the net asset classification of donor-restricted funds for not-for-profit organizations subject to the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act of 2006 (UPMIFA). It also provides for enhanced disclosure of net asset composition, changes in net assets composition, spending policies and investment policies. The ELCA is complying with applicable portions of this position for the year ended January 31, 2009.

**Reclassifications:** Certain amounts presented in the 2008 statements of financial position and activities have been reclassified to conform with the 2009 presentation.

(Continued)

**NOTE 2 - ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**

Included in accounts receivable at January 31, 2009 and 2008 were approximately \$10,907,459 and \$12,863,140, respectively, relating to synods' contributions for mission support, world hunger appeal, missionary sponsorship, and other programs that have been collected subsequent to year end. No allowance for bad debts has been established because management considers all accounts receivable to be collectible.

**NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS**

Investments at January 31, 2009 and 2008 consist of the following:

	2009		2008	
	Cost	Fair Value	Cost	Fair Value
Equity securities	\$ 297,170,802	\$ 236,532,618	\$ 246,747,088	\$ 271,097,333
Fixed income securities	225,263,279	237,367,192	267,972,030	283,914,359
Real estate	20,269,275	20,012,186	12,589,290	17,831,311
Mission Investment Fund	7,396,209	7,396,209	1,593,332	1,593,332
Other	68,016	68,016	197,679	197,679
	\$ 550,167,581	\$ 471,376,221	\$ 529,099,419	\$ 574,634,215

Out of the \$471,376,221 and \$574,634,215 of total investments at fair value at January 31, 2009 and 2008, \$436,911,844 and \$542,943,108 are stated at fair value determined at December 31, 2008 and 2007. Management believes that the composition of the portfolio and the fair value of these investments at December 31, 2008 and 2007 are not materially different than if they were recorded as of January 31, 2009 and 2008. Of these investments, dividend and interest income are recorded net of investment-related expenses which were \$3,236,542 and \$3,331,176 as of January 31, 2009 and 2008, respectively.

The Church is a pass-through entity for investment income related to certain endowment and deferred gift investments managed and distributed by an external financial institution. In relation to these investments, there were realized gains of approximately \$958,000 and \$762,000 on temporarily restricted investments and \$815,000 and \$1,092,000 on permanently restricted investments for the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008, respectively, with offsetting increases in certain liabilities reported.

Also, unrealized losses of approximately \$20,429,949 and \$1,820,000 on these investments with offsetting increases in certain liabilities were reported for the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008, respectively.

(Continued)

**NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS (Continued)**

Investment return shown above is net of such pass-through gains and losses.

Investments are reported at fair value except for certain investments in real estate which are reported at cost. Investments carried at fair value consist primarily of stocks, corporate and government obligations, publicly traded real estate securities, mortgage-backed securities, and mutual funds.

SFAS No. 157 defines fair value as the price that would be received for an asset (an exit price) in the principal or most advantageous market for the asset in an orderly transaction between market participants on the measurement date. Investments that have readily determinable market values are determined using quoted market prices. Fair values of investments for which market prices are not readily available are determined based upon quoted market close prices for similar issues, dealer quotes, appraisals, or pricing models utilizing market-observable inputs from comparable securities.

Fair value of the unitized investment pools are measured by quoted market prices in active and private markets of the underlying securities. Security prices are based on quotes that are obtained from an independent pricing service. Fair values of securities for which market prices are not readily available are determined based upon quoted market close prices for similar issues, dealer quotes, or pricing models utilizing market-observable inputs from comparable securities. This total fair value is divided by the total number of units in the pool to determine the per-share value that is assigned to the Pooled Trust's units.

SFAS 157 establishes a fair value hierarchy which requires an entity to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs when measuring fair value. The Standard describes three levels of inputs that may be used to measure fair value.

Level 1: Quoted prices (unadjusted) for identical assets in active markets that the Church has the ability to access as of the measurement date.

Level 2: Significant other observable inputs other than Level 1 prices such as quoted prices for similar assets; quoted prices in markets that are not active; or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data.

Level 3: Significant unobservable inputs that reflect the Church's own assumptions that the market participants would use in pricing an asset.

In many cases, a valuation technique used to measure fair value includes inputs from multiple levels of the fair value hierarchy. This table classifies the investments, in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

(Continued)

**NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS (Continued)**

The following table sets forth, by level within the fair value hierarchy, financial instruments owned, at fair value as of January 31, 2009.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Equity Securities	30,868,861	175,653,757	-
Fixed Income Securities	165,720,196	71,646,996	-
Real Estate Securities	-	16,239,258	-
Mission Investment Fund	-	7,396,209	-
Beneficial Interest in Outside Trusts	68,016	13,974,920	-
Other	196,657,073	284,921,140	-

**NOTE 4 - MORTGAGES, NOTES, AND CONTRACTS FOR DEED**

Mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed as of January 31 are summarized as follows:

	Interest Rates		2009	2008
Mortgages and contracts for deed	2.5% - 8.3%		\$ 905,000	\$ 1,095,290
Notes	0.0% - 9.0%		1,407,227	1,416,323
Less allowable for doubtful accounts			(269,682)	(272,782)
			\$ 2,042,545	\$ 2,238,831

**NOTE 5 - OVERSEAS CHURCH CONSTRUCTION LOANS**

Overseas church construction loans bear interest at rates ranging from 2% to 5% and mature at various dates through January 1, 2014. The balances of overseas church construction loans outstanding as of January 31, 2009 and 2008 are \$956,288 and \$725,584, respectively.

(Continued)



**NOTE 6 - PROPERTY, FURNITURE, AND EQUIPMENT**

Property, furniture, and equipment are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation. Details relating to these assets as of January 31 are presented below:

	2009	2008
Land	\$ 133,000	\$ 133,000
Buildings and improvements	45,298,621	44,838,011
Furniture and equipment	20,102,839	19,338,513
	<u>65,534,460</u>	<u>64,309,523</u>
Less accumulated depreciation	(35,851,033)	(34,220,854)
	<u>\$ 29,683,427</u>	<u>\$ 30,088,669</u>

Depreciation expenses for the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008 were \$1,630,179 and \$1,668,003, respectively.

**NOTE 7 - NOTE PAYABLE**

Details of the note payable as of January 31 are as follows:

	2009	2008
Note payable to Mission Investment Fund, refinanced on August 2003, with interest at 4% and monthly payments of principal and interest of \$172,964 until February 2012. The mortgage payable is secured by the Church's office building, which has a net book value of approximately \$15,569,996 at January 31, 2009.	\$ 5,852,953	\$ 7,655,768

Total interest expenses for the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008 were approximately \$272,756 and \$345,053, respectively, which include approximately \$272,756 and \$343,092 of interest on the note payable.

(Continued)

**NOTE 7 - NOTE PAYABLE (Continued)**

Annual principal payments on the note payable for years ending January 31 are as follows:

Year ending January 31:	Amount
2010	\$ 1,875,910
2011	1,952,337
2012	2,024,706
	<u>\$ 5,852,953</u>

**NOTE 8 - SPLIT INTEREST AGREEMENTS ADMINISTERED BY THE ELCA FOUNDATION**

**Charitable Remainder Trusts:** Charitable remainder trusts are arrangements in which the donor establishes and funds a trust with specific distributions to be made to a designated beneficiary or beneficiaries over the trust's term. Obligations to the beneficiaries are limited to the trust's assets. Assets are recorded at fair value when received, and a liability is recorded for the present value of the estimated future payments to the beneficiaries. Present values are calculated using a discount rate based on the applicable federal rate at the date of the trust and the life expectancies of the beneficiaries. The 2000 mortality tables are used to calculate life expectancies unless a time restriction is specified.

Upon termination of the trust, the remaining assets are given to a combination of the Church, related organizations, and other organizations, with no more than 50% of the remainder going to unrelated organizations. The Church may ultimately have unrestricted use of the assets or the donor may place permanent or temporary restrictions on their use.

**Charitable Gift Annuities:** Charitable gift annuities are arrangements between a donor and the Church in which the donor contributes assets to the Church in exchange for a promise by the Church to pay a fixed amount for the life of the donor or other individuals designated by the donor. Due to state insurance regulations, the assets received are held as segregated assets. The annuity liability is a general obligation of the Church. Assets are recognized at fair value on the date of the contribution. An annuity payment liability is recognized for the present value of future cash flows expected to be paid to the donor or to the designated individual. The discount rate is the applicable federal rate on the date of the contract. The 2000 mortality tables are used to calculate the life expectancies of the annuity beneficiaries.

At the death of the donor or designated individual, the book value of the contract is distributed to the Church or related organization for unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted use depending upon the donor restrictions.

(Continued)



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**NOTE 8 - SPLIT INTEREST AGREEMENTS ADMINISTERED BY THE ELCA FOUNDATION** (Continued)

Pooled Income Funds and Life Income Contracts: Donors contribute assets to an investment pool and are assigned a specific number of units based on the proportion of the fair value of their contribution to the total fair value of the pooled income fund on the date of the donor's entry to the pooled fund. Until a donor's death, the donor or designated beneficiary is paid the actual ordinary income earned on the donor's units. Realized gains or losses are added to each unit's principal. Upon the donor's death, the value of the units is released to the Church or a related organization to be used as specified by the donor.

The contributed assets are recorded at fair value. A contribution is recorded at the fair value of the assets discounted for the estimated time period until the donor's death. The applicable federal rate at the date of the contribution is used for the discount rate and the 2000 mortality tables are used to calculate life expectancies. The difference between the fair value of the assets received and the revenue recognized is recorded as deferred revenue, representing the amount of the discount for future revenue.

A summary of recorded amounts related to these arrangements as of December 31, 2008 and 2007 is as follows:

	2008		2007	
	Deferred Revenue	Annuity Payable	Deferred Revenue	Annuity Payable
Charitable remainder annuity trusts		2,434,924		2,789,349
Charitable remainder trusts		33,076,734		46,274,880
Charitable gift annuities		64,982,971		65,419,125
Pooled income funds	966,849		1,312,785	
Life income funds	99,500		231,412	
Life income estates	155,545		231,916	
	<u>1,221,894</u>	<u>100,494,629</u>	<u>1,776,113</u>	<u>114,483,354</u>

The summary of recorded amounts listed above is as of December 31, 2008 and 2007, which management believes is not materially different than if the amounts were recorded as of January 31, 2009 and 2008.

Adjustments to the liability to reflect amortization of the discount, re-evaluations of the present value of the estimated future payments to the donor or beneficiary, and changes in actuarial assumptions are recognized in the statement of activities as a change in the value of split-interest agreements in temporarily or permanently restricted net assets based on the donor's restrictions.

(Continued)

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**NOTE 9 - RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The Church provides accounting and management services to three affiliates at no charge. An estimate of the fair value of these accounting and management services is not readily available.

In addition, the Church also provides building space to four affiliates. One affiliate has a store and office space; the store space is billed, and the office space is not. As disclosed in Note 13, the church has entered into operating lease agreements with three of these entities which includes the store space for one affiliate. The Church is providing unbilled rental of office space to two entities which has an estimated fair value of \$157,000 as of January 31, 2009 and \$337,000 as of January 31, 2008.

The Church does not recognize the economic substance (fair value) of the unbilled services in the financial statements as these are immaterial.

**NOTE 10 - DEFINED-CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLAN**

Substantially all active employees of the Church are enrolled in the noncontributory defined-contribution pension plan administered by the Board of Pensions. The employer contributions to the plan for the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008 were \$3,760,469 and \$3,621,706, respectively. All contributions to the plan are funded on a current basis.

**NOTE 11 - RESTATEMENT OF UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

A review in 2008 indicated that the obligation for post-retirement medical benefits is properly recorded on the financial statements of the Board of Pensions, an affiliated corporation of the ELCA. The January 31, 2007 and 2008 unrestricted net asset balances have been restated to reflect this adjustment, resulting in a \$90,900,361 decrease in post retirement medical benefit liability and an equal increase in beginning net assets. It also resulted in a change in post-retirement medical benefit expense from -\$159,278 to \$2,800,000.

	2008 Prior to Adjustment	2008 Prior Adjustment	2008 Adjusted Value
Beginning net assets	\$216,568,783	\$90,900,361	\$307,469,144
Post retirement health care benefits expense	(159,278)	2,959,278	2,800,000
Post retirement health care benefits liability	90,900,361	(90,900,361)	-

(Continued)

**NOTE 12 - PENSION AND POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFITS**

**Pension Benefits:** The Church has established minimum pension levels, assumed from predecessor church organizations, for certain clergy who retired prior to January 1, 1988. The Church provides funding for these minimum pension benefits to the extent that the reserves maintained by the Board of Pensions are insufficient to fund the plan. During the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008, the Church made no payments to the Board of Pensions to cover the cost of retirees' pension benefits. Employer contributions to the Pension Plan during the fiscal year ending January 31, 2010 are expected to be zero.

During 2008, \$485,177 was paid in benefits to members and survivors under these plans. Total actuarial liability as of January 31, 2009 was \$2,513,490, and plan assets were \$3,222,708, which resulted in excess of plan assets over actuarial liabilities of \$709,218. The assumed long-term rates of investment return for minimum and non-contributory benefits were 6.8% and 7.2% at January 31, 2009 and 2008, respectively.

The invested assets supporting the Church's minimum pension and non-contributory pension obligations were allocated across several asset categories at December 31, 2008 and 2007. The following table shows the percent of assets in each category:

Asset Category	2008	2007
Equity securities	45.4%	38.7%
Debt securities	42.3	45.7
Real estate	4.8	4.6
Cash and short-term investments	7.5	11.0
Total	100.0%	100.0%

**Investment Objective:** The primary investment objective is to meet the liabilities of the Fund. The Fund will be invested in a portfolio of stock, core fixed-income, high-yield, inflation-indexed bonds, real assets, and other investments. Volatility of market values of the Fund is of secondary concern relative to meeting current and future payments to the Fund's beneficiaries.

**Strategic Asset Allocation:** The Fund will be invested in major asset categories as follows:

Target Allocation	Allocation	Range
Equity securities	45%	30% to 60%
Debt securities	45%	25% to 65%
Real assets	10%	5% to 15%

(Continued)

**NOTE 12 - PENSION AND POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFITS (Continued)**

Expected future cash flows for minimum and non-contributory pension benefits for the years ending December 31 are as follows:

	Minimum and Non-Contributory Pension Plans
2009	\$ 432,179
2010	406,333
2011	379,505
2012	351,762
2013	323,218
2014-2018	1,185,800
	\$ 3,078,792

**Post-Retirement Medical Benefits:** The ELCA Board of Pensions also provides medical contribution subsidies to certain retired members with predecessor church service. These subsidies are expressed as a percentage of the monthly cost for coverage paid by eligible retirees under the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan. Subsidies are based on age or a combination of age and service. Approximately 11,000 active or retired members and spouses are eligible or potentially eligible for these subsidies.

These postretirement medical subsidies are funded through trust funds set aside for that purpose. The trust funds are held and reported by the ELCA Board of Pensions; additional contributions are made by ELCA entities pursuant to a funding understanding with the ELCA Board of Pensions and other participating employers. The full actuarial valuation of the obligation is reported on the financial statements of the ELCA Board of Pensions. The ELCA contributed \$2,500,000 in 2008 and \$2,800,000 in 2007 toward the funding of this postretirement health care benefit.

**NOTE 13 - LEASES**

**Lease Income:** The Church has entered into operating lease agreements with three affiliated organizations to lease a portion of its building for retail and office space. Annual base rent approximated \$64,000 for two tenants plus a pro rata share of building operating expenses as defined in the lease; the third is an open-ended rental agreement at \$12,410 per month.

The Church has also entered into lease agreements with non-related exempt organizations to lease portions of its building for office space. The leases expire between June 30, 2009 and July 31, 2014. Minimum annual rentals under noncancelable leases for the years ending January 31 are as follows:

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**NOTE 13 - LEASES (Continued)**

Year:	Amount
2010	\$ 698,934
2011	710,323
2012	672,885
2013	666,148
2014	419,945
Thereafter	1,495,710
	<u>\$ 4,663,945</u>

**Operating Leases:** The Church leases certain office facilities and equipment under various operating leases. The facilities' leases generally provide for renewal options and include escalator clauses based on increases in real estate taxes and operating expenses. Total rent expenses for operating leases are approximately \$429,438 and \$400,933 for the years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008, respectively.

Minimum annual rental commitments under non-cancelable leases for the years ending January 31 are as follows:

	Office Facilities	Office Equipment	Total
2010	193,121	214,924	408,045
2011	188,584	209,973	398,557
2012	194,241	80,321	274,562
2013	200,068	11,565	211,633
2014	208,717	-	208,717
2015 and thereafter	961,366	-	961,366
	<u>1,946,097</u>	<u>516,783</u>	<u>2,462,880</u>

(Continued)

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**NOTE 14 - COLLECTIONS**

The Church's art collections, which were acquired through purchases and contributions, are not recognized as assets on the statement of financial position. The collections represent a wide variety of art mediums: collagraph, etching, intaglio, dry-point engraving, katazome, linocut, oil, serigraph/silk-screen, stained glass, watercolor, and woodcut. The art is intended to share the Gospel visually with many of the pieces having biblical references. Purchases of collection items, if any, are recorded as decreases in unrestricted net assets in the year in which the items are acquired. Contributed collection items, if any, are not reflected on the financial statements. Proceeds from de-accessions or insurance recoveries, if any, are reflected as increases in the appropriate net asset classes.

**NOTE 15 - LINE OF CREDIT**

At January 31, 2009, the Church had a \$20,000,000 unsecured line of credit with a bank at a variable interest rate, of which \$10,000,000 was on a committed basis; there is a maturity date of July 31, 2010 on the committed portion and no termination date on the uncommitted portion. Interest on outstanding borrowings is charged at the greatest of: the bank's prime commercial rate; quoted federal funds rate in the secondary market plus ½ of 1%; or one-month LIBOR rate plus 1%. There were no borrowings outstanding under the line of credit at January 31, 2009 or 2008, or during the years then ended. An annual commitment fee of 0.125% is charged on the unused portion of the committed portion of the line of credit.

**NOTE 16 - NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS**

Net assets which were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes or by occurrence of other events specified by donors were as follows during the year ended January 31, 2009:

Satisfaction of program restrictions:	
World Hunger	\$ 22,633,558
Disaster Relief	5,523,746
Global Mission Programs	3,021,023
Office of the Presiding Bishop	917,977
Other programs	<u>1,266,618</u>
	<u>\$ 33,362,922</u>

(Continued)

**NOTE 17 - CONCENTRATIONS OF RISK**

The Church's primary sources of revenue are contributions from synods. The synod contributions are dependent upon contributions from the membership of congregations of the Church. There are nine regions comprising a total of 65 synods. The following is a summary of the contributions by synods in each of the regions during the years ended January 31:

	2009	2008
Region 1 – Northwest area	\$ 2,546,242	\$ 2,517,286
Region 2 – Southwest area	5,848,710	5,969,876
Region 3 – Northwest Mid-West area	8,714,386	8,637,910
Region 4 – Southwest Mid-West area	6,397,693	6,280,636
Region 5 – Northeast Mid-West area	13,133,429	13,496,818
Region 6 – Southeast Mid-West area	6,535,698	6,710,602
Region 7 – Northeast area	6,917,255	7,178,152
Region 8 – East area	7,670,190	7,887,407
Region 9 – Southeast area	<u>7,523,323</u>	<u>7,450,430</u>
Total synod mission support	<b>\$ 65,286,926</b>	<b>\$ 66,129,117</b>

(Continued)

**NOTE 18 - FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 107, *Disclosure about Fair Value of Financial Instruments*, requires all entities to disclose the fair value of financial instruments, both assets and liabilities, for which it is practicable to estimate fair value.

The Church used the following methods and assumptions to estimate the fair value of each class of financial instruments for which it is practical to estimate that value. Changes in assumptions could significantly affect the estimates.

**Cash, Cash Equivalents, and Interest Receivable:** The carrying amount approximates fair value because of the short maturity of these instruments.

**Mortgages, Notes, Contracts for Deed:** The mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed carrying values approximate fair values based on current interest rates and the present values of the estimated future cash flows.

**Overseas Church Construction Loans:** The carrying value is recognized as the principal due at January 31, 2009. The fair value is based on future payments at the nominal interest rate (ranging from 2% to 5%), discounted at the prime rate, at January 31, 2009.

**Investments:** The majority of investments in equity and debt securities have readily determinable fair values. Other investments' carrying values approximate fair values based on current interest rates and the present values of the estimated future cash flows.

**Annuities Payable, Funds Held for Others and Funds Held for Others in Perpetuity:** The carrying value approximates the fair value as the carrying value is calculated as the present value of the estimated future cash flows, except for annuities payable, whose fair value is approximately \$111,899,000 versus a carrying value of approximately \$100,495,000.

**Mortgages and Notes Payable:** The carrying value approximates the fair value as the carrying value is calculated as the remaining amounts due on these mortgages and notes.

**NOTE 19 - FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS WITH OFF-BALANCE-SHEET RISK**

The Church is party to financial instruments with off-balance sheet risk in the normal course of its business. These instruments include financial guarantees and involve, to varying degrees, elements of credit and interest rate risk in excess of the amount recognized in the statement of financial position. The contract or notional amounts of those instruments reflect the extent of involvement the Church has in particular classes of financial instruments.

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**NOTE 19 - FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS WITH OFF-BALANCE-SHEET RISK (Continued)**  
The Church's exposure to credit loss in the event of nonperformance by the other party to the financial instrument for the guarantee commitment is represented by the contractual amount of those instruments. The Church uses the same credit policies in making commitments and conditional obligations as it does for on-balance-sheet instruments.

Unless noted otherwise, the Church does not require collateral or other security to support financial instruments with credit risk. The contractual amount is a reasonable estimate of the fair value. No material losses are anticipated by management as a result of these transactions.

**NOTE 20 - SECURITIES LOANED**

The Church has an agreement with its investment custodian to lend securities to brokers in exchange for a fee. The security lending agreement specifies that the custodian is responsible for the lending of securities and obtaining adequate collateral from the borrower. The Church receives compensation in the form of fees, or retains a portion of interest on the investment of any cash received as collateral. The Church also continues to receive interest or dividends on the securities loaned. The loans are secured by collateral at least equal, at all times, to the fair value of the securities loaned plus accrued interest. Any gain or loss in the fair value of the securities loaned that may occur during the term of the loan will accrue to the benefit of the Church.

At December 31, 2008 and 2007, investment securities with an aggregate market value of approximately \$63 million and \$57 million, respectively, were loaned to various brokers and are returnable upon demand.

The ELCA Foundation earned approximately \$575,000 in fees for the year ended December 31, 2008 and \$233,700 in fees for the year ended December 31, 2007.

**NOTE 21 - UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Unrestricted net assets consist of the following at January 31:

	2009	2008
General	\$ 24,939,677	\$ 49,337,767
Net investment in property, furniture, and equipment	23,830,874	22,432,901
	\$ 48,770,151	\$ 71,770,668

A review during 2007 of certain unrestricted net assets identified an error in the classification of particular endowments, resulting in a net reduction of \$7,040 to unrestricted net assets with increases to funds held for other in perpetuity.

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**NOTE 22 - TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Temporarily restricted net assets are available for the following purposes or periods at January 31:

	2009	2008
Program-restricted:		
Disaster Relief	9,235,769	10,284,557
World Hunger	4,648,137	5,300,003
Office of the Presiding Bishop	220,594	246,748
Vocation and Education	770,736	780,153
Global Mission	2,274,318	2,439,098
Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission	1,842,485	1,853,817
Church in Society	5,394,634	5,057,536
Other programs	3,874,401	3,026,684
	28,261,074	28,988,596
Time-restricted, expendable in subsequent years	45,049,018	72,091,944
	\$ 73,310,092	\$ 101,080,540

Reviews during 2007 of certain temporarily and permanently restricted net assets identified an error in the classification of particular endowments, resulting in a net reduction of \$347,598 to temporarily restricted net assets with increases to funds held for others and funds held for others in perpetuity.

**NOTE 23 - PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Permanently restricted net assets are restricted to:

	2009	2008
Investments in perpetuity, the income from which is expendable	124,746,426	117,661,507
Deferred gifts that will provide proceeds upon death of annuitant for a permanent endowment	11,212,553	14,884,305
Paid-up life insurance policies that will provide proceeds upon death of insured for permanent endowments	2,110,159	2,072,124
	\$ 138,069,118	\$ 134,617,936

Reviews during 2007 of certain temporarily and permanently restricted net assets identified an error in the classification of certain of particular endowments, resulting in a net reduction of \$1,163,866 to permanently restricted net assets with increases to funds held for others in perpetuity.

(Continued)

**NOTE 24 - FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS NO. 117-1**

**Interpretation of Relevant Law:** The Board of Trustees of the Endowment Fund, serving as the body delegated to manage the Church's endowments, has interpreted the Illinois Uniform Management of Institutional Funds Act as requiring the preservation of the historic dollar value of the original gift of donor-restricted endowment funds, absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. As a result of this interpretation, the Church classifies donor permanently restricted net assets (a) the original value of gifts donated to the permanent endowment, (b) the original value of subsequent gifts to the permanent endowment, and (c) accumulations to the permanent endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added to the fund. Net investment income or losses are recorded as changes in temporarily restricted or unrestricted net assets, according to the donor-imposed restriction(s) for the usage of endowment distributions. Realized and unrealized gains and losses on all Church permanently restricted endowments are being recognized in temporarily restricted net assets, except for unrealized gains and losses on deferred gifts that will provide proceeds upon death of the annuitant for a permanent endowment.

The Church classifies as temporarily restricted net assets all donor-restricted endowment funds where donor stipulation allows for the release of such funds according to an event or time restriction. In the absence of donor stipulations to the contrary, losses on the investment of such a donor-restricted endowment fund reduce temporarily restricted net assets to the extent that the donor-imposed temporary restrictions on net appreciation of the fund have not been met before the loss occurs. Any remaining loss is recorded as a reduction of unrestricted net assets.

The aggregate amounts of funds for which the fair value of the assets held is less than the level required by donor stipulation or law were \$123,448,143 and \$20,418,143 at December 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively. At December 31, 2008, a cumulative loss of approximately \$18,061,959 was reported in unrestricted net assets to re-establish underwater endowment balances in accordance with Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 124, *Accounting for Certain Investments Held by Not-for-Profit Organizations*. During the current year, approximately \$17,490,680 has been reclassified from unrestricted to temporarily restricted net assets.

**Endowment Spending Policies:** Endowment pool distributions are made quarterly at a rate established annually by the Trustee. The distribution rate reflects the Trustee's consideration of the anticipated returns of the Trust and anticipated changes in the purchasing power of the Trust. The rate established for both 2008 and 2007 was 4.5%, and is normally less than the anticipated total return of the Trust. The distribution unit value is equal to the average of the unit values on December 31 of the five preceding years multiplied by the annual distribution rate. The Trustee-approved distribution for the year 2009 is 4.5% of the average December 31 unit values of the five preceding years.

(Continued)

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**NOTE 24 - FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS NO. 117-1 (Continued)**

Earnings in excess of the distribution rate are allocated among the endowment accounts in proportion to the number of units assigned to each account as undistributed earnings. If the quarterly distribution exceeds the actual dividend, interest, and net realized gains earned in the quarter, the excess is distributed from accumulated undistributed earnings or participant capital. At December 31, 2008, 842 of 1,704 accounts had accumulated undistributed earnings compared to 394 of 1,566 at December 31, 2007.

In consideration of donor request or intent, certain donor-restricted endowments are invested through instruments held outside of the Trust. Investment income is distributed or reinvested according to the donor-imposed restriction(s) for the usage of endowment distributions.

**Endowment Investment Policies:** The Trust's investment objective is to provide a stable stream of investment income with long-term capital appreciation, while assuming a moderate level of investment risk. In accordance with guidelines approved by the Trustee, the Trust's assets are invested in a manner that is intended to produce results that exceed the investment's benchmark by 35 basis points over rolling five-year time periods. Actual returns in any given year may vary from this objective.

The Board of Pensions, serving as the Investment Advisor for the Trust, endeavors to achieve long-term return objectives within prudent risk constraints by investing the Trust's assets in a diversified portfolio that places a greater emphasis on equity-based and fixed-income investments. Investments are selected in accordance with the criteria of social responsibility that is consistent with the values and programs of the Church. The Trust's target asset allocation ranges are 46% to 54% in U.S. equity securities, 13% to 17% in non-U.S. equity securities, 17% to 23% in fixed income securities, 8% to 12% in high-yield securities, and 3% to 7% in real estate securities with the balance in cash and cash equivalents. The Board of Pensions, at its option and expense, may appoint one or more investment advisors to carry out certain responsibilities with respect to the Trust, including investment advisory responsibilities subject to the approval of the Trustee.

Certain donor-restricted endowments that are held outside of the Trust are generally invested in term certificates intended to provide interest income and preserve principal amounts while assuming a low level of investment risk.

(Continued)

28.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
 CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
 NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
 January 31, 2009 with comparative amounts for 2008

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
 CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
 NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
 January 31, 2009 with comparative amounts for 2008

**NOTE 24 - FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS NO. 117-1 (Continued)**

Net Asset Composition by Type of Endowment Fund

	Endowment Roll-Forward		
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted
Donor-Restricted Funds*	\$ (15,352,004)	\$ 30,920,247	\$ 124,746,426
Funds Functioning as Endowment	\$ 9,819,422	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ (6,532,582)	\$ 30,920,247	\$ 124,746,426
			\$ 150,134,091
			\$ 140,314,669

	Endowment Roll-Forward			
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$ 20,057,542	\$ 59,185,932	\$ 117,661,507	\$ 196,904,981
Investment Return:	\$ 8,208,641	\$ 37,103	\$ 577	\$ 8,246,321
Net Loss in Fair Value (realized and unrealized)	\$ (28,822,531)	\$ (41,492,440)	\$ (4,255,523)	\$ (74,570,494)
Total Investment Return	\$ (20,613,890)	\$ (41,455,337)	\$ (4,254,946)	\$ (66,324,173)
New Gifts	\$ 864,188	\$ 11,083,265	\$ 11,339,865	\$ 23,287,318
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$ 15,339,890	\$ (15,339,890)	\$ -	\$ -
Other Changes:				
Distribution of Endowment Income	\$ (3,689,632)	\$ (44,403)	\$ -	\$ (3,734,035)
Total Other Changes	\$ (3,689,632)	\$ (44,403)	\$ -	\$ (3,734,035)
Recovery of Endowment Balance	\$ (17,490,680)	\$ 17,490,680	\$ -	\$ -
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ (6,532,582)	\$ 30,920,247	\$ 124,746,426	\$ 150,134,091
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,110,159	\$ 2,110,159
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ (6,532,582)	\$ 30,920,247	\$ 126,856,585	\$ 157,244,250

\* With the exception of certain investments held by outside trust, ELCA Permanently Restricted net assets are based on the historic dollar value of donor-stipulated permanently restricted net assets.

**NOTE 25 - CONTINGENCIES**

The Church is a party to litigation in various matters arising in the ordinary course of operations. Typically, the Church's insurance carriers are defending these matters. Pending litigation will be vigorously defended and, in the opinion of management, is likely resolved without any material adverse effect upon the financial statements of the Church.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
 CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
 CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION INFORMATION BY FUND  
 January 31, 2009

	<u>General Operating and Other Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Endowment Funds</u>	<u>Deferred Gift Funds</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 5,600,388	\$ 2,223,503	\$ 10,051,776	\$ 17,875,667
Cash and securities held as collateral for loan	-	-	63,977,642	63,977,642
Payables under securities agreement loan	-	-	(63,977,642)	(63,977,642)
Accounts receivable	11,424,718	-	754,170	12,178,888
Due from (to) related organizations	3,269,786	(1,458,477)	(115,010)	1,696,299
Interest receivable	-	-	1,227,268	1,227,268
Investments	34,464,377	268,533,715	168,338,129	471,376,221
Prepaid expenses and other assets	4,696,234	2,999,176	1,300,213	8,995,623
Mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed, net	1,137,545	-	905,000	2,042,545
Overseas church construction loans net	956,288	-	-	956,288
Property, furniture, and equipment	29,604,120	-	79,307	29,683,427
Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	-	12,846,132	1,128,788	13,974,920
<b>Total assets</b>	<u>\$ 91,153,456</u>	<u>\$ 285,164,049</u>	<u>\$ 183,689,641</u>	<u>\$ 560,007,146</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>				
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Accounts payable	\$ 4,673,669	\$ 12,109	\$ 3,274,579	\$ 7,960,357
Deferred revenue	4,859,957	192,041	1,456,291	6,508,269
Annuities payable	-	-	100,494,629	100,494,629
Funds held for others	44,506	104,494,616	44,293,522	148,832,644
Note payable	5,852,953	-	-	5,852,953
Funds held for others in perpetuity	-	28,221,033	-	28,221,033
Other liabilities	1,987,680	-	220	1,987,900
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<u>17,418,745</u>	<u>132,919,799</u>	<u>149,519,241</u>	<u>299,857,785</u>
<b>Net assets</b>				
Unrestricted	47,019,380	(5,532,582)	7,283,353	48,770,151
Temporarily restricted	26,715,331	30,920,247	15,674,514	73,310,092
Permanently restricted	-	126,856,585	11,212,533	138,069,118
<b>Total net assets</b>	<u>73,734,711</u>	<u>152,244,250</u>	<u>34,170,400</u>	<u>260,149,361</u>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<u>\$ 91,153,456</u>	<u>\$ 285,164,049</u>	<u>\$ 183,689,641</u>	<u>\$ 560,007,146</u>

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
 CHURCHWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
 CONSOLIDATED SCHEDULES OF EXPENSES BY OBJECT  
 Years ended January 31, 2009 and 2008

	2009	2008, restated
Financial support - grants	\$ 53,676,275	\$ 66,165,670
Compensation		
Central staff	25,529,342	25,029,548
Missionaries	3,702,989	3,305,461
Employee benefits		
Central staff	11,666,258	11,196,555
Missionaries	1,797,008	1,751,561
Retiree pension expenses	1,253,939	(446,128)
Postretirement health care benefits	2,500,000	2,800,000
Travel - staff, board, and committees	4,211,059	3,766,998
Special events	3,718,249	4,853,052
Office expenses	2,100,226	2,299,683
Printing / duplicating	3,119,324	3,380,001
Purchased services	4,159,542	5,090,763
Regional office expenses	1,718,163	1,878,726
Insurance	602,023	531,879
Investment expense	1,052,772	1,747,571
Endowment interest payments and distribution	(1,303,788)	39,527,184
Interest expense	272,756	345,053
Facilities and utilities	2,174,683	1,750,361
Non-capitalized equipment, repairs, and rentals	738,703	1,058,690
Depreciation	1,630,179	1,668,003
Miscellaneous	386,974	139,246
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$ 124,706,676</b>	<b>\$ 177,839,877</b>

# Sermon of Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson Monday, August 17, 2009

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*Joel 2:28-32 + Romans 8:18-27 + John 20:19-23*

Grace to you and peace in the name of Jesus. Amen.

What shall be our witness this week? This is not an insignificant question.

In more than one media interview prior to the assembly, the reporter's questions made it seem that the story had already been written. The story is one of anxiety and dissension leading to division. But the story of this assembly has not been written. You will be one of the many witnesses who tell the story. Your witness—the story you tell—will contribute to the shaping of what others hear and believe about our life together this week.

So, then, what shall be your witness?

Will you tell how we gathered in fear behind the closed doors of the Minneapolis Convention Center, just as Jesus' disciples gathered that first Easter evening?

Almost matter-of-factly, John describes the doors being locked "for fear of the Jews." But wait a minute. The disciples, like Jesus, were Jews. Had it come to this for the disciples? Could it be that they were literally scared of themselves—that they feared their own shadows, the shame of their own identity, their own failure to follow Jesus to the end?

I am convinced that, as we begin this week, it is important to recognize our fears and acknowledge them honestly. When I do not name the fears I hold—be it the anxiety that somehow it's my responsibility to hold the ELCA together or that I will not give you evidence that I've been faithful in memorizing all 704 pages of *Robert's Rules of Order*—when you and I do not name the fears we hold, then too often our fears end up holding us captive. We then become our fears, and fear—not faith—becomes our witness.

So, it is important to recognize what fear and anxiety can do to us. Fear can turn us into mere shadows of what God created us to be: turned inward, immobilized, withdrawn from engagement in God's mission. Fear can make us obsessively protective of what we have and reactively distrustful of others. Fear nurtures the suspicion and cynicism that lead us to act in ways that are mean-spirited and downright anti-neighborly. Fear can drive us to make demands of others for our own security rather than faith making us ready to serve others with confidence and humility. Fear can drive us to hide in false certainties rather than be ready to explore questions that, when addressed faithfully, can embolden our witness, release our imaginations, deepen our faith, and strengthen our courage.

So what fears, if any, do you hold for this assembly? Please take a moment to offer them silently before God in prayer and allow God to hold them rather than let them hold you.

+ + +

Ironically, one fear I have had is that I would speak too long about fear. Why? Because while fear is real, it is not the full story—neither in the place where the disciples gathered, nor in this place, in this assembly. There is more to the story, more waiting to be told. If we are to be true to the witness of the Scripture, if the stories you and I tell of this week are to be faithful and true, then we will tell the story of Jesus Christ who is present in this place. In this assembly.

Can you believe it? It is just as true for us as when the risen Christ just showed up in the midst of his terrified disciples. John writes, “Jesus came and stood among them” (John 20:19, 26). No picture of Jesus standing at the door knocking, waiting to be invited in. No evidence of Jesus putting his ear to the wall, listening to see if his disciples could come to agreement on the theory of atonement that would rightly explain the significance of Jesus’ death. No hint that the disciples were even expecting Jesus. Just, “Jesus came and stood among them.” How audacious. How gracious. We should not be surprised. This has been John’s witness throughout his Gospel, for he wrote, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became flesh and lived among us . . . full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14).

This is John’s witness—the story that he tells. Jesus came into the world, not by invitation but out of the Father’s love. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (3:16). This is John’s witness. Jesus, now raised from the dead, liberated from the tomb, returns to that tomb-like upper room to reclaim his people, still captive to the bonds of fear and death.

Yes, yes. This is the story that is waiting to be told about us also, in this place and time, in this assembly. The crucified and risen Christ is present here. Jesus comes and stands among us. No rules need to be proposed, debated, amended, or adopted to determine whether and on what terms Christ will be present among us. Christ is here because Christ is faithful to his word of promise. Christ is present where he promised—in the Word proclaimed, bread broken, wine poured, Baptism remembered. This is the story that is waiting to be told. The crucified and risen Christ is present here both in promised and surprising places, even in unexpected faces.

And where Christ is present there is peace. When Jesus came to the disciples gathered in fear, he stood among them saying, “Peace be with you.” Oh, yes, it was an ordinary greeting of the day: Salaam. Shalom. Peace. But it was also Christ’s most extraordinary gift.

I hear Jesus’ announcement of peace first as absolution. It is Jesus saying to his disciples, “Although you betrayed me, denied me, abandoned me, and you were completely thick-headed, self-serving, gutless wonders right to the end, and I justifiably could punish you or better yet abandon you and start over with a new and improved twelve, I am here in peace. I remain faithful to you, forgiving you as I have before, with renewed life, in a way you’ve never seen before.”

Oh, yes, sisters and brothers, let this be our witness. Where the crucified and risen Christ is present, there is forgiveness of sin, there is peace, and there is joy.

It was not until Jesus showed the disciples the marks of his crucifixion that their fear turned to joy. May it be so in our witness this week: that through eyes of faith we “see” the wounds in Jesus’ hands and side and realize that our self-emptying God would rather die than be in the sin-accounting business. The wounds of Jesus’ crucified body, risen from the dead, become our testimony that God is mercifully present in the midst of struggle and sin, suffering and death to bring healing and hope, living faith and deep joy. This is not the story of the elation or relief that some might feel if on the prevailing side of assembly actions. The joy of our witness, the story of Jesus Christ waiting to be told, is the joy of which Jesus spoke to his disciples before his death, “I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete” (John 15:11).

This joy is not a distant fiction or an unrealistic hope, neither in our lives nor the life of the ELCA. As we walked into the Superdome for the Youth Gathering, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin stopped me. It was obvious that he was deeply moved by the joyful singing and dancing of the 37,000 participants. “Oh, bishop,” he said, placing his arm around my shoulders, “how the people of New Orleans need to hear these joyful sounds. For this dome holds so many

painful memories of the aftermath of Katrina: memories of devastation and separation, memories of death and despair. Oh, bishop, our whole city needs to experience the healing that the joyful witness of these youth brings.”

Sisters and brothers in Christ, who might be waiting for such a witness from us this week? Let this be our testimony: the crucified and risen Christ is the source of our joy.

It is also the source of our peace, for where Christ is present there is peace. The peace of Christ that Joseph Sittler said is both rest and movement. Listen to Sittler:

When the world is regarded as a succulent resource to be squeezed for its juice of joy, it turns out to be a thief, a liar, a cheat. When the world is received as a gift, a grace, an ever-astounding wonder, it can be rightly enjoyed and justly used. The peace of God as rest, whose gift is to have no anxiety, fulfills itself in the peace of God as movement which goes out with holy concern about everything. The peace of God as rest in God’s acceptance of a person is not a knowledge that the world can give, is not in fact concerned with the world at all. But this same peace knows that the peaceless world is precisely the place for working out of God’s will for truth, justice, purity, beauty.<sup>1</sup>

And it is into the peaceless world—the world that crucified Jesus—that the risen Christ sends his fearful, yet joyful, disciples. And into that world Christ sends you and me and all gathered for this assembly. But not on our own and not all alone. “‘As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ When [Jesus] had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (John 20:21–22).

In the New Orleans Superdome football dressing rooms, Youth Gathering staff had put up signs for those who would be speaking to and leading the 37,000 participants. They splashed one word on walls and in the tunnels: breathe, breathe, breathe, breathe. For when anxiety takes over, we often forget to breathe deeply in the Spirit. Our performance suffers and our witness is diminished. May this be our witness throughout this week: we have gathered in the strong name of Jesus to breathe in the Holy Spirit deeply, for the Spirit was poured out in Baptism upon each one of us. Upon each one of us.

Please turn to the person next to you, invite them to “Breathe, breathe, breathe in the Holy Spirit.”

+ + +

Our oldest granddaughter, Naomi, was born without a connected esophagus. It has since been surgically repaired, but during the first few months of her life, she could not breathe on her own. And neither can we who have gathered for this assembly.

Pope Benedict XVI describes the Holy Spirit as the church’s oxygen source. Paul reminds us that the Spirit helps us in our weakness, interceding with sighs too deep for words. Evidence will abound all week that the Holy Spirit is present, for in this place sins will be forgiven, faith confessed, Baptism remembered, the Word engaged, prayers answered, diverse gifts shared, unity restored. And then, as the assembly draws to a close, we will be sent. We will be sent in the power of the Holy Spirit with the promise of the Gospel: that, for Jesus’ sake, God forgives sins. “[Jesus] breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’” (John 20:22–23).

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Sittler, *The Care of the Earth, and Other University Sermons*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 39.

Doesn't that Gospel promise make you want to turn on your cell phone right now and call that family member or friend, that colleague or congregation member from whom you feel alienated? Perhaps you have exchanged harsh words. Perhaps you have carried feelings of resentment with you into this assembly. Don't you want to share the good news of forgiveness for Jesus' sake? So, why does it seem easier to hold on to resentments than to seek reconciliation? Why do we feel more secure locked in fear behind closed doors than sent into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit with the good news of Jesus Christ—the good news that God is extravagantly rich in grace, forgiving sinners, reconciling the alienated, giving new life in Christ?

Yes, may this be our shared witness. As Bonhoeffer reminds us that “the very moment of great disillusionment with my sister or brother” becomes the moment to be taught “that both of us can never live by our own words and deeds, but only by that one Word and deed that really binds us together, the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

When Jesus sends us into the world with his breathed-on, breathed-in Spirit, we become the embodiment of forgiveness wherever we go and whatever we do. More than forgetting past wrongs, forgiveness in Jesus is an embodied promise to hold on in love, whatever may come, in all our callings, in all the places where we live and serve. Forgiveness is the promise to remain present as the embodiment of Christ's peace. It is a promise even in and especially for the places where sin threatens to hold us captive in fear. Forgiveness is the promise that we remain connected to every human sister and brother in the joy, peace, hope, and love that lives in Jesus and therefore in us.

Oh yes, may this be our witness: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a sent church. Sent in the power of the Holy Spirit. Sent to share the good news and embody the forgiving presence of Jesus Christ. Sent to serve the Lord. Sent to remember the poor.

Please place your hand on someone's head as I pray for the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon our work and our witness. The Lord be with you. Let us pray: “Father in heaven, for Jesus' sake, stir up in these women and men the gift of your Holy Spirit; confirm their faith, guide their lives, empower them in their serving, give them patience in suffering, and bring them to everlasting life. Amen.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “Life Together,” in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, vol. 5 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996) pp. 36–37.

<sup>3</sup> *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 236.

## Exhibit G

# ***Ad Hoc Committee Report: Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust***

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**August 2009**

The purpose of the *Ad Hoc* Committee is to facilitate the work of the assembly through:

- Ensuring clarity of each amendment;
- Assisting those who have submitted amendments with language or wording;
- Assisting, if possible, in forming consensus with authors of motions of like substance or interest;
- Proposing recommendations to the assembly relative to each amendment for use in deliberations.

The deadline for submitting amendments to the proposed social statement was 2:00 P.M. Tuesday, August 18, 2009. Thirteen motions were received and addressed by the *Ad Hoc* Committee to enable more effective action by the assembly. In addition, the committee considered the 42 synod memorials, including proposed amendments. The names of these synods are provided on page 2 of this document. We express our gratitude to all who worked on behalf of the church to respond to the text of the social statement and the implementing resolutions.

The recommendations from the committee, provided below, are grouped as follows:

### **Report I: Amendments to *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust***

### **Report II: Amendments to Implementing Resolutions of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust***

For purpose of consistency and clarity, the *Ad Hoc* Committee made some minor grammatical and editorial corrections to some of the amendments in partnership with the originating author.

Respectfully submitted:

Bp. Leonard Bolick  
Bp. Murray Finck  
Dr. Norma Hirsch  
Rev. Rebecca Larson  
Rev. Steven Loy, *chair*  
Rev. Stan Olson

Rev. Paul Rajashekar  
Rev. Kaari Reierson  
Ms. Sandra Schlesinger, *co-chair*  
Rev. Peter Strommen  
Rev. Roger A. Willer

**Ad Hoc Committee Report:  
Recommendations for Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust  
August 2009**

## **Introduction**

In addition to amendments from voting members of the assembly, the *Ad Hoc* Committee received all memorials from synods relative to the ELCA Studies on Sexuality, which can be found in the *2009 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section VI, Category F1 (beginning on page 63), Category F3 (beginning on page 75), Category F4 (beginning on page 84), Category F6 (beginning on page 86), and Category F7 (beginning on page 92).

**The following synods memorialized the Churchwide Assembly “...to adopt the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions...,” thereby indicating substantial support for the social statement text as it stands:** Montana, Pacifica, Sierra Pacific, Eastern North Dakota, Central States, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Minneapolis Area, Saint Paul Area, Metropolitan Chicago, Northern Illinois, Greater Milwaukee, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Southeastern Iowa, Lower Susquehanna, Metropolitan New York, Upstate New York, New Jersey, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., North Carolina, Southeastern, Florida-Bahamas, Southwestern Washington, Eastern Washington-Idaho, Southwest California, Rocky Mountain, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Texas-Louisiana, Northern Great Lakes, La Crosse Area, Southeast Michigan, Indiana-Kentucky, New England, Northwest Washington, and Grand Canyon.

**The following synods memorialized the Churchwide Assembly to reject the proposed social statement on human sexuality and its implementing resolutions:** South Dakota, Northeastern Iowa, Southern Ohio, Southwestern Pennsylvania, and Allegheny.

Recommendations for all amendments are addressed by the *Ad Hoc* Committee in the following pages of this report.

Throughout their deliberations, the committee was intentional about recommending adoption of amendments that strengthened the intent and coherence of the existing text. Likewise, the committee recommended not adopting amendments that, in its judgment, were inconsistent with the intent and coherence of the existing text. In one case, no recommendation was made.

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**Report I: Amendments to *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust***

**A. The *Ad Hoc* Committee recommends the following proposed amendments to *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* be adopted.**

**Amendment A1**

Submitted By: Terri Stagner-Collier (Submission No. 18)

**Propose the following change to page 36, line 1311:**

“ . . . understand why this church ~~has taught~~ teaches that the greatest . . . ”

**Rationale:** The committee understands this amendment to be editorial and recommends it be adopted.

**Amendment A2**

Submitted By: Jeff Thiemann (Submission No. 34)

**Propose the following changes to page 24, lines 316 and 317:**

“We recognize the complex and varied ~~callings people have in relation~~ situations people are in relative to human sexuality; . . . ”

**Rationale:** The committee understands this amendment to be editorial and recommends it be adopted.

**Amendment A3**

Submitted By: James Mauney (Submission No. 26)

**Propose the following changes to page 28, lines 620-628:**

“ . . . The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have taught and recognized marriage as a normative, lifelong covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10:6-9: “But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one put asunder.” (Jesus here recalls Genesis 1:27; 2:23-24.) Marriage thus provides the possibility for the added blessing of children and the joy and responsibility for raising them in the faith.

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment be adopted because it strengthens and bridges the issues of marriage, family, and the responsibilities of parenting.



#### **Amendment A4**

Submitted By: Kurt F. Kusserow (Submission No. 25)

**Propose the following changes to page 29, lines 740 and 741:**

It must be noted that some, Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, some people, though not all, in this church and within the larger Christian community, conclude that marriage . . .

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment be adopted because it aids in clarifying the point.

**B. The *Ad Hoc* Committee recommends the following proposed amendments to *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* not be adopted.**

#### **Amendment B1**

Submitted By: Johannes Olsen (Submission No. 32)

**Propose the following change to page 21, line 50:**

Each of these is based on Scripture and the central Lutheran understanding of *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone) as the authoritative source and norm of the church's proclamation of faith and life. Deeply grounded in Scripture, understood as . . .

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted since this point is addressed adequately in footnote 3 on page 21.

#### **Amendment B2**

Submitted By: C. Peter Maisenbach (Submission No. 19)

**Propose the following be inserted on page 28, between lines 628 and 629 (with footnotes added accordingly):**

With our predecessor churches we affirm that "Marriage is a structure of human life built into the creation by the Creator. It builds upon our creation as male and female (Gen. 1:27). Sexual differences are of God's good design, intended to bring joy and enrichment to human life as well as to provide for procreation. The essence of marriage is that in the act and relationships of marriage two persons become one flesh (Gen. 2:24). In this complementary nature of the two sexes as God created them lies the basis for marriage and each new family." 1

"Christian people recognize their marital union as belonging to God's created order; it is not merely a contract between two individuals, the essential elements of which can be arbitrarily altered. Christian people seek also the fulfillment of their marital union in Christ as they grow in loving one another even as Christ has loved them, as they learn to forgive one another in the spirit of Christ, and as they draw upon the resources which the

Lord of the church makes available to his people. The faith of Christian people affects, often decisively, every aspect of their marriage.”<sup>2</sup>

“Marriage is ordained by God as a structure of the created order. Thus the sanction of civil law and public recognition are important and beneficial in marriage, as checks against social injustice and personal sin. The marriage covenant, therefore, should be certified by a legal contract, and Christian participants should seek the blessings of the church.”<sup>3</sup>

“The relationship between husband and wife is likened in Ephesians 5:21-23 to the relationship between Christ and the church. This depicts a communion of total persons, each of them living for the other. As with the covenant between Christ and the church, the promise of fidelity is fundamental. Therefore, Christians regard marriage as a primary setting in which to live out their calling from the Lord.”<sup>4</sup>

1 “Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage,” A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1982.

2 “Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage,” A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1982.

3 “Sex, Marriage, and Family,” A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

4 “Sex, Marriage, and Family,” A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

**Rationale:** This section reflects the foundational premise of this document that we seek to reflect God’s unfailing trustworthiness in our relationships and in our social institutions. Marriage is discussed as a social structure (building on Luther’s understanding) that best supports trust. It is within marriage that lifelong commitment and public accountability protect and shelter trust for the couple, children and any in need of special care.

The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted because the proposed substitution does not incorporate or build upon these foundational premises, which are important for the coherence and consistency of the document.

### **Amendment B3**

Submitted By: Timothy Deal (Submission No. 20) and Randal Fett (Submission No. 21)

**Propose deletion of lines 740 through 750 on page 29.**

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted because the existing paragraph provides a description of a portion of the ELCA who regard the term “marriage” as appropriate for same-gender relationships.

### **Amendment B4**

Submitted By: Randal Fett (Submission No. 21)

**Propose deletion of lines 751 through 868 on pages 29–31.**

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted. A portion of the charge to the task force was helping this church respond to homosexuality. This section names

this church's opposition to assault and discrimination based on sexual orientation and clarifies its commitment to welcome, care for, and support same-gender-orientated people and their families. This section states the issues within this church and describes a range of widely articulated views, representing different understandings of scripture, pastoral care, and faith perspectives. Given the current discussion within the church and the culture, the presence of this section is critical to the coherence of the proposed social statement in its description of our differences.

### **Amendment B5**

Submitted By: Rev. Michael Johnson (Submission No. 31)

**Propose deletion of lines 751 through 868 on pages 29 – 31 and insertion of the following (with footnotes added accordingly):**

### **Homosexuality**

We affirm biblical teaching on homosexual behavior as articulated by our predecessor churches, The American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America:

“Scientific research has not been able to provide conclusive evidence regarding the causes of homosexuality. Nevertheless, homosexuality is viewed biblically as a departure from the heterosexual structure of God’s creation.”<sup>1</sup> “We note the current consensus in the scientific community that one’s preferred sexual behavior exists on a continuum from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual and that homosexual behavior takes a variety of forms. We believe it appropriate to distinguish between homosexual orientation and homosexual behavior. Persons who do not practice their homosexual erotic preference do not violate our understanding of Christian sexual behavior.”<sup>2</sup>

“This church regards the practice of homosexual erotic behavior as contrary to God’s intent for his children. It rejects the contention that homosexual behavior is simply another form of sexual behavior equally valid with the dominant male/female pattern.”<sup>3</sup>

“We agree that homosexually-behaving persons need God’s grace as does every human being. We all need the care and concern of the congregation. We all need opportunity to hear the Word, to receive the sacraments, to accept the forgiveness God offers, to experience the understanding and the fellowship of the community of Christ. We all need the power of the Holy Spirit for ethical living sensitive to our own individual situations.

So saying we nevertheless do not condone homosexual erotic behavior. Nor do we condone idolatry, pride, disrespect for parents, murder, adultery, theft, libel, gossip, or the other sins known in our circles. The sacrifice God finds acceptable from each of us is "a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart." Then he can answer our prayer for a "clean heart . . . a new and right spirit within me." (See Psalm 51.)<sup>4</sup>

“Persons who engage in homosexual behavior are sinners only as are all other persons—alienated from God and neighbor. However, they are often the special and undeserving victims of prejudice and discrimination in law, law enforcement, cultural mores, and congregational life. In relation to this area of concern, the sexual behavior of freely consenting

adults in private is not an appropriate subject for legislation or police action. It is essential to see such persons as entitled to understanding and justice in church and community.”<sup>5</sup>

The 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly has committed this church to “continue to respect the guidance of the 1993 statement of the Conference of Bishops”<sup>6</sup> which reads: “We, as the Conference of Bishops of the ELCA, recognize that there is basis neither in Scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship. We, therefore, do not approve such a ceremony as an official action of this church’s ministry. Nevertheless, we express trust in and will continue dialogue with those pastors and congregations who are in ministry with gay and lesbian persons, and affirm their desire to explore the best ways to provide pastoral care for all to whom they minister”<sup>6</sup>

1 “Sex, Marriage, and Family,” A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

2 “Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior,” A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

3 “Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior,” A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

4 “Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior,” A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church, 1980.

5 “Sex, Marriage, and Family,” A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

6 2005 Churchwide Assembly Action, CA05.05.18.

7 1993 Conference of Bishops Statement, CB93.10.25.

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted. While the position articulated in the language of the proposed amendment reflects the position of many in this church, it implies a consensus that no longer exists.

### **Amendment B6**

Submitted By: Meredith Nelson (Submission No. 28)

**Propose amending lines 1363 through 1394 on page 36 as follows:**

1363 Because ~~t~~ This church urges couples to seek the highest social  
~~1364 —~~ and legal support for their relationships, it does not favor  
1365 cohabitation arrangements outside of marriage. It has a  
~~1366 —~~ special concern when such arrangements are entered into as  
~~1367 —~~ an end in themselves. It does, however, acknowledge the  
1368 social forces at work that encourage such practices. This  
~~1369 —~~ church also recognizes the pastoral and familial issues that  
1370 accompany these contemporary social patterns.

1371 In cases where a decision is made for cohabitation, and  
1372 regardless of the reasons, this church expects its pastors and  
1373 members to be clear with the couple regarding the reasons  
1374 for the position of this church as well as supporting the  
~~1375 —~~ couple in recognizing their obligation to be open and candid  
~~1376 —~~ with each other about their plans, expectations, and levels of

1377 mutual commitment.

1378 It should be noted that some cohabitation arrangements can  
1379 be constructed in ways that are neither casual nor  
1380 intrinsically unstable. In earlier generations, betrothal  
1381 carried obligations similar to those of marriage. In certain  
1382 situations, conventional or even legal obligations  
1383 accompany cohabitation arrangements. In some states, for  
1384 instance, laws govern “common law marriages.” Such  
1385 arrangements may differ markedly from more transitory  
1386 forms of cohabitation.

1387 This church believes, however, that the deepest human  
1388 longings for a sense of personal worth, long-term  
1389 companionship, and profound security, especially given the  
1390 human propensity to sin, are best served through binding  
1391 commitment, legal protections, and the public  
1392 accountability of marriage, especially where the couple is  
1393 surrounded by the prayers of the congregational community  
1394 and the promises of God.

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted. The suggested changes eliminate the pastoral care aspect and a descriptive paragraph regarding common-law marriages.

## Report II: Amendments to the Implementing Resolutions of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*

C. **The *Ad Hoc* Committee recommends the following amendments to the Implementing Resolutions of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* not be adopted.**

### **Amendment C1**

Submitted By: John G. Barnes (Submission No. 22)

**Propose the following changes to Implementing Resolution 1, lines 1-8 on page 39:**

To embrace as a church our legacy of a rich theological tradition that proclaims God's ~~gracious love expressed in Jesus Christ as the basis of our salvation, hope, and unity;~~ Word of Law and Gospel, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures; and to call upon members of this church, on this basis, to ~~commit themselves to finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements;~~ rejoice in Jesus Christ as our hope and salvation and to follow God's will in faithfulness and obedience.

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted. The substitute language shifts the point of the implementing resolution and eliminates reference to the actions taken by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly that committed us to find ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements.

### **Amendment C2**

Submitted By: Roy L. Gibbs (Submission No. 33)

**Propose the following changes to Implementing Resolution 9, lines 50-53 on page 39:**

To affirm the 2001 ELCA Message "Commercial Sexual Exploitation" and the 1996 ELCA Message "Sexuality: Some Commons Convictions and ~~its~~ their continuing value for the mission and ministry of the ELCA;

**Rationale:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted. If approved, the social statement on human sexuality will take precedence over any other social statements or messages on the same topic, including 1996 ELCA Message "Sexuality: Some Common Convictions." The implementing resolution lifts up the 2001 Message to provide more definition on the topic of commercial sexual exploitation.

### **Amendment C3**

**The following amendments direct churchwide units to develop resources to support same-gender relationships and hold same-gender couples publicly accountable, and have been drawn from synod memorial categories F4.1, F4.2, F4.3 and F4.5 (somewhat revised language), F6.1, F6.2, F6.3, F6.4, F6.5 (somewhat revised language), F6.6, F6.7, F6.8, F6.9, F6.10, F6.11, F6.12, and F6.13. These memorials request the addition of one of the following implementing resolutions:**

**C3.1:** To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity;

or

**C3.2:** To direct the appropriate churchwide units and offices to develop resources for ministers and congregations that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable for promises of lifelong love and fidelity made before their faith-community;

**Rationale for C3.1 and C3.2:** The committee recommends both amendments not be adopted for the following reasons:

1. The committee notes that this church does not have agreement on the actions to which these amendments refer: “We do not have agreement on whether this church should honor these relationships, uplift, shelter and protect them, or on precisely how it is appropriate to do so.” (line 525). The committee also recognizes, as the proposed social statement indicates that, “this church, on the basis of ‘the bound conscience,’ will include... different understandings and practices within its life as it seeks to live out its mission and ministry in the world.” (line 633) It also notes that such decisions lie within the realm of pastoral care for local congregations. Therefore it is the opinion of the *Ad Hoc* Committee that, absent general agreement within this church, the development of churchwide resources to address this particular concern would not be advisable.
2. This committee recognizes that at present this church has neither the financial nor staff resources to implement these amendments.

#### **Amendment C4**

**The following amendments call upon churchwide units to develop sexual education resources and have been drawn from synod memorial categories F4.4 and F4.5. These memorials request addition of one of the following implementing resolutions:**

#### **From category F4.4:**

**C4.1:** To direct relevant churchwide units, in cooperation with congregations and recognized Lutheran organizations whose mission includes ministry by and on behalf of people of all sexual orientation and gender identities, to develop congregational resources for age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education that upholds the values of this social statement;

#### **From category F4.5:**

**C4.2:** To encourage relevant churchwide units to develop congregational resources for age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education that upholds the values of this social statement;

**C4.3:** To encourage relevant churchwide units to develop resources that assist congregations and ministers in providing pastoral care for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, without the expectation that they change their sexual orientation or gender identity;

**Rationale for C4.1, C4.2, and C4.3:** The committee recommends all three amendments not be adopted for the following reasons:

1. Three implementing resolutions already attached to the proposed social statement address the concern about educational resources. Specifically, implementing resolution two references *Journey Together Faithfully*, implementing resolution four encourages Augsburg Fortress to consider developing educational materials, and implementing resolution eight calls on this church to encourage the availability and funding of comprehensive sex education programs in public schools, as well as in Lutheran private schools.
2. Other denominations have published sexual education materials that are available to congregations; as well the ELCA has completed an award-winning online resource for youth as part of the *Journey Together Faithfully* process.
3. This committee recognizes that at present this church has neither the financial nor staff resources to implement these resolutions.

#### **Amendment C5**

**The following amendment, drawn from synod memorial category F4.5, encourages churchwide units to advocate for legal changes related to widows and widowers and retirement benefits. This memorial requests addition of the following implementing resolution:**

**C5.1:** To encourage relevant churchwide units and encourage synods, congregations, and members of this church to advocate for laws and regulations that permit widows and widowers to marry without losing their pensions or Social Security benefits;

**Rationale for C5.1:** The committee recommends this amendment not be adopted because the Church in Society program unit has begun a process to address these concerns.

**D. The *Ad Hoc* Committee makes no recommendation regarding the following amendments to the Implementing Resolutions of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust***

#### **Amendment D1**

Submitted By: John T. Gates (Submission No. 30)

**Propose deletion of Implementing Resolution 3, lines 16-19 on page 39.**



## **Registry of Votes on Resolutions of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies**

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**CA09.06.29** To allow voting members to register in writing with the secretary of this church their votes on Resolutions Two and Three of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

**CA09.06.30** To allow voting members to register in writing with the secretary of this church their votes on Resolution Four of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies.

The following are the names of those voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly who chose to register their votes on the resolutions of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies. Each voting member registered either “Yes” or “No” votes on all three resolutions.

### **Yes**

Mr. Homer G. Alexander (7C)  
Mr. Albert Arndt (5H)  
Mr. Robert W. Baer (7A)  
Mr. Mark Betley (7D)  
Pr. Pamela J. S. Challis (2D)  
Ms. Joan D. Church (5A)  
Pr. David L. Cline (5D)  
Pr. Bruce H. Davidson (7A)  
Ms. Kay M. Erickson (5H)  
Ms. Margaret H. Fielding (7C)  
Pr. Katrina D. Foster (7C)  
Pr. Curtis W. Gerald (5A)  
Mr. Jason S. Glombicki (5A)  
Pr. Mark W. Jeske (8D)  
Mr. Jared M. Johnson (7A)  
Mr. Drew M. Knobloch (5A)  
Mr. F. Thomas Kull Jr. (7A)

Ms. Catherine B. Malmstrom (7A)  
Pr. Margaret M. Marks (7A)  
Pr. Jay M. McDivitt (2E)  
Pr. David A. Miller (4B)  
Mr. Robert S. Nicol (7E)  
Mr. Wayne E. Olsen (7A)  
Pr. Sara K. Olson-Smith (7A)  
Mr. John M. Pederson (3B)  
Pr. Brooke N. Petersen (5A)  
Mr. Eric M. Peterson (5K)  
Ms. Laura N. Sanchez (7A)  
Mr. Kyle R. Severson (5B)  
Ms. Leora E. Stadler (2D)  
Ms. Cheryl G. Stuart (9E)  
Mr. Chad N. Winterfeldt (3F)  
Mr. Alan R. Wold (5B)  
Ms. Alyson M. Yee (7A)

## No

Pr. Dwight L. Anderson (5I)  
Pr. David H. Andreae (5F)  
Pr. Kerry R. Aucker (8E)  
Pr. David J. Baer (3C)  
Pr. Joel A. Benson (8B)  
Pr. Jeffrey J. Blain (5I)  
Pr. Scott A. Bryte (8B)  
Ms. Heidi A. Buzzard (7E)  
Mr. Timothy L. Deal (9B)  
Mr. Gary A. Diers (3G)  
Ms. Linda M. Diers (3G)  
Ms. Patricia F. Echko (6E)  
Pr. Craig L. Fourman (6F)  
Ms. Sarah E. Fox (6F)  
Pr. Steven R. Frock (5E)  
Ms. Linda S. Gotthardt-Allende (6E)  
Pr. Michael A. Greenauer (8E)  
Ms. Sharon A. Gsellman (6E)  
Pr. Marshall E. Hahn (5F)  
Mr. Paul W. Hamlin (3I)  
Pr. Rebecca M. Heber (9E)  
Mr. Richard J. Helgeson (3H)  
Ms. Sharon E. Hickman (9E)  
Mr. Clay R. Hilman (5G)  
Pr. Timothy J. Housholder (3H)  
Ms. Mary E. Howe (5B)  
Ms. Diane S. Irwin (8F)  
Mr. Wayne A. Jacobson (5F)  
Pr. Corinne R. Johnson (5G)  
Pr. Michael E. Johnson (3A)  
Mr. John M. Karriker (9B)  
Mr. David P. Kingsborough (8D)  
Pr. Mark W. Knappe (5J)  
Ms. Diane S. Koch (6E)  
Pr. Katie A. Koch (3D)  
Pr. Paul C. Koch (3D)  
Ms. Eileen L. Koehler (7E)  
Ms. Marilyn R. Krause (3A)  
Pr. Carol L. Lankes (7D)  
Mr. Ronald P. Larkin (9E)  
Mr. Michael T. Lette (5F)  
Pr. C. Peter Maisenbach (5E)  
Mr. John W. Marr Jr. (6F)  
Ms. Darlene M. Larson Matz (3D)  
Pr. Judith A. McKee (8D)  
Pr. Paul R. Messner (7D)  
Pr. Ryan D. Mills (4D)  
Ms. Meredith L. Nelson (4F)  
Pr. Carl J. Nielsen (2B)  
Mr. David B. Olsen (3H)  
Mr. Johannes Olsen (7D)  
Pr. Paul J. Owens (6B)  
Ms. Deanna J. Osterbur (5C)  
Pr. David E. Pennebaker (8E)  
Ms. Michelle R. Premuto (9E)  
Mr. Albert H. Quie (3G)  
Pr. Bret L. Reedy (5B)  
Mr. Matthew M. Riak (6B)  
Pr. Allen R. Riethmiller (8B)  
Pr. David A. Rike (8D)  
Pr. Robert P. Rognlien Jr. (2B)  
Mr. Glenn L. Ryder II (1B)  
Pr. Shelly D. S. Schultz (5H)  
Mr. John L. Seng (6E)  
Mr. Carroll S. Shaddock (4F)  
Bp. Thomas A. Skrenes (5G)  
Mr. Lloyd O. Smith (7B)  
Mr. Curtis A. Sorbo (3B)  
Ms. Jeanne C. Suehr (8B)  
Ms. Clare A. Swenson (3D)  
Pr. Shirley J. Teske (3A)  
Mr. Roger G. Thompson (3I)  
Pr. Zachary N. Thompson (3H)  
Pr. Michael J. Toomey (3B)  
Pr. Bruce A. Vold (3B)  
Ms. Eunice V. Vold (3B)  
Ms. Pamela F. Way (8C)  
Ms. Sheila Welch (7G)  
Pr. N. Craig Werling (3C)  
Mr. Paul F. White (9A)  
Pr. Barbara M. Wills (5F)  
Ms. Kim Y. Wittel (8D)  
Ms. Mary E. Wolf (7D)  
Mr. Eric D. Wong (3E)  
Ms. Jenny M. Wu (5A)  
Mr. Michael J. Yagley (6A)



# **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

## **CONSTITUTIONS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America®**

as adopted by the Constituting Convention  
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
(April 30, 1987)

and

as amended by the

First (1989), Second (1991), Third (1993), Fourth (1995),  
Fifth (1997), Sixth (1999), Seventh (2001), Eighth (2003),  
Ninth (2005), Tenth (2007), and Eleventh (2009) Churchwide Assemblies of  
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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## INTRODUCTION

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The *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* reflect both the underlying theology of this church as well as its organizational principles and governance structures. They are both ecclesial and legal documents. Thus, they commit this church in each of its expressions—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—to the centrality of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, carrying out Christ’s Great Commission, serving the neighbor in response to God’s love, worshiping God, nurturing members in the Word of God, and manifesting the unity given to God’s people in living together in Christ. At the same time, these governing documents also provide necessary organizational principles, structures, and policies for good order and to meet legal requirements. Taken together, these governing documents reflect the organic whole of this church in its interdependent relationships and as part of the one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

Although the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America began operation in 1988, its governing documents are rooted in Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and in the experiences of predecessor church bodies. They incorporate important provisions that unite us as this church, yet provide organizational flexibility to congregations and synods. As such, they should facilitate ministry, not inhibit it.

We, as members of this church, find ourselves consulting these documents frequently to guide, direct, and assist us in mission and ministry together. They remind us again and again that this is not our church, but God’s church. As God’s people in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world. We are doing God’s work. “God’s work. Our hands.”

Secretary David D. Swartling  
September 4, 2009



**RESTATED**  
**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**  
**OF**  
**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN**  
**AMERICA<sup>®</sup>**

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**ARTICLE I**

The name of this corporation shall be:

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

**ARTICLE II**

This corporation (sometimes referred to herein as the “Church”) is organized and shall be operated exclusively for religious purposes and, specifically, this corporation shall constitute a Lutheran church the purpose and functions of which shall be as specified from time to time in the Constitution of this corporation.

Within the framework and limitations of these purposes, the Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively for religious purposes and shall have such powers as are consistent with the foregoing purposes, including the power to acquire and receive funds and property of every kind and nature whatsoever, whether by purchase, conveyance, lease, gift, grant, bequest, legacy, devise, or otherwise, and to own, hold, expend, make gifts, grants, and contributions of, and to convey, transfer, and dispose of any funds and property and the income therefrom for the furtherance of the purposes of the Church hereinabove set forth, or any of them, and to lease, mortgage, encumber, and use the same, and such other powers which are consistent with the foregoing purposes and which are afforded to the Church by the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act, and by any future laws amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto.

**ARTICLE III**

This corporation shall not afford pecuniary gain, incidentally or otherwise, to its members, and no part of the net income or net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of any member, private shareholder, or individual, and no substantial part of its activities shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. This corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

This corporation shall not lend any of its assets to any officer, director, or member of this corporation or guarantee to any other person the payment of a loan made to an officer, director, or member of this corporation.

All references in these Articles of Incorporation to sections of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 include any provisions thereof adopted by future amendments thereto and any cognate provisions in future Internal Revenue codes to the extent such provisions are applicable to this corporation.

**ARTICLE IV**

The period of duration of corporate existence of this corporation shall be perpetual.

**ARTICLE V**

The registered office of this corporation shall be located at 405 Second Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401.

**ARTICLE VI**

The management and direction of the business of the Church shall be vested in a board of directors which shall be known and designated as the Church Council. The terms of office, method of election, powers, authorities, and duties of the members of the Church Council, the time and place of their meetings, and such other regulations with respect to them as are not inconsistent with the express provisions of these Articles of Incorporation shall be as specified from time to time in the bylaws of the Church, which shall be known to the Church as its Constitution.

**ARTICLE VII**

The Church Council shall consist of thirty-seven (37) persons. The names and addresses of the members of the Church Council and the expiration date of their respective terms of office, are as follows:

		Expiration Date of Term— Close of the Church’s
<u>Name</u>	<u>Post Office Address</u>	<u>Convention in the Year:</u>

*Names of the members of the Church Council elected at the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and, in the case of the treasurer, at the first meeting of the Church Council, were filed in the Restated Articles of Incorporation and appear in the minutes of the convention and council meeting.*

## **ARTICLE VIII**

Except as otherwise provided in the Church's Constitution, the Church shall have no members with voting rights.

Whenever, and to the extent that, the Church's Constitution provides that voting rights shall be exercised by individuals elected, appointed, or otherwise designated to serve as voting members of an assembly of the Church, then the voting members of this Church for purposes of the laws of the State of Minnesota shall be the persons who were most recently seated as the voting members of an assembly of the Church.

Members of congregations of the Church shall not, as such, have any voting rights with respect to this corporation.

## **ARTICLE IX**

For purposes of the laws of the State of Minnesota, only the Church's Constitution shall be treated as the bylaws of this corporation, and none of this corporation's governing documents other than these Articles of Incorporation and the Church's Constitution need be subject to the procedures specified by law or otherwise for the amendment of articles of incorporation or bylaws.

## **ARTICLE X**

Members of this corporation shall not be personally liable for the payment of any debts or obligations of this corporation of any nature whatsoever, nor shall any of the property of the members be subject to the payments of the debts or obligations of this corporation to any extent whatsoever.

## **ARTICLE XI**

This corporation shall have no capital stock.

## **ARTICLE XII**

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended from time to time in the manner prescribed by law.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation any surplus property remaining after the payment of its debts shall be disposed of by transfer to one or more corporations, associations, institutions, trusts, community chests, or foundations organized and operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes of this corporation, and described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, in such proportions as the Church Council of this corporation shall determine. Notwithstanding any provision herein to the contrary, nothing herein shall be construed to affect the disposition of property and assets held by this corporation upon trust or other condition, or subject to any executory or special limitation, and such property, upon dissolution of this corporation, shall be transferred in accordance with the trust, condition, or limitation imposed with respect to it.





**CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS,  
AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS  
of the  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
IN AMERICA®**



# CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA®

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## CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

The provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions that pertain to the same matter have been placed together. This arrangement requires that the three types of material be identified by means other than physical separation.

The three types of provisions are identified by the following devices:

- a. All constitutional provisions are printed in **bold** face type.
- b. All bylaw provisions are printed in light face type.
- c. All continuing resolutions are printed in *italic* type.
- d. A numerical codification indicates general subject, constitutional provisions, bylaw provisions, and continuing resolutions.

Major sections are designated as chapters. The chapters are numbered 1 through 22. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus provisions in "Chapter 14. Church Council" are preceded by "14."

General subjects normally are titled and designated by a number ending in zero. Thus, a subdivision of Chapter 16 that contains provisions regarding the program units is codified and titled "16.10. Program Units." When subjects that are bylaw provisions only are titled, the same principles would apply within the third number sequence, *e.g.*, 16.12.10. Program Committees.

Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus, one constitutional provision related to the presiding bishop of this church is 13.21.

Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number; the related constitutional provision number; and a two-digit bylaw number. Thus, one bylaw provision related to the secretary of this church is codified as 13.41.01.

Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered 16. to designate the chapter; 16.11. to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A07. in the codification 16.11.A07. to indicate by the "A" that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and by the "07" that it was adopted in 2007.

When many related provisions are parts of a unit that are considered inseparable, they normally are lettered "a," "b," "c," etc. When related provisions are part of a unit but considered separable, such as a list of duties, they are normally numbered in sequence. If the related provisions cannot be clearly judged to be separable or inseparable, preference will be given to a number sequence.

If chapter numbers are considered the major sequence number, constitution numbers as a fraction of the chapter number, and bylaw numbers as a fraction of the constitution number, then the codification can be said to provide a progressive sequence. Thus, 8.31. will precede 8.33.01., and 9.21.01. will precede 9.22.

Provisions in the *Constitution for Synods* are prefaced with "S," and those in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* with "C."

In these governing documents, with the exception of the "Restated Articles of Incorporation," "Church" with a capital letter is used in references to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. In references to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the words "church" and "this church" in lower case letters are employed.

## PREAMBLE

Convinced that the Holy Spirit is leading us toward unity in the household of God, we of The American Lutheran Church, The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and the Lutheran Church in America give thanks to God for the faith we share together in Christ and, by adopting this constitution, form a new church, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### Chapter 1.

## NAME, INCORPORATION, SEAL, AND LOCATION

- 1.01. The name of this church shall be Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- 1.01.01.** The name, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as used herein, refers, in general references, to this whole church, including its three primary expressions—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references are made herein.
- 1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as “this church.”**
- 1.11. This church shall be incorporated.**
- 1.21.01.** The seal of this church is a cross with three united flames emanating from the base of the cross and three entwined circles beside the cross. The year of the constituting convention of this church is included at the base of the cross. The name of this church forms the circular outer edge of the seal.



- 1.31.01.** The principal office of this church shall be located in Chicago, Illinois.
- 1.31.02.** This church may maintain offices in such other locations as the Churchwide Assembly or the Church Council shall determine.

## **Chapter 2.**

### **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

- 2.01. This church confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**
- 2.02. This church confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.**
- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.**
  - b. The proclamation of God’s message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.**
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God’s Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God’s revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God’s Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.**
- 2.03. This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.**
- 2.04. This church accepts the Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this church.**
- 2.05. This church accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.**
- 2.06. This church accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.**
- 2.07. This church confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God’s mission in the world.**

## **Chapter 3.**

### **NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

- 3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this church are to be carried out under his rule and authority.**
- 3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.**

## Chapter 4.

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- 4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- 4.02. To participate in God's mission, this church shall:
- a. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - b. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
  - c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs.
  - d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
  - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
  - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- 4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this church shall:
- a. Receive, establish, and support those congregations, ministries, organizations, institutions, and agencies necessary to carry out God's mission through this church.
  - b. Encourage and equip all members to worship, learn, serve, and witness; to fulfill their calling to serve God in the world; and to be stewards of the earth, their lives, and the Gospel.
  - c. Call forth, equip, certify, set apart, and oversee an ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament and such other forms of ministry that will enable this church to fulfill its mission.
  - d. Seek unity in faith and life with all Lutherans within its boundaries and be ready to enter union negotiations whenever such unity is manifest.

- e. Foster Christian unity by participating in ecumenical activities, contributing its witness and work and cooperating with other churches which confess God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- f. Develop relationships with communities of other faiths for dialogue and common action.
- g. Lift its voice in concord and work in concert with forces for good, to serve humanity, cooperating with church and other groups participating in activities that promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged.
- h. Produce and publish worship materials for corporate, family, and personal use and resources for education, witness, service, and stewardship.
- i. Establish and maintain theological seminaries, schools, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions to equip people for leadership and service in church and society.
- j. Assure faithfulness to this church's confessional position and purpose and provide for resolution of disputes.
- k. Publish a periodical and make use of the arts and public communication media to proclaim the Gospel and to inform, interpret, and edify.
- l. Study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world.
- m. Establish, support, and recognize institutions and agencies that minister to people in spiritual and temporal needs.
- n. Work with civil authorities in areas of mutual endeavor, maintaining institutional separation of church and state in a relation of functional interaction.
- o. Provide structures and decision-making processes for this church that foster mutuality and interdependence and that involve people in making decisions that affect them.
- p. Support the mission of this church by arranging for and encouraging financial contributions for its work, management of its resources, and processes of planning and evaluation.
- q. Provide fair personnel practices and adequate compensation, benefits, and pensions for those employed by this church.



## Chapter 5.

### PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION

- 5.01.** The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be one church. This church recognizes that all power and authority in the Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head. Therefore, all actions of this church by congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization shall be carried out under his rule and authority in accordance with the following principles:
- a. The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization shall act in accordance with the Confession of Faith set forth in Chapter 2 of this constitution and with the Statement of Purpose set forth in Chapter 4.
  - b. This church, in faithfulness to the Gospel, is committed to be an inclusive church in the midst of division in society. Therefore, in their organization and outreach, the congregations, synods, and churchwide units of this church shall seek to exhibit the inclusive unity that is God's will for the Church.
  - c. The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent partners sharing responsibly in God's mission. In an interdependent relationship primary responsibility for particular functions will vary between the partners. Whenever possible, the entity most directly affected by a decision shall be the principal party responsible for decision and implementation, with the other entities facilitating and assisting. Each congregation, synod, and separately incorporated unit of the churchwide organization, as well as the churchwide organization itself, is a separate legal entity and is responsible for exercising its powers and authorities.
  - d. Each congregation and synod in its governing documents shall include the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose and such structural components as are required in this constitution. Beyond these common elements, congregations and synods shall be free to organize in such manner as each deems appropriate for its jurisdiction.
  - e. The Church Council shall establish an ongoing process to review the function of the structural organization of this church and to develop recommendations for changes.
  - f. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the churchwide organization, through the Church Council, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; that as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of these assemblies,

councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50 percent shall be male, and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both female and male. At least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. Processes shall be developed that will assure that in selecting staff there will be a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and persons on the roster of ordained ministers. This balance is to be evident in terms of both executive staff and support staff consistent with the inclusive policy of this church.

- g. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, synods, through synodical councils, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of their assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of their assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50 percent shall be male, and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both female and male. Each synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of the membership of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.
- h. Leaders in this church should demonstrate that they are servants by their words, life-style, and manner of leadership. Leaders in this church will recognize their accountability to the Triune God, to the whole Church, to each other, and to the organization of this church in which they have been asked to serve.
- i. As a steward of the resources that God has provided, this church shall organize itself to make the most effective use of its resources to accomplish its mission.
- j. Each assembly, council, committee, board, task force, or other body of the churchwide organization or any churchwide units shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly, council, committee, board, task force, or other body may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly, council, committee, board, task force, or other body.

- 5.01.A87.** *It shall be a goal of this church that within 10 years of its establishment its membership shall include at least 10 percent people of color and/or primary language other than English.*
- 5.01.B87.** *With regard to the minimum goal that 10 percent of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English, it is understood that initially there may be exceptions to the attainment of this goal based on the makeup of the membership within a particular synod. By the time of its second assembly, each synod shall establish a plan to attain this goal within 10 years.*
- 5.01.C00.** *The term, “persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English,” shall be understood to mean African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people. This definition, however, shall not be understood as limiting this church’s commitment to inclusive participation in its life and work.*

**Chapter 6.**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

- 6.01.** The members of this church shall be the baptized members of its congregations.
- 6.02.** The voting members of this church shall be those persons elected to serve as members of the Churchwide Assembly. Membership in a congregation does not, in itself, confer voting rights in this corporation.
- 6.02.A09.** *It is the goal of this church that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, and churchwide boards and committees be youth and young adults. The Church Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.*

## **Chapter 7. MINISTRY**

### **7.10. MINISTRY OF THE BAPTIZED PEOPLE OF GOD**

**7.11. This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church. It is within this context of ministry that this church calls some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church.**

### **7.20. ORDAINED MINISTRY**

**7.21. Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons.**

**7.22. An ordained minister of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to preach, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. An ordained minister shall comply with the constitution of this church.**

**7.23. The standards for acceptance and continuance of pastors in the ordained ministry of this church shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

**7.24. The secretary of this church shall maintain a roster containing the names of ordained ministers who qualify on the basis of constitutional provisions 7.22., 7.23., 7.30., and 7.31., and related bylaws.**

### **7.30. STANDARDS FOR ORDAINED MINISTERS**

**7.31. In accordance with the description of an ordained minister stated in 7.22., pastors as ordained ministers shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures.**

#### **7.31.10. Basic Standards**

**7.31.11. Persons admitted to and continued in the ordained ministry of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church in its governing documents and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:**

- a. commitment to Christ;
- b. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;

- c. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- d. academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- e. commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
- f. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- g. membership in a congregation of this church.

**7.31.12.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

- a. Every ordained minister shall:
  - 1) preach the Word;
  - 2) administer the sacraments;
  - 3) conduct public worship;
  - 4) provide pastoral care;
  - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
  - 6) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
  - 7) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
  - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
  - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation;
  - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications;
  - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - 5) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
  - 6) with the council, administer discipline.

**7.31.13. Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided below, a candidate for ordination as a pastor shall have:

- a. membership in a congregation of this church and registration, by its pastor and council, of the candidate with the candidacy committee;
- b. been endorsed by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee for at least a year before being approved for ordination;

- c. satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school in North America, including practical preparation, as defined by the appropriate church-wide unit, such as internship and supervised clinical work;
- d. completed at least one year of residency in a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, except when waived by the appropriate committee in consultation with the faculty of a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;
- e. been recommended for approval by the faculty of a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;
- f. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;
- g. been recommended to a congregation or other entity by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned for first call in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council; and
- h. received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

**7.31.14. Admission under Other Circumstances.** Candidates for ordination as pastors or for reception who by reason of (a) age and prior experience, (b) ordination in another Lutheran church body, or (c) ordination in another Christian church body, whether in North America or abroad, shall be approved by the candidacy committee for ordination or reception according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In preparing such criteria, policies, and procedures, the appropriate churchwide unit shall consult with the seminaries of this church and, as appropriate, with other churchwide units.

**7.31.15. Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement to the ordained ministry as a pastor, whether having served previously in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, shall be registered by the pastor and council of the congregation of which such a person is a member with the candidacy committee of the synod in which the person was last rostered or, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved, after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church, with the candidacy committee of the synod of current residence. The person then shall be interviewed, examined, and approved by the candidacy committee under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with sub-

sequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call to serve as a pastor in this church.

**7.31.16. On Leave from Call.** An ordained minister of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that ministry without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which the ordained minister is a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

- a. **Normative Pattern:** By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, an ordained minister who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.
- b. **Study Leave:** By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, an ordained minister engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the ordained ministry, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of this church for a maximum of six years.
- c. **Family Leave:** An ordained minister who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, such an ordained minister who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the ordained minister or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of this church—under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years beginning at the completion of an active call.
- d. Exception to these limits for the purpose of serving the needs of this church may be granted in accordance with established policy of this church by the Synod Council in the synod of current roster after having received approval by the Conference of Bishops.

**7.31.17. Ordination in Unusual Circumstances.** For pastoral reasons in unusual circumstances, a synodical bishop may provide for the ordination by another pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of an approved candidate who has received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry. Prior to authorization of such an ordination, the bishop of the synod of the



candidate's first call shall consult with the presiding bishop as this church's chief ecumenical officer and shall seek the advice of the Synod Council. The pastoral decision of the synodical bishop shall be in accordance with policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

**7.31.20. Invitation to Service**

**7.31.21.** In accord with bylaw 8.72.11. and following, an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may serve contractually in a ministry setting of this church under a "Letter of Invitation to Service" upon the authorization of the bishop of the synod in which such service occurs.

**7.40. CALLS FOR ORDAINED MINISTERS**

**7.41. Letters of Call. Letters of call to ordained ministers of this church or properly approved candidates for this church's roster of ordained ministers shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council.**

**7.41.10. General Categories**

**7.41.11. Service under Call.** An ordained minister of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, a synodical council or assembly, the Church Council, or the Churchwide Assembly.

- a. Calls may be extended for stated periods of time and for shared-time ministry by the appropriate calling body under criteria recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. Ordained ministers serving as interim pastors appointed by the synodical bishop may serve under a letter of call, according to policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. A call to interim ministry shall be a term call extended by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.

**7.41.12. Initial Call to Congregational Service.** Because the responsibilities of the office of the ordained ministry are most clearly focused in the congregational pastorate, experience in which is deemed by this church to be invaluable for all other ordained service, initial service of at least three years shall be in the parish ministry in this church. Exceptions may be granted under criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

**7.41.13. Calls to Non-Congregational Service.** Calls to serve in institutions, agencies, and other entities inside and outside this church may be extended where there is an identifiable relationship of the work to the

purpose of the ordained ministry. Such calls involve, for example, the care of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, pastoral care, and activities closely associated with those tasks including oversight in the church and in inter-Lutheran and inter-church agencies and institutions. Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ordained ministers for their convenience or status. Synodical councils and the Church Council may seek the advice of the Conference of Bishops in specific situations.

- 7.41.14. Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When it is deemed necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council—according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to an ordained minister for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ordained ministers for their convenience, status, or personal preference. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.
- 7.41.15. Calls to Serve in Unusual Circumstances.** When it is deemed to be in the interests of this church in the care of the Gospel, ordained ministers may be called for a stated period of time, not to exceed three years, to minister on behalf of this church while employed in an occupation outside the traditional range of the ordained ministry. Such calls may be extended by a Synod Council or the Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops according to criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Such calls shall be reviewed annually.
- 7.41.16. Calls in Predecessor Church Bodies.** Accountability for specific calls to service extended in predecessor church bodies shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.
- 7.41.17. Retirement.** Ordained ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on the roster of ordained ministers of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.
- a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the roster of ordained ministers shall be developed by the appropriate

churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

- b. If an ordained minister who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ordained minister to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.41.18. Disability.** Ordained ministers may be designated as disabled and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the roster of ordained ministers shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If an ordained minister who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ordained minister to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.41.19. Retention of Roster Records.** When an ordained minister resigns or is removed from that roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

**7.42. Each pastor on the roster of ordained ministers of this church shall be related to that synod:**

- a. to which the congregation issuing the call to the ordained minister is related;
- b. which issues a letter of call to the ordained minister;
- c. on whose roster the ordained minister was listed at the time of the issuance of a letter of call from the Church Council;
- d. on whose roster the ordained minister, if a seminary teacher or administrator, was assigned by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of each affected synod, to promote proportionate representation of faculty and administration in each synod of its region;

- e. on whose roster the ordained minister was listed at the time of the issuance of a call to federal chaplaincy or on the roster of the synod of current address, if approved by the synodical bishop and received by the Synod Council;
- f. in which the ordained minister, upon receiving a call from this church, serves as a deployed staff person or on the roster of one of the synods to which the ordained minister is deployed;
- g. on whose roster the ordained minister was listed when placed on leave from call;
- h. on whose roster the ordained minister, if designated as disabled, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the ordained minister for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church; or
- i. on whose roster the ordained minister, if granted retired status, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the ordained minister for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.42.01.** If the service of an ordained minister who receives and accepts a letter of call from this church, under 7.42.c., would be enhanced through transfer of roster status from the previous synod of roster to the synod of current address, such a transfer may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.42.02.** In unusual circumstances, the transfer of an ordained minister who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.42.03.** In certain circumstances for the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, the transfer of an ordained minister serving under call in the churchwide organization may be authorized, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved in such a transfer after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.43.** **A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to an ordained minister of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than, the duration of the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for ordained ministry, as**

**contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.**

**7.43.01.** When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of ordained ministers.

**7.44.** Each synod shall maintain a roster containing the names of those ordained ministers who are related to it on the basis of 7.42. of this constitution.

**7.44.A05. Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers**

*a. Principles for Sources of Calls*

- 1) *A "call" is an action by expressions of this church, as specified in the "Table of Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers," through which a person is asked to serve in a specified ministry. Such an action is attested in a "letter of call."*
- 2) *Interdependence within the body of this church suggests that any action of one of its entities affects other entities. Therefore, interdependence is expressed in all calls extended within this church.*
- 3) *A call expresses a relationship between this church and the person called involving mutual service, support, accountability, supervision, and discipline.*
- 4) *A letter of call is issued by that expression of this church authorized to do so which is most directly involved in accountability for the specified ministry.*
- 5) *Decisions on calls for ministries in unusual circumstances not otherwise provided for but deemed to be in the interests of this church's care of the Gospel are referred to the Conference of Bishops for recommendation to the appropriate calling body.*

*b. Table of Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers*

Setting	Calling Body
1.0 Congregational ministry	
1.1 Single congregation	Congregation meeting
1.11 Pastor	
1.12 Senior Pastor	
1.13 Associate/assistant pastor	
1.14 Co-pastor	
1.15 Shared-time pastor	

1.2	<i>Multiple-congregation parish</i>	<i>Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal</i>
	1.21 <i>Pastor</i>	
	1.22 <i>Other pastoral arrangements</i>	
1.3	<i>Coalition and cluster ministry</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
1.4	<i>Congregations beyond ELCA</i>	
	1.41 <i>Independent Lutheran congregation</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
	1.42 <i>Overseas independent Lutheran congregation</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
	1.43 <i>Other</i>	<i>Synod Council or Church Council</i>
1.5	<i>Interim pastor</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
1.6	<i>Pastor in a congregation under development</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
2.0	<i>Synodical ministry</i>	
	2.1 <i>Bishop</i>	<i>Synod Assembly</i>
	2.2 <i>Assistant to bishop</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
	2.3 <i>Shared staff by two or more synods</i>	<i>One of the participating synods</i>
	2.4 <i>Synod staff partially supported by grants from churchwide units</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
3.0	<i>Regional ministry</i>	
	3.1 <i>Staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
	3.2 <i>Shared synodical-churchwide staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
4.0	<i>Churchwide ministry</i>	
	4.1 <i>Presiding bishop and secretary</i>	<i>Churchwide Assembly</i>
	4.2 <i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
	4.3 <i>Presiding bishop's staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
	4.4 <i>Office staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
	4.5 <i>Unit executive director</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
	4.6 <i>Section executive</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
	4.7 <i>Other churchwide unit staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>

- 5.0 *Chaplaincy and institutional ministry*
  - 5.1 *Institution/agency related Synod Council or unrelated to a synod*
  - 5.2 *Institution/agency related Synod Council of one of more than one synod*      *the synods*
  - 5.3 *ELCA-related institution/agency*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 5.4 *Federal agency/institution*      *Church Council*
  - 5.5 *Military*      *Church Council*
- 6.0 *Campus ministry*
  - 6.1 *Staff*      *Synod Council*
- 7.0 *Church camp ministry*
  - 7.1 *Staff*      *Synod Council*
- 8.0 *Ecumenical ministry*
  - 8.1 *Related to a synod*      *Synod Council*
  - 8.2 *Related to more than one synod*      *Synod Council of one of the synods*
  - 8.3 *National/international organization*      *Church Council*
- 9.0 *Inter-Lutheran ministry*
  - 9.1 *Related to a synod*      *Synod Council*
  - 9.2 *Related to more than one synod*      *Synod Council of one of the synods*
  - 9.3 *National/International*      *Church Council*
- 10.0 *Educational ministry*
  - 10.1 *ELCA-related seminary chaplain/faculty/administrator*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 10.2 *Chaplain/faculty/administrator of seminary unrelated to ELCA*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 10.3 *ELCA-related college chaplain/faculty/administrator*      *Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
  - 10.4 *Chaplain/faculty/administrator of a college unrelated to ELCA*      *Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*

10.5	<i>ELCA-related school chaplain/faculty/administrator</i>	<i>Congregation of which the school is a part or, if related to several congregations, Synod Council of the synod in which the school is located</i>
10.6	<i>Chaplain/faculty of a school unrelated to ELCA</i>	<i>Synod Council of the synod in which school is located</i>
10.7	<i>Director/staff of a continuing education center related to churchwide unit</i>	<i>Synod Council in which the main office of center is located upon the request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
11.0 <i>Missionary ministry</i>		
11.1	<i>Outside United States</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
11.2	<i>Within United States</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
12.0 <i>Other</i>		
12.1	<i>Non-stipendiary service under call</i>	<i>Synod Council upon approval by the Conference of Bishops</i>
12.2	<i>Unusual ministries (as in conjunction with occupations and in approved situations not otherwise specified)</i>	<i>Synod Council or Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops</i>

**7.45. In keeping with the historic discipline and practice of the Lutheran church and to be true to a sacred trust inherent in the nature of the pastoral office, no ordained minister of this church shall divulge any confidential disclosure received in the course of the care of souls or otherwise in a professional capacity, nor testify concerning conduct observed by the ordained minister while working in a pastoral capacity, except with the express permission of the person who has given confidential information to the ordained minister or who was observed by the ordained minister, or if the person intends great harm to self or others.**

**7.46. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between an ordained minister and a congregation shall be as follows:**

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:**



- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
  - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
  - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
  - 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate—or when such allegations have been brought to the synod’s attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall investigate—such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the synodical bishop with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the synodical bishop together with the committee described in 7.46.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the synodical bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the

voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

- e. **If, in the course of proceedings described in 7.46.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- f. **If, following the appointment of the committee described in 7.46.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the synodical bishop may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).**

**7.47. Ordained ministers shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Chapter 20 of this constitution and bylaws.**

**7.47.01.** No person who belongs to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be ordained or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so ordained or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins such an organization. Violation of this rule shall make such minister subject to discipline.

**7.50. OFFICIAL ROSTERS OF LAYPERSONS**

**7.51. This church may establish rosters of laypersons on which the names may be listed of those who qualify for such according to the bylaws and continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**7.51.01.** The standards of acceptance and continuance on the lay rosters of this church as defined herein shall be included in the bylaws.

**7.51.02.** Under constitutional provision 7.51., those persons previously rostered as commissioned church staff (The American Lutheran Church), deaconesses (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), deaconesses (The American Lutheran Church), deacons (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), lay professional leaders (the Lutheran Church in America), and commissioned teachers (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches) shall be retained as associates in ministry of this church (except for removals in accord with the governing documents, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church) in the recognized category of ministry of their previous church body for as long as they are in good standing according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church. Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church. Such persons may resign from the roster or may elect to be rostered in another ELCA category by meeting the appropriate criteria established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by relinquishing their previous roster category.

**7.51.03. Associates in Ministry.** This church shall maintain a lay roster of associates in ministry of those commissioned—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all of God’s people. Associates in ministry are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world as they serve in congregations and other ministry settings. The roster of associates in ministry, in addition to those listed in bylaw 7.51.02., shall be composed of:

- a. those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and
- b. those who are approved, subsequent to September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry in this church according to policies and procedures developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- c. Upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, a newly approved candidate shall be commissioned, according to the proper service orders of this church, as an associate in ministry.

Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church. Such persons may resign from the roster or may elect to be rostered in another ELCA category by meeting the appropriate criteria established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by relinquishing their previous roster category.

**7.51.04. Deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.** This church shall maintain a lay roster of the deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of those consecrated—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all of God’s people. Deaconesses are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. They are to be theologically trained to serve in congregations and other ministry settings.

- a. A newly approved candidate for this roster shall be consecrated, according to the proper service orders of this church, as a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- b. As used herein, references to deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America mean members of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America listed on this church’s official rosters of laypersons as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. Unless otherwise specified, all constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, except for the service order of consecration as a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall apply to those on the lay roster of this church as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.51.05. Diaconal Ministers.** This church shall establish and maintain a lay roster of diaconal ministers of those consecrated—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for service on behalf of this church in positions of Word and service that exemplify the servant life and that seek to equip and motivate others to live it. Diaconal ministers are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. Such diaconal ministers shall seek in a great variety of ways to empower, equip, and support all the baptized people of God in the ministry of Jesus Christ and the mission of God in the world.

- a. Upon approval as a candidate for the lay roster of diaconal ministers, and upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, the candidate shall be consecrated, according to the service orders of this church, as a lay diaconal minister.

- b. All constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall apply to those on the lay roster of diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52. The standards of acceptance and continuance as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall be included in the bylaws.**

**7.52.10. Standards for the Official Rosters of Laypersons**

**7.52.11.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers shall be governed by the following:

**a. Basic Standards.** Persons approved and continued as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following:

- 1) commitment to Christ;
- 2) acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;
- 3) willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- 4) academic and practical qualifications for the position, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- 5) commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
- 6) receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- 7) membership in a congregation of this church.

**b. Preparation and Approval of an Associate in Ministry.** A candidate for approval and commissioning as an associate in ministry of this church shall have:

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the committee;
- 3) completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which approved according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit;
- 4) been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the seminaries and colleges of this church that offer programs designed to prepare persons for rostered service as associates in ministry;

- 5) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call; and
- 6) been commissioned, according to the rite of this church, as an associate in ministry.

**c. Preparation and Approval of a Deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.** A candidate for approval and consecration as a deaconess of this church shall have:

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for call and consecration;
- 3) completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which approved according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit;
- 4) been examined and approved by the synodical candidacy committee according to procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Deaconess Community of the ELCA and the seminaries and colleges of this church that offer programs designed to prepare persons for rostered service as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- 5) completed the required formation component, as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, in the preparation program for service as a deaconess of this church;
- 6) been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
- 7) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call; and
- 8) been consecrated, according to the rite of this church, as a deaconess.

**d. Preparation and Approval of a Diaconal Minister.** A candidate for approval and consecration as a diaconal minister of this church shall have:

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least

- a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for consecration;
- 3) demonstrated competence in at least one area of specialization or expertise according to guidelines established by the appropriate churchwide unit;
  - 4) completed a first theological degree from an accredited theological school in North America;
  - 5) completed approved work in Lutheran studies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;
  - 6) completed the required formation component in the preparation program for Lutheran diaconal ministry as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;
  - 7) completed an approved internship or practical preparation as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;
  - 8) been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit for such candidacy;
  - 9) been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
  - 10) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call; and
  - 11) been consecrated, according to the rite of this church, as a diaconal minister.

**7.52.12. Approval under Other Circumstances.** A candidate may, for reasons of age or prior experience, be granted approval under criteria and procedures which permit certain equivalencies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit.

**7.52.13. Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement as an associate in ministry, whether having previously served in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be endorsed by the pastor and council of the congregation of this church of which such a person is a member, and interviewed, examined, and approved for reinstatement by the synodical candidacy committee under criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call in this church.

- a. Any person removed from a lay roster that existed on December 31, 1987, as cited herein, who seeks to return to active lay roster status must apply for acceptance to a roster of this church under the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures that apply to the official rosters of laypersons, as identified in 7.51.03.b. This same requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.
- b. A person on the roster of a previous church body or a person on the roster of associates in ministry of this church, who was so certified during the period between January 1, 1988, and September 1, 1993, shall relinquish such a roster category upon being received and accepted on another roster of this church.

**7.52.14. Maintenance of Lay Rosters.** Each synod shall maintain a lay roster or rosters containing the names of those related to the synod as members of its congregations who have been approved as associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers—according to the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church—for inclusion on such a roster or rosters.

- a. To promote proportionate representation of the rostered faculty and administration in each synod related directly to a seminary of this church, an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, if a seminary teacher or administrator, shall be assigned to the roster of a synod by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of the affected synod.
- b. For the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, serving under call in the churchwide organization, may be assigned to a synod, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.52.15.** The secretary of this church shall maintain the lay rosters of associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers on which shall be listed the names of those who qualify according to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.

**7.52.20. Service as Rostered Laypersons**

**7.52.21. Service under Call.** An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, synod, or the churchwide organization.

- a. A call may be extended either for indefinite or stated periods of time by the appropriate calling body for service in a congregation, synod, or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.52.A05.



- b. Regular, valid calls in this church shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- c. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.

**7.52.22. On Leave from Call.** An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that call without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

- a. Normative Pattern: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.
- b. Study Leave: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister engaged in graduate study appropriate for service in this church may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church for a maximum of six years.
- c. Family Leave: An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, such a rostered layperson who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the rostered layperson or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church—under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the

Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

- d. Exception to these limits for the purpose of serving the needs of this church may be granted in accordance with established policy of this church by the Synod Council in the synod of current roster after having received approval by the Conference of Bishops.

**7.52.23. Issuance and Termination of the Call of an Associate in Ministry, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister.**

- a. A letter of call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, the synodical bishop, following appropriate consultation, will recommend a course of action to the pastor, lay rostered person, and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If any party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than the duration of, the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.
- c. When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers.

- d. The call of a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the individual, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52.24. Retirement.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52.25. Disability.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may be designated as disabled, and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of

full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52.26. Retention of Roster Records.** When an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister resigns or is removed from the roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

**7.52.27. Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council—according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

**7.52.A05. Sources of Calls for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers**

*a. The principles governing sources of calls for ordained ministers shall, as appropriate, also govern sources of letters of call for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

*b. Table of Sources of Call for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers*

Setting	Calling Body
<i>1.0 Congregational ministry</i>	
<i>1.1 Single congregation</i>	<i>Congregation meeting</i>
<i>1.2 Multiple-congregation parish</i>	<i>Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal</i>
<i>1.3 Coalition and clusters</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>1.4 Other congregations</i>	
<i>1.41 Independent Lutheran</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>1.42 Other</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>2.0 Synodical ministry</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>3.0 Regional ministry</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
<i>4.0 Churchwide ministry</i>	
<i>4.1 Officer's staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
<i>4.2 Unit executive director</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
<i>4.3 Section executive</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
<i>4.4 Other churchwide unit staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>

- 5.0 *Social ministry institutions*
  - 5.1 *Institution/agency related Synod Council or unrelated to a synod*
  - 5.2 *Institution/agency related Synod Council of one of the to more than one synod*      *synods*
  - 5.3 *ELCA-related institution/ agency*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 5.4 *Other*      *Church Council*
- 6.0 *Campus ministry*
  - 6.1 *Staff*      *Synod Council*
- 7.0 *Church camp ministry*
  - 7.1 *Staff*      *Synod Council*
- 8.0 *Ecumenical ministry*
  - 8.1 *Related to a synod*      *Synod Council*
  - 8.2 *Related to more than one synod*      *Synod Council of one of the synods*
  - 8.3 *National/international organization*      *Church Council*
- 9.0 *Inter-Lutheran ministry*
  - 9.1 *Related to a synod*      *Synod Council*
  - 9.2 *Related to more than one synod*      *Synod Council of one of the synods*
  - 9.3 *National/international organization*      *Church Council*
- 10.0 *Educational ministry*
  - 10.1 *ELCA-related seminary*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 10.2 *Seminary unrelated to ELCA*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 10.3 *ELCA-related college*      *Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
  - 10.4 *College unrelated to ELCA*      *Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
  - 10.5 *ELCA-related school*      *Congregation of which the school is a part or, if related to several congregations, Synod Council of the synod in which the school is located*
  - 10.6 *School unrelated to ELCA*      *Synod Council of the synod in which school is located*
  - 10.7 *Director/staff of a continuing education center related to the appropriate churchwide*      *Synod Council of the synod in which the main office of center is located upon the request of appropriate churchwide unit*

<i>11.0 Missionary ministry</i>	
<i>11.1 Outside United States</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
<i>11.2 Within United States</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
<i>12.0 Other</i>	
<i>12.1 Non-stipendiary service under call</i>	<i>Synod Council upon approval by the Conference of Bishops</i>
<i>12.2 Unusual ministries (as in conjunction with occupations and in approved situations not otherwise specified)</i>	<i>Synod Council or Church Council upon recommendation by Conference of Bishops</i>

**7.53. Persons on the lay rosters of this church as defined herein shall be subject to discipline as set forth in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.***

**7.60. LICENSURE AND SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED MINISTRY**

**7.61.01.** When need exists to render Word and Sacrament ministry for a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible to provide appropriate ordained pastoral leadership, the synodical bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer this ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by a pastor appointed by the synodical bishop; such service shall be rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod’s pastor. Such an individual will be trained and licensed to fulfill this ministry for a specified period of time and in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

**7.61.02.** When needed to provide for diaconal ministry as part of a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible for such ministry to be provided by appropriately rostered lay ministry, the synodical bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a non-rostered person who is a member of a congregation of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer such non-sacramental ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by an ordained minister appointed by the synodical bishop and shall be trained and authorized to fulfill a particular ministry for a specific period of time in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

## **Chapter 8.**

### **RELATIONSHIPS**

- 8.10. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONGREGATIONS, SYNODS, AND THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION**
- 8.11. This church shall seek to function as people of God through congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, all of which shall be interdependent. Each part, while fully the church, recognizes that it is not the whole church and therefore lives in a partnership relationship with the others.**
- 8.12. The congregation shall include in its mission a life of worship and nurture for its members, and outreach in witness and service to its community.**
- 8.13. The synod shall provide for pastoral care of the congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers within its boundaries. It shall develop resources for the life and mission of its people and shall enlarge the ministries and extend the outreach into society on behalf of and in connection with the congregations and the churchwide organization.**
- 8.14. The churchwide organization shall implement the extended mission of the Church, developing churchwide policies in consultation with the synods and congregations, entering into relationship with governmental, ecumenical, and societal agencies in accordance with accepted resolutions and/or in response to specific agreed-upon areas of responsibility.**
- 8.15. Since congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization are partners that share in God’s mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program of this church.**
- 8.16. In faithful participation in the mission of God in and through this church, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as interdependent expressions of this church—shall be guided by the biblical and confessional commitments of this church. Each shall recognize that mission efforts must be shaped by both local needs and global awareness, by both individual witness and corporate endeavor, and by both distinctly Lutheran emphases and growing ecumenical cooperation.**
- 8.17. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three primary expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission, and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in Chapter 4, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.**



- 8.20. RELATIONSHIP THROUGH OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS**
- 8.21. Conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions shall serve to assist the congregations and synods in exercising their mutual responsibilities.**
- 8.30. RELATIONSHIP WITH INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES**
- 8.31. Seminaries. This church shall sponsor, support, and provide for oversight of seminaries for the preparation of persons for the ordained and other ministries and for continuing study on the part of ordained ministers and laypersons.**
- 8.31.01.** Each seminary shall be a seminary of this church, shall be incorporated, and shall be governed by its board of directors consistent with policies established by the Church Council. Amendments to the governing documents of each seminary and each seminary cluster shall be submitted, upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization, to the Church Council for approval.
- 8.31.02.** The board of directors of each seminary shall be nominated and elected to terms as specified in the governing documents of the respective seminaries, and shall consist of 20-30 members, as follows:
- a. At least one-fifth nominated, in consultation with the seminaries, by the appropriate churchwide unit and elected by the Church Council;
  - b. Two members elected by the bishops of the supporting synods from among their number; and
  - c. The remaining members elected by the supporting synods, in consultation with the seminaries, with the number to be elected by each synod set forth in the governing documents of the seminary.
- Elections shall be so arranged that the terms of all directors of any given seminary elected in any year shall commence simultaneously.
- 8.31.03.** In accordance with the governing documents of each seminary, the board of directors shall elect the president of the seminary in consultation with the presiding bishop of this church and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization as designated by the Church Council, elect and retain faculty and administrative officers, and approve educational policies and programs for persons preparing for public ministry. The board shall exercise all other normal governance functions, including the granting of degrees, holding title to and managing all seminary property and assets, receiving gifts and bequests, establishing salaries for faculty and administrative officers, providing for the financial resources and fiscal contracts required to operate the seminary, and shall have authority to recruit students throughout this church.
- 8.31.04.** The seminaries shall receive churchwide and synodical financial support. The amount of such support shall be determined through a consultation process involving seminaries, synods, and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization as designated by the Church Council.

- 8.31.05.** To implement financial support by this church, synods shall be assigned to specific seminaries in such manner as to attain equitable distribution of synods. Normally, all synods in a given region will be assigned to one seminary. Churchwide funds shall be distributed according to a formula developed by the appropriate churchwide unit and approved by the Church Council.
- 8.31.06.** Seminaries shall provide for their remaining financial requirements through tuition, fees, endowment income, and fund-raising programs. Fund-raising in the congregations of supporting synods, however, shall be conducted only upon approval of the synods.
- 8.31.07.** Aid to students preparing for the ministries of this church shall be administered by the seminaries under guidelines developed by the appropriate churchwide units in consultation with the presidents of the seminaries and adopted by the Church Council.
- 8.32.** **Colleges and Universities. This church shall express its responsibility for higher education through its colleges and universities, the appropriate churchwide unit as determined by the Church Council, and its synods. While variation is possible in college or university relationships across this church, this church recognizes the desirability of some degree of uniformity of relationship for colleges and universities within the same region.**
- 8.32.01.** The relationship of this church to its colleges and universities shall be guided by policies fostering educational institutions dedicated to the Lutheran tradition wherein such institutions are an essential part of God's mission in the world; faithful to the will of God as institutions providing quality instruction in religion and a lively ministry of worship, outreach, and service; diligent in their preparation of leaders committed to truth, excellence, and ethical values; and pledged to the well-being of students in the development of mind, body, and spirit.
- 8.32.02.** Colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may relate to this church in various ways, including relationship with the Churchwide Assembly, a synodical assembly, or a corporation whose voting members are, or have been elected by, synodical assemblies, other organizational units (conferences, clusters, etc.), or congregations. Subject to approval by the appropriate synods, a college or university may be owned by a not-for-profit corporation (1) that has voting members, at least 90 percent of whom shall consist of members of the biennial Churchwide Assembly, and (2) that shall hold the biennial meeting of such a corporation in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly for the purpose of electing or ratifying members of the governing board and approving amendments to the governing documents. At least 60 percent of the members of the governing boards of the corporations that meet in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly shall be members of this church.

- 8.32.03.** Primary responsibility for recruiting members for its board belongs to each college or university of this church. This responsibility is best exercised when appropriate structures of this church are substantially involved. The college or university and the appropriate synods shall determine how many of the college or university board members are to be elected or ratified by the approved form of relationship as provided in 8.32.02.
- 8.32.04.** The responsibility for initiating changes in constitutional documents rests with each college or university of this church. Each college or university will reach agreement with the appropriate structures of this church as identified in 8.32.02. regarding changes in constitutional documents. This church's participation may range from prior consultation to final approval.
- 8.32.05.** Representation of members of this church on college or university boards, limitation of terms for board members, whether or not college or university presidents shall be members of this church, and representation of bishops of synods on college or university boards shall be determined by each institution and the appropriate synods.
- 8.33. Institutions and Agencies. This church shall seek to meet human needs through encouragement of its people to individual and corporate action, and through establishing, developing, recognizing, and supporting institutions and agencies that minister to people in their spiritual and temporal needs.**
- 8.33.01.** Through membership in Lutheran Services in America and the appropriate churchwide unit as designated by the Church Council, this church shall, with affiliated social ministry organizations, develop criteria for their ministries, establish affiliations and alliances within this church and within society, and carry out a comprehensive social ministry witness.
- 8.40. SPECIAL INTEREST CONFERENCES**
- 8.41. This church cherishes the diversity of cultural and linguistic groups as they are brought together in the geographic synods, recognizing, however, that certain groups, for historical reasons, may be able to meet needs and share resources through special interest conferences, which for the present cannot occur in the regular life within the geographic synods.**
- 8.41.01.** Because of both official and informal international contacts with other churches, the Danish Special Interest Conference, Finnish (Suomi) Special Interest Conference, German Lutheran Conference in North America, and Hungarian Special Interest Conference shall relate to this church under the authority of the presiding bishop of this church through an executive or designated unit as determined by the presiding bishop. Official contacts and relationships of the special interest conferences with leaders and representatives of other churches shall be coordinated through the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

- 8.50. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER LUTHERAN ORGANIZATIONS**
- 8.51. This church may establish relationships with Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies whose purposes are compatible with its mission and ministry. Policies and procedures to create and implement these relationships shall be adopted by the Church Council.**
- 8.52. This church shall not, in any manner, be responsible for the debts or liabilities of other Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies, whether independent of or affiliated with this church.**
- 8.60. RELATIONSHIP WITH INTERCHURCH AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS, AND COUNCILS**
- 8.61. The congregations, synods, social ministry institutions and agencies, and churchwide organization may establish or affiliate with inter-church agencies and councils in relationships that will reflect this church's objectives of sharing with other faith communities in study, dialogue, and common action, in accordance with adopted policies governing such associations.**
- 8.61.01.** Policies governing ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and interfaith activities shall be recommended by the presiding bishop of this church to the Churchwide Assembly for its adoption.
- 8.61.02.** Formal membership in interchurch agencies and/or councils shall be by action of the Churchwide Assembly in all relationships involving national or international involvement, by the Synod Assembly in its geographic area, and by congregations in community settings, with each affiliation by any congregation, synod, or churchwide organization to be in accordance with the policies of this church.
- 8.70. OFFICIAL CHURCH-TO-CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS**
- 8.71. This church may establish official church-to-church relationships and agreements. Establishment of such official relationships and agreements shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly.**
- 8.72. Policies and procedures to implement church-to-church relationships of full communion established by action of a Churchwide Assembly may be recommended by the appropriate officer or churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.**
- 8.72.10. Ecumenical Availability of Ordained Ministers**
- 8.72.11.** An ordained minister of this church, serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers—upon endorsement by the synodical bishop and by action of the

Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster—under policy developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

- a. A letter of call may be issued to an ordained minister of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.44.A05.b.).
- b. A letter of call may be issued to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.52.A05.b.).
- c. A letter of call issued by the Church Council or a Synod Council for service in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly shall be governed by churchwide constitutional provision 7.43. and churchwide bylaw 7.43.01.
- d. A letter of call to an ordained minister of this church or to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who serves in a congregation of another church body, under a relationship of full communion, or an institution of such a church body on the territory of the synod, may be issued by the Synod Council. A letter of call to an ordained minister of this church or to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who serves in a national or international agency or institution of another church body, under a relationship of full communion, may be issued by the Church Council.

**8.72.12.** An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be authorized by the synodical bishop to serve in a congregation or employing entity of this church. Such service shall be rendered under a contract between the congregation or employing entity and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation or employing entity. Any such service shall be in accord with churchwide policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**8.72.13.** Whenever an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to serve or is serving in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Church-

wide Assembly, or whenever an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been so declared and established is to serve or is serving in this church, a full sharing of relevant information concerning such ordained minister's experience and fitness for ministry is expected between the synodical bishop (or other appropriate office or entity) of this church and the appropriate person, office, or entity in the other church. Relevant information related to fitness for ministry shall include, but is not limited to, any information concerning disciplinary proceedings or allegations that could result, or could have resulted, in disciplinary proceedings.

**8.72.14.** An ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be granted the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church, in accord with ELCA churchwide bylaw 8.72.12.

**8.72.15.** The availability of ordained ministers from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be understood normally in three categories: availability to serve in an occasional situation; availability to meet an extended need, including service in "yoked parish" settings; and availability for a transfer of roster status.

- a. *Occasional service:* An occasional situation is defined as one in which an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synodical bishop.
- b. *Extended service:* An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time, yet remain an ordained minister of his or her present church body. Such a person would be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to live in a manner consistent with the ministerial policy of this church. Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synodical bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA in a given situation.
- c. *Transfer:* An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists who seeks to serve indefinitely within the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may apply for admission to the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and be approved through the candidacy process for admission to the roster. Such an

ordained minister would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other setting.

- d. Roster status in more than one church body is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As required by ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 7.22. and bylaw 7.31.11., ordained ministers on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must accept and adhere to this church's Confession of Faith, as well as abide by this church's standards and policies for ordained ministers.

**8.72.16.** An ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, while serving in an ecumenical setting, remains subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists is understood by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the church body in which the ordained minister is rostered or holds ministerial membership. Such an ordained minister, while serving in an ELCA congregation or other ministry, is expected to abide by the standards and policies of this church related to ordained ministers.

**8.73.** **This church acknowledges the relationship established through the Lutheran World Federation as a communion of member churches which confess the triune God, agree in the proclamation of the Word of God, and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship. The bylaws on ecumenical availability of ordained ministers under relationships of full communion shall apply to such service within this church of ordained ministers from other member churches of the Lutheran World Federation.**

**8.74.** **This church, in accord with constitutional provision 2.05., acknowledges as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that accept the teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and understands that altar and pulpit fellowship with congregations and other entities of such churches may be locally practiced. Local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship, in accord with churchwide constitutional provision 2.05., is subject to the approval of the Synod Council, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop. Notice of such approval is to be given to the presiding bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**8.75.** **Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and units of the churchwide organization are encouraged to engage in cooperative work, wherever possible, with churches that accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Units engaging in this work shall advise the presiding bishop of such developments.**

## Chapter 9. CONGREGATIONS

### 9.10. DEFINITION

9.11. **A congregation is a community of baptized persons whose existence depends on the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments and whose purpose is to worship God, to nurture its members, and to reach out in witness and service to the world. To this end it assembles regularly for worship and nurture, organizes and carries out ministry to its people and neighborhood, and cooperates with and supports the wider church to strive for the fulfillment of God's mission in the world.**

### 9.20. CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION AND RECEPTION

9.21. **This church shall recognize, receive, and maintain on the roster those congregations which by their practice as well as their governing documents:**

- a. **preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission;**
- b. **accept this church's Confession of Faith;**
- c. **agree to the Statement of Purpose of this church;**
- d. **agree to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of this church in accordance with the call procedures of this church except in special circumstances and with the approval of the synodical bishop;**
- e. **agree to be responsible for their life as a Christian community; and**
- f. **agree to support the life and work of this church.**

9.21.01. Approval of the synodical bishop, as required in 9.21.d., involves the bishop's attesting that a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers of this church has been approved, in conformity with the governing documents and policies of this church, through the synodical candidacy process for first call as a seminary graduate or for call in this church through approval for reception into this church from another Lutheran church body or another Christian church body. Consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with the call procedures and governing documents of this church and the synod is required for the calling of pastoral leadership from among persons on the roster of ordained ministers of this church or persons who are approved as eligible candidates for the roster of ordained ministers of this church.

9.21.02. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of the congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion by action of a



Churchwide Assembly may serve temporarily under contract as pastor of a congregation of this church.

- 9.22. All congregations of this church shall abide by the provisions of 9.21., 9.62., and 7.46. The judgment on whether a congregation meets the criteria listed in 9.21. shall be made by this church through the synod of this church in whose territory the congregation is located.**
- 9.23. In accord with constitutional provision 9.21.d. and bylaw 9.21.01. and without invoking the provisions of Chapter 20, a congregation that maintains as its pastor an ordained minister who has resigned or been removed from this church's roster of ordained ministers or that calls as its pastor one who has not been approved for the roster of ordained ministers may be removed from the roster of congregations of this church by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.**
- 9.24. A recognized and received congregation that is part of this church shall, when legally possible, be incorporated and may:**
- a. own property and be responsible for its care; and**
  - b. call or employ staff.**
- 9.25. A congregation newly formed by this church and any congregation seeking recognition and reception by this church shall:**
- a. Accept the criteria for recognition and reception as a congregation of this church, fulfill the functions of the congregation, and accept the governance provisions as provided in Chapter 9 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.**
  - b. Adopt governing documents that include fully and without alterations the Preamble, Chapter 1, where applicable, and all required provisions of Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* consistent with requirements of this constitution and the *Constitution for Synods* of this church. Bylaws and continuing resolutions, appropriate for inclusion in these chapters and not in conflict with these required provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the constitution of the synod, or the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be adopted as described in Chapters 16 and 18 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.**
  - c. Accept the commitments expected of all congregations of the ELCA as stated in \*C6.01., \*C6.02., and \*C6.03. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.**

**If a congregation is a member of another church body, the leaders of the congregation first should consult with the appropriate authorities of that church body before taking action to leave its current church body. After such consultation, leaders of the congregation should make contact with the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located.**

**Recognition and reception into this church of transferring or independent congregations by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the Synod Council and Synod Assembly. The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the register of congregations.**

**9.30. RESERVATION OF AUTHORITY**

**9.31. Congregations of this church shall have authority in all matters that are not assigned by the constitution and bylaws of this church to synods and the churchwide organization.**

**9.40. FUNCTIONS**

**9.41. The congregation shall:**

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.**
- b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.**
- c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily life and in their congregation.**
- d. Teach the Word of God.**
- e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.**
- f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.**
- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of the synod and the churchwide organization.**
- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization.**
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.**

**9.50. GOVERNANCE**

**9.51. Each congregation shall structure itself in such a way as to involve its members in fulfilling the definition, purpose, and functions of a congregation.**

**9.52. The governing documents of congregations recognized at the establishment of this church shall continue to govern such congregations. When such a congregation wishes to amend any provision of its governing documents, the governing documents of that congregation shall be so amended to conform to 9.25.b. The synod responsible for the review of such amendments may permit, for good cause, a congregation to retain particular unamended provisions in the congre-**

**gation's governing documents that were in force at the establishment of this church.**

**9.52.A93.** *The Church Council, in cooperation with the synods, shall provide an ongoing process for congregations whose governing documents have been accepted into this church under 9.52. to review those documents and compare them with the required elements of the Model Constitution for Congregations listed in 9.25.b., applicable to the extent provided in 9.52. to congregations recognized and received by this church as of January 1, 1988. Congregations are encouraged to resolve significant conflicts between their governing documents and the Model Constitution for Congregations.*

**9.53.** **Each congregation shall have governing documents, no terms of which shall conflict with provision 9.21. Subject to the provisions of 9.52., these documents shall contain the elements listed in the bylaws.**

**9.53.01.** The governing documents of congregations shall include:

- a. the Confession of Faith;
- b. the Statement of Purpose;
- c. provisions describing the congregation's relationship to this church;
- d. a process for calling a pastor;
- e. a listing of the duties of a pastor;
- f. provisions describing the role of the pastor in the governance of the congregation;
- g. a process for removal of a pastor;
- h. provisions regulating the disposition of property;
- i. a legislative process;
- j. an enumeration of officers with definition of authority and functions of each;
- k. a definition of each structural component (*e.g.*, committees, boards); and
- l. a process for the discipline of members.

**9.53.02.** *A Model Constitution for Congregations shall be provided by this church. Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in Chapter 22 for amendments of the bylaws of this church.*

**9.53.03.** Each congregation shall provide a copy of its governing documents to the synod. All proposed changes in the constitution or incorporation documents of a congregation shall be referred to the synod with which the congregation is affiliated. The synod shall approve or disapprove the proposed changes within 120 days of receipt thereof, and shall notify the congregation of its decision; in the absence of a decision, the changes shall go into effect.

The synod shall recognize that congregations may organize themselves in a manner which they deem most appropriate.

- 9.53.04.** Each congregation shall take the necessary steps to protect its members and this church from liability.
- 9.53.05.** Congregations shall normally maintain a fiscal year of January 1 through December 31.
- 9.53.06.** A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.
- 9.53.07.** Congregations shall have the right to petition this church. Petitions shall be addressed to the synod to which the congregation relates for response by the synod, or, at the discretion of the synod, for forwarding to the Churchwide Assembly.
- 9.53.08.** A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.
- 9.60. TERMINATION OF RELATIONSHIP**
- 9.61. The relationship between a congregation and this church may be terminated in one of the following ways:**
- a. The congregation takes action to dissolve.**
  - b. The congregation ceases to exist.**
  - c. The congregation is no longer recognized by this church under the disciplinary provisions of Chapter 20.**
  - d. The congregation terminates its relationship according to the procedure outlined in 9.62.**
  - e. The membership of the congregation becomes so scattered or diminished in numbers as to make it impracticable for such congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized. In such case, the synod, in order to protect the property from waste and deterioration, through the Synod Council or trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the synod. The congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Assembly.**
- 9.62. A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:**
- a. A resolution indicating desire to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.**
  - b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the**

resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.

- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with the congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
- d. If the congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the synodical bishop or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
- g. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. Congregations that are established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.

**9.70. OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY**

**9.71.** Subject to the provisions of 9.52., the following shall govern the ownership of property by congregations of this church:

- a. Title to property shall reside in the congregation. The congregation may dispose of its property as it determines, subject to any self-accepted indebtedness or other self-accepted restrictions.
- b. Title to the undisposed property of a congregation that ceases to exist shall pass to the synod of this church to which the congregation is related.
- c. Title to the property of a congregation that is no longer recognized by this church as a result of discipline shall continue to reside in the congregation.
- d. Title to the property of a congregation that has acted to terminate its relationship with this church by the provisions of 9.62. to relate to another Lutheran church body shall continue to reside in the congregation.

- e. **Title to the property of a congregation that has acted to terminate its relationship with this church by the provisions of 9.62. to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body shall continue to reside in the congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with the congregation by an established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of the congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of this church.**

**9.80. DISCIPLINE OF CONGREGATIONS**

See Chapter 20.

**9.90. FEDERATED OR UNION CONGREGATIONS**

- 9.91. A synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may authorize a particular congregation or recognized ministry related to the synod to form a federated congregation or union congregation with a congregation or recognized ministry of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a synod may organize a federated congregation or union congregation, with the synod acting in concert with a comparable ecclesiastical entity of another church body or church bodies with which a relationship of full communion has been established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

- 9.91.01.** A federated congregation is one congregation that is formed and maintained with the approval of both the synod in which the congregation is located and the comparable ecclesiastical entity of one or more church bodies with which a relationship of full communion has been established. A federated congregation shall conduct its life and work under a plan of agreement adopted by the federated congregation in accord with policy of the synod in which the federated congregation is located and the comparable entity or entities of a church body or church bodies with which a relationship of full communion has been declared by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accord with 8.71. and 9.91.

- a. The plan of agreement shall follow, as clearly as is practicable, the model provisions developed by the secretary of this church, after consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units and Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council, and such a plan of agreement shall be subject to the constitutions of each church body involved.

- 1) Whenever the constitutions of the respective church bodies differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive.
  - 2) Whenever conflicting mandatory provisions or conflicting permissive provisions exist, petition shall be made to the appropriate governing bodies of the church bodies involved to resolve the conflict under the internal procedures of the respective church bodies.
- b. The plan of agreement of a federated congregation shall be consistent with the commitments made by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in church-to-church resolutions and documents for the continuing relationship of full communion.
  - c. The plan of agreement of each federated congregation shall be subject to review and ratification by the Synod Council of the synod in which the federated congregation is located.
  - d. Implementation of the plan of agreement of a federated congregation shall be guided by policies and procedures developed in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units by the Office of the Secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - e. A federated congregation shall be incorporated, when legally possible, under the laws of the state of location. A federated congregation shall take the necessary steps to protect its members and the related church bodies from liability.

**9.91.02.** A union congregation may be formed by two separate congregations that shall continue to exist as separate but cooperating entities. The separate congregations in a union congregation shall be related to their respective church bodies that have established a relationship of full communion in accord with 8.71. and 9.91. A union congregation shall conduct its life and work under a plan of agreement approved by the two separate congregations upon recommendation of the synod in which the congregation is located, with the synod acting in concert with the comparable ecclesiastical entity of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists.

- a. The plan of agreement of a union congregation shall follow, as clearly as is practicable, the model provisions of such a plan of agreement developed by the secretary of this church, after consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units and Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council, and such a plan of agreement for a union congregation shall be subject to the constitutions of each church body involved.
- b. The plan of agreement of a union congregation shall be consistent with the commitments made by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America in church-to-church resolutions and documents for the continuing relationship of full communion.

- c. The plan of agreement of a union congregation shall be subject to review and ratification by the Synod Council of the synod in which the union congregation is located.
- d. Implementation of the plan of agreement of a union congregation shall be guided by policies and procedures developed in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units by the Office of the Secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. Each congregation in a union congregation shall take the necessary steps to protect its members and the related church body from liability.



## **Chapter 10.**

### **SYNODS**

**10.01. This church shall be divided into synods, the names and boundaries of which shall be determined by the Churchwide Assembly and included in the bylaws.**

#### **10.01.10. Names and Boundaries**

**10.01.11.** The names and boundaries of the synods shall be:

Synod 1.A—Alaska. The state of ALASKA.

Synod 1.B—Northwest Washington. The counties of Island, King (north), San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom in the state of WASHINGTON.

Synod 1.C—Southwestern Washington. The counties of Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, King (south), Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum in the state of WASHINGTON.

Synod 1.D—Eastern Washington-Idaho. The state of IDAHO; the counties of Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman, Yakima in the state of WASHINGTON.

Synod 1.E—Oregon. The state of OREGON; and the city of Tulelake in the state of CALIFORNIA.

Synod 1.F—Montana. The state of MONTANA; and the counties of Big Horn, Park, Sheridan, and Washakie in the state of WYOMING.

Synod 2.A—Sierra Pacific. The counties of Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benito, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, Yuba in the state of CALIFORNIA; the counties of Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey, Washoe, White Pine and the consolidated municipality of Carson City in the state of NEVADA.

Synod 2.B—Southwest California. The counties of Kern, Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura in the state of CALIFORNIA.

Synod 2.C—Pacifica. The counties of Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego in the state of CALIFORNIA; the state of HAWAII.

Synod 2.D—Grand Canyon. The state of ARIZONA; the counties of Clark, Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye in the state of NEVADA.

Synod 2.E—Rocky Mountain. The states of COLORADO; NEW MEXICO; UTAH; and WYOMING, excluding the counties of Big Horn, Park, Sheridan, and Washakie; the counties of Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Loving, Presidio, Reeves, Ward, Winkler in the state of TEXAS.

Synod 3.A—Western North Dakota. The counties of Adams, Benson (the town/parishes of Esmond), Billings, Bottineau, Bowman, Burke, Burleigh, Divide, Dunn, Emmons, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Kidder (excluding the Woodworth Parish of Pettibone), Logan (excluding the towns/ parishes of Fredonia and Gackle), McHenry, McIntosh, McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Oliver, Pierce, Renville, Rolette, Sheridan, Sioux, Slope, Stark, Towner, Ward, Wells, Williams in the state of NORTH DAKOTA; and the parishes of Lemmon, Lodgepole, Ralph, and Shadehill in the state of SOUTH DAKOTA.

Synod 3.B—Eastern North Dakota. The counties of Barnes, Benson (east of and including the towns/ parishes of Maddock and Leeds), Cass, Cavalier, Dickey, Eddy, Foster, Grand Forks, Griggs, Kidder (the Woodworth Parish of Pettibone), LaMoure, Logan (the towns/parishes of Fredonia and Gackle), Nelson, Pembina, Ramsey, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, Stutsman, Traill, Walsh in the state of NORTH DAKOTA.

Synod 3.C—South Dakota. The state of SOUTH DAKOTA.

Synod 3.D—Northwestern Minnesota. The counties of Becker, Beltrami, Clay, Clearwater, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, Roseau, Todd, Traverse, Wadena, Wilkin in the state of MINNESOTA.

Synod 3.E—Northeastern Minnesota. The counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cass, Cook, Crow Wing, Itasca, Kanabec, Koochiching, Lake, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pine, St. Louis in the state of MINNESOTA.

Synod 3.F—Southwestern Minnesota. The counties of Benton, Big Stone, Brown, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Martin, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Pope, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Sherburne (part), Sibley, Stearns, Stevens, Swift, Watonwan, Wright (part), Yellow Medicine in the state of MINNESOTA.

Synod 3.G—Minneapolis Area. The counties of Anoka, Carver, Hennepin, Isanti, Scott, Sherburne (part), Wright (part) in the state of MINNESOTA.

Synod 3.H—Saint Paul Area. The counties of Chisago, Dakota, Ramsey, Washington in the state of MINNESOTA.

Synod 3.I—Southeastern Minnesota. The counties of Blue Earth, Dodge, Faribault, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Le Sueur, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Winona in the state of MINNESOTA.

Synod 4.A—Nebraska. The state of NEBRASKA.

Synod 4.B—Central States. The states of MISSOURI and KANSAS.

Synod 4.C—Arkansas-Oklahoma. The states of ARKANSAS and OKLAHOMA.

Synod 4.D—Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana. The counties of Andrews, Archer, Armstrong, Bailey, Baylor, Bell, Borden, Bosque, Bowie, Briscoe, Brown, Callahan, Camp, Carson, Cass, Castro, Childress, Clay, Cochran, Coke, Coleman, Collin, Collingsworth, Comanche, Concho, Cooke, Coryell, Cottle, Crosby, Dallam, Dallas, Dawson, Deaf Smith, Delta, Denton, Dickens, Donley, Eastland, Ector, Ellis, Erath, Falls, Fannin, Fisher, Floyd, Foard, Franklin, Gaines, Garza, Glasscock, Gray, Grayson, Gregg, Hale, Hall, Hamilton, Hansford, Hardeman, Harrison, Hartley, Haskell, Hemphill, Henderson, Hill, Hockley, Hood, Hopkins, Howard, Hunt, Hutchinson, Irion, Jack, Johnson, Jones, Kaufman, Kent, King, Knox, Lamar, Lamb, Lampasas, Limestone, Lipscomb, Lubbock, Lynn, McCulloch, McLennan, Marion, Martin, Midland, Mills, Mitchell, Montague, Moore, Morris, Motley, Navarro, Nolan, Ochiltree, Oldham, Palo Pinto, Panola, Parker, Parmer, Potter, Rains, Randall, Reagan, Red River, Roberts, Rockwall, Runnels, Rusk, San Saba, Scurry, Shackelford, Sherman, Smith, Somervell, Stephens, Sterling, Stonewall, Swisher, Tarrant, Taylor, Terry, Throckmorton, Titus, Tom Green, Upshur, Van Zandt, Wheeler, Wichita, Wilbarger, Wise, Wood, Yoakum, Young in the state of TEXAS; the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, Catahoula, Claiborne, Concordia, DeSoto, East Carroll, Franklin, Grant, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Red River, Richland, Sabine, Tensas, Union, Webster, West Carroll, Winn in the state of LOUISIANA.

Synod 4.E—Southwestern Texas. The counties of Aransas, Atascosa, Bandera, Bastrop, Bee, Bexar, Blanco, Brooks, Burnet, Caldwell, Calhoun, Cameron, Comal, Crane, Crockett, De Witt, Dimmit, Duval, Edwards, Frio, Gillespie, Goliad, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Hays, Hidalgo, Jackson, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Karnes, Kendall, Kenedy, Kerr, Kimble, Kinney, Kleberg, La Salle, Lavaca, Lee, Live Oak, Llano, McMullen, Mason, Maverick, Medina, Menard, Milam, Nueces, Pecos, Real, Refugio, San Patricio, Schleicher, Starr, Sutton, Terrell, Travis, Upton, Uvalde, Val Verde, Victoria, Webb, Willacy, Williamson, Wilson, Zapata, Zavala in the state of TEXAS.

Synod 4.F—Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast. The counties of Anderson, Angelina, Austin, Brazoria, Brazos, Burleson, Chambers, Cherokee, Colorado, Fayette, Fort Bend, Freestone, Galveston, Grimes, Hardin, Harris, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Matagorda, Montgomery, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Polk, Robertson, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Trinity, Tyler, Walker, Waller, Washington, Wharton in the state of TEXAS; the parishes of Acadia,

Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, LaFourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Vermilion, Vernon, Washington, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana in the state of LOUISIANA.

Synod 5.A—Metropolitan Chicago. The counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake in the state of ILLINOIS.

Synod 5.B—Northern Illinois. The counties of Boone, Bureau, Carroll, De Kalb, Grundy, Henderson, Henry, Jo Daviess, Kendall, Knox, La Salle, Lee, McHenry, Mercer, Ogle, Putnam, Rock Island, Stephenson, Warren, Whiteside, Will, Winnebago in the state of ILLINOIS.

Synod 5.C—Central/Southern Illinois. The counties of Adams, Alexander, Bond, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, De Witt, Douglas, Edgar, Edwards, Effingham, Fayette, Ford, Franklin, Fulton, Gallatin, Greene, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Iroquois, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Jersey, Johnson, Kankakee, Lawrence, Livingston, Logan, McDonough, McLean, Macon, Macoupin, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Mason, Massac, Menard, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie, Peoria, Perry, Piatt, Pike, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Richland, St. Clair, Saline, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, Stark, Tazewell, Union, Vermilion, Wabash, Washington, Wayne, White, Williamson, Woodford in the state of ILLINOIS.

Synod 5.D—Southeastern Iowa. The counties of Appanoose, Benton, Boone, Cedar, Clarke, Clinton, Dallas (east), Davis, Decatur, Des Moines, Henry, Iowa, Jackson (south), Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Keokuk, Lee, Linn, Louisa, Lucas, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Muscatine, Polk, Poweshiek, Scott, Story (south), Tama (south), Van Buren, Wapello, Warren, Washington, Wayne in the state of IOWA.

Synod 5.E—Western Iowa. The counties of Adair, Adams, Audubon, Buena Vista, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Cherokee, Clay, Crawford, Dallas (west), Dickinson, Emmet, Fremont, Greene, Guthrie, Hamilton (west), Hancock, Harrison, Humboldt, Ida, Kossuth, Lyon, Mills, Monona, Montgomery, O'Brien, Osceola, Page, Palo Alto, Plymouth, Pocahontas, Pottawattamie, Ringgold, Sac, Shelby, Sioux, Taylor, Union, Webster, Winnebago, Woodbury, and Wright (west) in the state of IOWA.

Synod 5.F—Northeastern Iowa. The counties of Allamakee, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hamilton (east), Hardin, Howard, Jackson (north), Mitchell, Story (north), Tama (north), Winneshiek, Worth, Wright (east) in the state of IOWA.

Synod 5.G—Northern Great Lakes. The counties of Florence, Forest, Iron, Marinette, Oneida, Vilas in the state of WISCONSIN; the counties in the Upper Peninsula in the state of MICHIGAN.

Synod 5.H—Northwest Synod of Wisconsin. The counties of Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Buffalo (north), Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson (north), Marathon (west), Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Price, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer, Taylor, Trempealeau (north), Washburn, Wood (northwest corner) in the state of WISCONSIN.

Synod 5.I—East-Central Synod of Wisconsin. The counties of Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond Du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Langlade, Lincoln, Manitowoc, Marathon (east), Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Portage, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago, Wood (southeast) in the state of WISCONSIN.

Synod 5.J—Greater Milwaukee. The counties of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Washington, Waukesha in the state of WISCONSIN.

Synod 5.K—South-Central Synod of Wisconsin. The counties of Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Walworth in the state of WISCONSIN.

Synod 5.L—La Crosse Area. The counties of Adams, Buffalo (south), Crawford, Jackson (south), Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau (south), Vernon in the state of WISCONSIN; and parishes in or near the towns of La Crescent, Caledonia, and Spring Grove in the state of MINNESOTA.

Synod 6.A—Southeast Michigan. The counties of Genesee, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Saint Clair, Washtenaw, Wayne in the state of MICHIGAN.

Synod 6.B—North/West Lower Michigan. The counties of Alcona, Allegan, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Barry, Bay, Benzie, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Clare, Clinton, Crawford, Eaton, Emmet, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Huron, Ingham, Ionia, Iosco, Isabella, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kalkaska, Kent, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Midland, Missaukee, Montcalm, Montmorency, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Ogemaw, Osceola, Oscoda, Otsego, Ottawa, Presque Isle, Roscommon, St. Joseph, Saginaw, Sanilac, Shiawassee, Tuscola, Van Buren, Wexford in the state of MICHIGAN.

Synod 6.C—Indiana-Kentucky. The states of INDIANA and KENTUCKY.

Synod 6.D—Northwestern Ohio. The counties of Allen, Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Lucas, Marion, Mercer, Morrow, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wood, Wyandot in the state of OHIO.

Synod 6.E—Northeastern Ohio. The counties of Ashland, Ashtabula, Carroll, Columbiana, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson,

Lake, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Richland, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Tuscarawas, Wayne in the state of OHIO.

Synod 6.F—Southern Ohio. The counties of Adams, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Butler, Champaign, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Coshocton, Darke, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Gallia, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Knox, Lawrence, Licking, Logan, Madison, Meigs, Miami, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Preble, Ross, Scioto, Shelby, Union, Vinton, Warren, Washington in the state of OHIO.

Synod 7.A—New Jersey. The state of NEW JERSEY.

Synod 7.B—New England. The states of CONNECTICUT; MAINE; MASSACHUSETTS; NEW HAMPSHIRE; RHODE ISLAND; and VERMONT; and the counties of Clinton, Essex, and Franklin in the state of NEW YORK.

Synod 7.C—Metropolitan New York. The counties of Bronx, Dutchess, Kings, Nassau, New York, Orange, Putnam, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester in the state of NEW YORK.

Synod 7.D—Upstate New York. The counties of Albany, Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Columbia, Cortland, Delaware, Erie, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Monroe, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Otsego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates in the state of NEW YORK.

Synod 7.E—Northeastern Pennsylvania. The counties of Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 7.F—Southeastern Pennsylvania. The counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 7.G—Slovak Zion. A non-geographic synod consisting of congregations distinctively Slovak in language or antecedents.

Synod 8.A—Northwestern Pennsylvania. The counties of Armstrong (part), Cameron, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Indiana, Jefferson, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.B—Southwestern Pennsylvania. The counties of Allegheny, Armstrong (part), Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Lawrence, Washington, Westmoreland in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.C—Allegheny. The counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Huntingdon, Somerset in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.D—Lower Susquehanna. The counties of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.E—Upper Susquehanna. The counties of Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Tioga, Union in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.F—Delaware-Maryland. The state of DELAWARE; the city of Baltimore and the counties of Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, Worcester in the state of MARYLAND; the counties of Accomack, Northampton in the state of VIRGINIA.

Synod 8.G—Metropolitan Washington, D.C. The District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince Georges, St. Mary's in the state of MARYLAND; the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and the independent cities within the territory of these counties in the state of VIRGINIA; BERMUDA.

Synod 8.H—West Virginia-Western Maryland. The county of Garrett in the state of MARYLAND; the state of WEST VIRGINIA.

Synod 9.A—Virginia. The counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Brunswick, Buchanan, Buckingham, Campbell, Caroline, Carroll, Charles City, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Clarke, Craig, Culpeper, Cumberland, Dickenson, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fauquier, Floyd, Fluvanna, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Gloucester, Goochland, Grayson, Greene, Greenville, Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, Henry, Highland, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Lee, Louisa, Lunenburg, Madison, Mathews, Mecklenburg, Middlesex, Montgomery, Nelson, New Kent, Northumberland, Nottoway, Orange, Page, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Richmond, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Southampton, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Surry, Sussex, Tazewell, Warren, Washington, Westmoreland, Wise, Wythe, York, and the independent cities within the territory of these counties in the state of VIRGINIA.

Synod 9.B—North Carolina. The state of NORTH CAROLINA.

Synod 9.C—South Carolina. The state of SOUTH CAROLINA.

Synod 9.D—Southeastern. The states of ALABAMA; GEORGIA; MISSISSIPPI; and TENNESSEE.

Synod 9.E—Florida-Bahamas. The state of FLORIDA; the BAHAMAS.

Synod 9.F—Caribbean. The commonwealth of PUERTO RICO; the territory of the VIRGIN ISLANDS.

- 10.02. Each congregation, except those which are in partnership with the Slovak Zion Synod, shall establish a relationship with the synod in whose territory it is located.**
- 10.02.01.** The Slovak Zion Synod shall continue as a nongeographic synod of this church. In all other respects it shall be bound by the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. In addition, it shall enter into relationships with geographic synods in order to provide opportunities for congregations, ordained ministers, and other leaders to share in the programmatic services of such synods, workshops, and conferences. It shall also periodically review and evaluate its ministries to ascertain their continuing effectiveness.
- 10.02.02.** Any congregation in a border area desiring to change its synod relationship may do so upon approval of the synod assemblies of the synods concerned, which shall report any such change to the Churchwide Assembly.
- 10.02.03.** Within the territory of each geographic synod, the synod—in keeping with criteria, policies, and procedures proposed by the secretary of this church, after consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units, and approved by the Church Council—may acknowledge certain authorized worshipping communities such as developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels as related to the synod and part of the synod’s life and mission. Such authorized worshipping communities of the synod shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

**10.10. INCORPORATION AND CONSTITUTION**

- 10.11. Each synod shall be incorporated. The articles of incorporation of each synod in existence on January 1, 1988, shall continue to govern such synods. The articles of incorporation of each synod organized after December 31, 1987, shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing. Amendments to the articles of incorporation of all synods shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.**
- 10.12. Each synod shall have a constitution, which shall become effective upon ratification by the Church Council. Amendments thereto shall be subject to like ratification, provided, however, that an amendment which is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption and the Church Council shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.**
- 10.13. The *Constitution for Synods* contains mandatory provisions that incorporate and record therein provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. Amendments to mandatory provisions incorporating constitutional provisions of this church shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in Chapter 22 for amendments to**



**the constitution of this church. Amendments to mandatory provisions incorporating bylaw provisions of this church and amendments to non-mandatory provisions shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in Chapter 22 for amendments to the bylaws of this church. Non-mandatory provisions shall not be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.**

**10.20. PURPOSE**

**10.21. Each synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in its territory. In fulfillment of this role, the synod shall:**

- a. Provide for the pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in the synod, including:**
  - 1) approving candidates for the ordained ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;**
  - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining on behalf of this church;**
  - 3) approving associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;**
  - 4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the consecration of deaconesses, and the consecration of diaconal ministers of this church; and**
  - 5) consulting in the calling process for ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.**
- b. Provide for leadership recruitment, preparation, and support in accordance with churchwide standards and policies, including:**
  - 1) nurturing and supporting congregations and lay leaders;**
  - 2) seeking and recruiting qualified candidates for the rostered ministries of this church;**
  - 3) making provision for pastoral care, call or appointment review, and guidance;**
  - 4) encouraging and supporting persons on the rosters of this church in stewardship of their abilities, care of self, and pursuit of continuing education to undergird their effectiveness of service; and**
  - 5) supporting recruitment of leaders for this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and social ministry organizations.**
- c. Provide for discipline of congregations, ordained ministers, and persons on the official lay rosters; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with the**

- procedures established by this church in Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.
- d. Foster organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities.
  - e. Plan for the mission of this church in the synod, initiating and developing policy, and implementing programs, consistent with churchwide policy, including:
    - 1) ecumenical guidance and encouragement;
    - 2) development of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;
    - 3) leadership and encouragement of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
    - 4) development of relationships to and participation in planning for the mission of social ministry organizations and ministries;
    - 5) encouragement of financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;
    - 6) provision for resources for congregational life;
    - 7) assistance to the members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world; and
    - 8) interpretation of social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues through (a) Synod Assembly memorials to the Churchwide Assembly or (b) resolutions for referral from the Synod Assembly through the Synod Council to the Church Council and (c) Synod Council resolutions addressed to the Church Council or for referral to a unit of the churchwide organization through the Church Council's Executive Committee.
  - f. Promote interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and enter into partnership with other synods in the region.
  - g. Participate in churchwide programs and develop support for the ministry of the churchwide organization.
  - h. Foster the grouping of congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.
  - i. Support relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries.
  - j. Foster relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of social ministry organizations.
  - k. Maintain relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers.

- l. Foster supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries.**
- m. Foster supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of the synod.**
- n. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public.**
- o. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.**
- p. Provide for archives in conjunction with other synods.**
- q. Cooperate with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of the synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.**

**10.22. In the event that this church or any synod of this church is charged with liability for any contingent debt, liability, or obligation arising or resulting from acts or omissions of any synod of the Lutheran Church in America, or The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, or district of The American Lutheran Church, occurring prior to January 1, 1988, the Church Council is authorized and empowered to determine whether and to what extent this church or such synod of this church shall be indemnified or reimbursed for any such debt, liability, or obligation by one or more synods of this church. In making its determination with respect to indemnification or reimbursement, the Church Council shall consider the nature of the activity which gave rise to the debt, liability, or obligation, the situs of that activity, and such other factors as the Church Council deems appropriate under the circumstances in order that such debt, liability, or obligation may be discharged in a manner that is fair and equitable to this church's congregations, synods, and churchwide organization. For purposes of this provision, a "contingent" debt, liability, or obligation means a debt, liability, or obligation (a) the amount of which had not been ascertained by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on December 31, 1987, or (b) the existence of which was unknown to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on December 31, 1987.**

**10.30. OFFICERS**

**10.31. The officers of each synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.**

- a. As the synod's pastor, the bishop shall:**
  - 1) Oversee and administer the work of the synod.**
  - 2) Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the faith of this church.**

- 3) Provide pastoral care and leadership for the synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, its associates in ministry, its deaconesses, and its diaconal ministers.
- 4) Advise and counsel its related institutions and organizations.
- 5) Be its chief ecumenical officer.
- 6) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers.
- 7) Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and be the chief executive officer of the synod; provide for the preparation of the agenda of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the Executive Committee; see to it that the constitution and bylaws of the synod are duly observed, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect; coordinate the work of all synodical staff members; and appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made.
- 8) Coordinate the use of the resources available to the synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church's life and witness in the areas served by the synod.
- 9) Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synodical bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry (and as provided in the bylaws of this church); to commission approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as an associate in ministry; to consecrate approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a deaconess; and to consecrate approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a diaconal minister; and shall install (or provide for the installation of):
  - a) the pastors of all congregations of the synod;
  - b) ordained ministers called to extraparish service within this church;
  - c) associates in ministry rostered in the synod;
  - d) deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America rostered in the synod; and
  - e) diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America rostered in the synod.
- 10) Be *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly and a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod.

- 11) **Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning the synod's life and work.**
  - 12) **Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church.**
- b. The vice president shall chair the Synod Council. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected, or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.**
- 10.31.01.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister of this church. The bishop may have as many assistants as the synod shall authorize.
- 10.31.02.** The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.
- 10.31.03.** The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.
- 10.31.04.** The treasurer shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The treasurer may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.
- 10.31.05.** The bishop of the synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected. The other officers shall be elected to a term as defined by each synod, but not to exceed six years, and may be reelected.
- 10.31.06.** Each officer shall be a voting member of a congregation of the synod, except that the bishop need not be a member of a congregation of the synod at the time of election.

**10.32. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 10.32.01.** The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops:
- a. Whenever a synodical bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in 10.32.01.b. may require his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in 10.32.01.c., the synodical bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synodical bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
  - b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. (+S14.13.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synodical bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the

related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.

- c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synodical bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, or in-law (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).

### **10.33. INTEGRITY OF MINISTRY**

**10.33.01.** Ordained ministers previously under call to the churchwide organization or to a synod shall respect the integrity of the ministry in which they no longer serve and shall not interfere with or exercise the functions of the office or position in which they no longer serve unless invited to do so by the presiding bishop or Church Council in the churchwide organization or, in the synods, by the bishop or the Synod Council.

### **10.40. SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

**10.41. Each synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority, and which shall meet at least biennially. Special meetings may be called as needed. With the exception of ordained ministers on the roster of synods other than their synod of residence, each member of the Synod Assembly, the Synod Council, a board, committee, or other organizational unit of the synod shall be a voting member of a congregation of the synod.**

**10.41.01.** Membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a. All ordained ministers under call on the roster of the synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
- b. All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, under call, on the lay roster or rosters of the synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item 10.41.01.c.
- c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to the synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional

members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female.

d. Voting membership shall include the officers of the synod.

- 10.41.02.** Synods may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, or those designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01. above.
- 10.41.03.** Synods may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call or those designated as disabled on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01. above.
- 10.41.04.** Synods may establish processes that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, under bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01.
- 10.41.05.** Synods may establish processes that permit Synod Council voting members who are not otherwise serving as voting members of the Synod Assembly the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.

**10.50. SYNOD COUNCIL**

**10.51. Each synod shall have a Synod Council, which shall be its board of directors, and which shall serve as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly, except that it may not take any action which is reserved exclusively for the Synod Assembly or which is in conflict with action taken by the Synod Assembly.**

**10.52. The Synod Council shall consist of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth, all elected by the Synod Assembly. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of the synod, with the exception of ordained ministers on the roster of the synod who reside outside the territory of the synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise specified herein shall be determined by each synod. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America from the synod, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.**

**10.60. CONFERENCES, CLUSTERS, COALITIONS, OR OTHER AREA SUBDIVISIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

**10.61. Opportunities for groupings of congregations and institutions in specified geographic areas of the synod shall be provided by the synod to foster interdependent relationships among congregations, insti-**

tutions, the synod, and churchwide units for mission purposes. These groupings may be formed as conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions.

**10.62.** Each synod may establish such boards, committees, task forces, and other organizational forms as it deems necessary to carry out effectively the functions assigned to the synod.

**10.63.** Each synod shall have an executive committee, a consultation committee, and a committee on discipline. Each synod also shall establish a mutual ministry committee to provide support and counsel to the bishop.

**10.70.** FISCAL POLICY

**10.71.** Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage of all donor-unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod, such percentage to be determined by the Churchwide Assembly. Individual exceptions may be made by the Church Council upon request of a synod.

**10.72.** Each synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm selected by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by the synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of the synod. Synodical financial reports shall be in a format approved by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer in order to attain uniformity in reporting.

**10.73.** Each synod shall have the fiscal year of February 1 through January 31.

**10.74.** Each synod shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage in accordance with standards recommended by the churchwide organization. Insurance programs offered or endorsed by the churchwide organization shall be deemed to fulfill this obligation.

**10.80.** INSTALLATION

**10.81.01.** The presiding bishop of this church, or a bishop appointed by the presiding bishop of this church, shall preside for the installation into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, of each newly elected synodical bishop.



## **Chapter 11.**

### **CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION—DEFINITION AND PURPOSES**

#### **11.10. DEFINITION OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION**

**11.11.** The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a churchwide organization that shall function interdependently with the congregations and synods of this church. The churchwide organization shall serve on behalf of and in support of this church's members, congregations, and synods in proclaiming the Gospel, reaching out in witness and service both globally and throughout the territory of this church, nurturing the members of this church in the daily life of faith, and manifesting the unity of this church with the whole Church of Jesus Christ.

**11.12.** The churchwide organization shall be an instrument for accomplishing the purposes of this church, as defined by Chapter 4 of this constitution, that are shared with and supported by the members, congregations, and synods of this church. In keeping with this church's purposes, it shall develop churchwide policy, set standards for leadership, establish criteria for this church's endeavors, and coordinate the work of this church. It shall be a means for the sharing of resources throughout this church, and shall provide programs and services as determined by this church.

#### **11.20. PURPOSES OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION**

**11.21.** In fulfillment of the purposes of this church, the churchwide organization shall:

- a.** Undergird the worship life of this church as the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
- b.** Provide resources to equip members to worship, learn, serve, and witness in their ministry in daily life.
- c.** Support and establish policy for this church's mission and coordinate planning and evaluation for that mission throughout the world, including participation with other churches.
- d.** Witness to the Word of God in Christ by united efforts in proclaiming the Gospel, responding to human need, caring for the sick and suffering, working for justice and peace, and providing guidance to members on social matters.
- e.** Foster interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to implement the mission of this whole church.
- f.** Provide for the ordained ministry and other rostered ministries of this church.
- g.** Oversee and establish policy for this church's relationship to seminaries, colleges, universities, schools, and other education endeavors, and provide support as appropriate.

- h. Establish and reflect this church's ecumenical stance and its relationship to other churches, and direct this church's policy for relationship with persons of other faiths.
- i. Develop and administer policies for this church's relationship to social ministry organizations and cooperate with public and private agencies that enhance human dignity and justice.
- j. Determine and implement policy for this church's relationship to governments.
- k. Provide for a comprehensive financial support system for this church's mission and for the administration of financial resources necessary for fulfillment of the particular responsibilities of the churchwide organization.
- l. Provide planned giving opportunities for the financial support of this church, its congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions through the establishment of a foundation.
- m. Provide pension and other benefits plans for this church.
- n. Provide a church publishing house.
- o. Provide archives for the retention of its valuable records, and coordinate archival activity in the synods, regions, institutions, and agencies of this church.
- p. Provide and monitor a system of discipline, appeals, and adjudication.
- q. Establish and operate other programs and activities, as determined by this church, on behalf of and in support of the congregations and synods of this church.

**11.30. DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION**

- 11.31. The legislative function of the churchwide organization shall be fulfilled by the Churchwide Assembly as described in Chapter 12 of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- 11.32. The Church Council shall exercise interim legislative authority and shall serve as the board of directors of the corporation.
- 11.33. Leadership of this church shall be vested in the officers, the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council, boards, and executive directors of churchwide administrative units. The full-time officers shall be the presiding bishop of this church, secretary of this church, and treasurer of this church. The vice president shall be non-salaried and shall serve as chair of the Church Council.
- 11.34. The churchwide organization shall carry out its duties through functional elements known as units. Units shall be responsible to the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council in the interim between regular meetings of the assembly.
- 11.35. Each program unit shall relate to a program committee and each separately incorporated unit shall be governed by a board.

**11.40. GENERAL FISCAL POLICIES**

**11.41. Within the limits established by the Churchwide Assembly in the constitution and bylaws, the Church Council, as the board of directors of the churchwide organization, shall establish the fiscal policies of this church.**

**11.41.01.** A single treasury shall be maintained for the receipt and disbursement of funds for the churchwide organization and its units receiving budgetary support, except as otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws or as approved by the Church Council.

**11.41.02.** Within the policies established by the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council, the management and investment of the funds of the churchwide organization and its units receiving budgetary support shall be the responsibility of the Office of the Treasurer.

**11.41.03.** On the basis of estimated income, and upon advice of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer, in consultation with the units receiving support from the churchwide budget, the Church Council shall authorize expenditures within the budget for the fiscal year and the units may incur financial obligations up to the specified amounts. Expenditure authorizations shall be subject to revision, in light of changing conditions, by the Church Council, upon the advice of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer.

**11.41.04.** The Church Council shall establish a working capital fund to be administered by the Office of the Treasurer within the policies established by the Church Council.

**11.41.05.** The fiscal year for the churchwide organization shall be February 1 through January 31.

**11.41.06.** No churchwide appeal to congregations or individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by this church or churchwide units without the consent of the Churchwide Assembly, following consultation with the Conference of Bishops. No appeal to selected congregations and individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by this church or churchwide units without the consent of the Church Council, following consultation with either the Conference of Bishops or specific synods as appropriate. Proposals for such special appeals shall be presented to the Church Council through the appropriate council committee with recommendations by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

## **Chapter 12.**

### **CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

#### **12.10. DESCRIPTION AND AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

**12.11. The Churchwide Assembly shall be the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization and shall deal with all matters which are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church. The powers of the Churchwide Assembly are limited only by the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, and the assembly's own resolutions.**

**12.12. Any matter for which adoption by a vote of two-thirds of those voting in a prior Churchwide Assembly was required by the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall require a two-thirds vote to be amended or repealed by a subsequent Churchwide Assembly.**

**12.12.01. A social statement, which is developed by the appropriate churchwide unit and presented to the Churchwide Assembly as a proposed social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall require for adoption a vote of two-thirds of those voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly. The text of a proposed social statement shall be approved and recommended to the assembly by the Church Council.**

#### **12.20. DUTIES OF THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

**12.21. The Churchwide Assembly shall:**

- a. Review the work of the churchwide officers, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.**
- b. Review the work of the churchwide units, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.**
- c. Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.**
- d. Establish churchwide policy.**
- e. Adopt a budget for the churchwide organization.**
- f. Elect officers, board members, and other persons as provided in the constitution or bylaws.**
- g. Establish churchwide units to carry out the functions of the churchwide organization.**
- h. Have the sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws.**
- i. Fulfill other functions as required in the constitution and bylaws.**
- j. Conduct such other business as necessary to further the purposes and functions of the churchwide organization.**

**12.30. MEETINGS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

**12.31. The assembly shall meet biennially in regular session. Special meetings may be called by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. The purpose for a special meeting shall be stated in the notice.**

**12.31.01.** The time and place of the Churchwide Assembly shall be determined by the Church Council. The time and place for the next regular assembly normally shall be announced at the preceding assembly.

**12.31.02.** The secretary shall give notice of the time and place of each regular assembly by publication thereof at least 60 days in advance in this church's periodical. The secretary shall give written notice of a special assembly to the bishop of each synod upon the issuance of a call thereof and shall publish the same in this church's periodical at least 30 days in advance of the special assembly. Notice shall be provided to all voting members or voting members-elect not more than 30 days or less than 10 days in advance of any meeting. Notice may be provided electronically for voting members or voting members-elect who have provided email addresses, unless the voting member or voting member-elect has requested that written notice be mailed.

**12.31.03.** At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a pre-assembly report. Distribution to congregations may be accomplished by posting the report on the Web site of this church. Distribution to voting members-elect may be accomplished electronically to those who have provided e-mail addresses. A written copy of the *Pre-Assembly Report* will be mailed to any voting member-elect who does not provide an e-mail address and to any congregation or voting member-elect who requests a written copy.

**12.31.04.** The arrangements for agenda, program, and worship shall be under the supervision of the presiding bishop.

**12.31.05.** Physical arrangements for churchwide assemblies shall be made by the secretary or by an assembly manager working under the secretary's supervision. Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop.

**12.31.06.** The churchwide organization shall be responsible for the costs of the Churchwide Assembly, including reasonable costs for travel, housing, and board for voting and advisory members.

**12.31.07.** At least one-half of all persons elected as voting members must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum for the legal conduct of business. If such a quorum is not present, those voting members present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place, provided that only those persons eligible to vote at the original meeting may vote at the adjourned meeting.

**12.31.08.** Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted at a Churchwide Assembly.

**12.31.09.** The Churchwide Assembly shall use parliamentary procedures in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.

**12.40. MEMBERS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

**12.41. The voting members of the Churchwide Assembly shall be the voting members of this church. The requirements for voting members of the assembly and other members shall be specified in the bylaws.**

**12.41.10. Voting Members**

**12.41.11.** Each synod shall elect one voting member of the Churchwide Assembly for every 5,800 baptized members in the synod. In addition, each synod shall elect one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. The synodical bishop, who is *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. There shall be at least two voting members from each synod. The secretary shall notify each synod of the number of assembly members it is to elect.

**12.41.12.** The secretary of each synod shall submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly. If a voting member elected by the Synod Assembly is unable to serve, the name of an eligible person chosen by the Synod Council shall be submitted by the secretary of the synod to the secretary of this church. If a vacancy occurs or exists within 30 days or less of the convening of the Churchwide Assembly or during the meeting of the Churchwide Assembly, the synodical bishop may submit the name of an eligible person to the secretary of this church. The individual whose name is submitted to the secretary of this church shall be registered and seated by the Credentials Committee as a voting member from the synod.

**12.41.13.** Each voting member of the Churchwide Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church. Any such voting member (except a rostered person described in in 7.42.b., c., d., or e., or 7.52.14.) shall cease to be a member of the assembly if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church within the synod from which elected. The criterion for voting membership in the congregation from which the voting member is elected shall be in effect regarding minimum age for that voting member.

**12.41.14.** Voting members elected through the process of 12.41.11. through 12.41.13. shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Churchwide Assembly and shall continue serving until voting members are seated at the next regular Churchwide Assembly.

**12.41.15.** Except as defined in 12.41.21., employees of the churchwide organization, including those serving under call, appointment, employment agreement,

or contract, shall not be eligible for election and service as voting members of the Churchwide Assembly.

**12.41.20. *Ex Officio* Members**

**12.41.21.** The officers of this church and the bishops of the synods shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. They shall have voice and vote.

**12.41.22.** Unless otherwise determined by the synod, the synodical vice president shall serve as a voting member of the Churchwide Assembly.

**12.41.30. Advisory Members**

**12.41.31.** Members of the Church Council, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Likewise, program committee chairpersons and board chairpersons or their designees, and the president of the Lutheran Youth Organization or a designee, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. In addition, executive directors of churchwide program units, executive directors of churchwide service units, executives for sections related to the officers, presidents of separately incorporated churchwide units, the executive for administration, and executive assistants to the presiding bishop shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly.

**12.41.32.** Advisory members shall have voice but not vote.

**12.41.40. Other Non-Voting Members**

**12.41.41.** Other categories of non-voting members may be established by the Churchwide Assembly.

**12.41.A89.** *Presidents of the colleges, universities, and seminaries of this church, unless elected as voting members of the assembly, shall have voice but not vote.*

**12.41.B07.** *Faculty Resource Persons. A representative of the faculty of each seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be appointed by the president of each seminary to serve as a seminary faculty resource person for each Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In addition, a teaching theologian who is a member of a congregation of this church and who is teaching at a college or university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be appointed by the steering committee of the Association of Teaching Theologians in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to serve as a faculty resource person. Faculty resource persons shall have voice, if so granted in the assembly's rules, but not vote in plenary sessions of the assembly. Travel, food, and housing costs for the faculty resource persons shall be an expense of the assembly. Other expenses will be the responsibility of the individual or sending institution.*

**12.41.C04. Congregation Observers.** *Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may register with the secretary of this church one congregation observer for the Churchwide Assembly prior to May 31 in the year of a Churchwide Assembly.*

- a. Provision shall be made for such an individual to have reserved seating in the observers section of the plenary hall. Such congregation observers will receive a copy of the report of recommendations for assembly action and also materials distributed on the plenary floor to voting members, advisory members, and non-voting members during the assembly. Such observers shall have neither voice nor vote in plenary sessions of the assembly.*
- b. A registration fee shall be established by the secretary of this church for registration and related costs, including enabling observers to receive the same meals as are provided for voting members.*
- c. Transportation costs, housing, other meals, and related expenses shall be the responsibility of the registered observer or sending congregation.*

**12.50. COMMITTEES OF THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

**12.51. The Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, and a Nominating Committee. The description of these committees shall be in the bylaws. The Churchwide Assembly may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary.**

**12.51.10. Reference and Counsel Committee**

**12.51.11.** A Reference and Counsel Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review all proposed changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws and other items submitted that are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly.

**12.51.20. Memorials Committee**

**12.51.21.** A Memorials Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review memorials from synodical assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for assembly action.

**12.51.30. Nominating Committee**

**12.51.31.** A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate two persons for each position for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly and for which a nominating procedure has not otherwise been designated in the constitution and bylaws of this church.



## **Chapter 13.**

### **OFFICERS OF THIS CHURCH**

#### **13.10. OFFICERS**

**13.11. This church shall have as its officers the presiding bishop, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.**

#### **13.20. PRESIDING BISHOP**

**13.21. This church shall have a presiding bishop who, as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church. The presiding bishop shall be an ordained minister of this church. The presiding bishop may be male or female, as may all other officers of this church. The presiding bishop shall:**

- a. Be the president and chief executive officer of the corporation, overseeing the work of the churchwide organization.**
- b. Be the chief ecumenical officer of this church and its primary representative in the national and international interchurch agencies in which this church holds membership.**
- c. Provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, Conference of Bishops, and Cabinet of Executives, and preside at the Churchwide Assembly.**
- d. Provide leadership and care for the bishops of the synods.**
- e. Supervise the work of the other officers.**
- f. Provide for the preparation of the budget for the churchwide organization.**
- g. Nominate and direct the work of the executive for administration.**
- h. Coordinate and supervise the work of executives of churchwide units.**
- i. Appoint members of all churchwide committees for which election procedures are not provided.**
- j. Be responsible for the chaplaincies of this church in federal agencies, institutions, and armed forces and provide for the pastoral care of those called to these ministries.**
- k. Recommend legal counsel to the Church Council.**
- l. Serve as an advisory member, with voice but not vote, on all committees of this church and all boards or committees of churchwide units, or designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative.**

**13.22. The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term.**

- 13.22.01.** The presiding bishop shall be elected as provided in Chapter 19 and shall take office on the first day of the third month after election.
- 13.22.02.** The presiding bishop shall be a full-time, salaried position.

**13.22.A04. *Ecumenical Representatives***

*Ecumenical representatives shall be chosen by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the following pattern:*

- a. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of delegations to national and international inter-church entities in which this church holds membership.*
- b. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of inter-Lutheran, inter-faith, and ecumenical discussions, including bilateral dialogues and conversations, in which this church participates.*
- c. All such appointments shall be reported to the Church Council as information.*

**13.30. VICE PRESIDENT**

**13.31. The vice president of this church shall be a layperson who shall serve as chair of the Church Council and, in the event the presiding bishop is unable to do so, as chair of the Churchwide Assembly. The vice president shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership as specified in provision 11.33. of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.**

**13.32. The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church.**

**13.32.01.** The vice president shall be elected as provided in Chapter 19 and shall take office on the first day of the third month after election.

**13.32.02.** The vice president shall serve without salary.

**13.40. SECRETARY**

**13.41. The secretary of this church shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership, as specified in Chapter 11 of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, and shall fulfill the normal functions of the secretary of a corporation.**

**13.41.01.** The secretary, as the recording officer of this church, shall keep the minutes, have responsibility for rosters, records, and reporting of parochial statistics, oversee the archives, attest to all documents that require such signature, be the custodian of the seal, and perform other duties as prescribed by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

- 13.41.02.** The secretary shall:
- a. Be responsible for the minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, Conference of Bishops, and Cabinet of Executives, and shall receive complete minutes for permanent record of all boards and committees of the churchwide organization.
  - b. Maintain the rosters of ordained ministers, all other rostered persons, congregations, and synods.
  - c. Provide for the publication of official documents and policies of this church, pre-assembly reports, assembly minutes, a directory of congregations, rostered persons, and entities of this church, and other informational and statistical material.
  - d. Receive the annual report of the congregations in a form devised by the secretary, summarize the information, and make the summary available to this church.
  - e. Coordinate the use of legal services by the churchwide organization.
  - f. Be responsible for the archives of this church.
  - g. Implement and operate a records management system for the churchwide organization.
  - h. Arrange for and manage meetings of the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council.
  - i. Have custody of the seal, maintain a necrology, and attest documents.
  - j. Provide library and reference services for the churchwide office.
- 13.41.03.** The secretary, in consultation with the presiding bishop, shall be responsible for preparation and research of amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, as well as the *Constitution for Synods* and the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, to be proposed by the Church Council for action by the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with provisions of Chapter 22.
- 13.41.04.** The secretary shall prepare interpretations, as necessary, of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If a board, committee, or synod disagrees with the interpretations, as rendered, the objecting entity may appeal the secretary's interpretation to the Church Council.
- 13.41.05.** The secretary shall provide staff services to the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly and the nomination process of the Church Council; shall be responsible for declaring an interim vacancy resulting from the resignation, death, or disability of a member of a board, committee, or council; and shall arrange for an election by the Church Council to fill the vacancy consistent with Chapter 19.

**13.41.A03. Responsibilities for Risk Management**

*The Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in collaboration with the treasurer of this church, shall provide and manage insurance (exclusive of life and health) programs for the churchwide organization and shall make available insurance programs to congregations, synods, regions, and related institutions, agencies, and organizations. Recommendations on standards for adequate, continuous insurance coverage to be maintained by synods, as required in constitutional provision 10.74., shall be provided.*

**13.42. The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church.**

**13.42.01.** The secretary shall be elected as provided in Chapter 19 and shall take office on the first day of the third month after election.

**13.42.02.** The secretary shall be a full-time, salaried position.

**13.50. TREASURER**

**13.51. The treasurer of this church shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership as specified in Chapter 11 of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, and shall fulfill the normal functions of the treasurer of a corporation.**

**13.51.01.** The treasurer shall propose policy for review and action by the Church Council and provide for the implementation, within such policies, of the financial, accounting, insurance, property management, investment, and money management systems, and related services for the units of the churchwide organization.

**13.52. The treasurer shall be elected by the Church Council to a six-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church.**

**13.52.01.** The treasurer shall be elected as provided in Chapter 19 and shall take office on the first day of the third month after election.

**13.52.02.** The treasurer shall be a full-time, salaried position.

**13.52.03.** The Church Council, by a two-thirds vote, may dismiss the treasurer for cause.

**13.52.A05. Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer**

*a. This office shall be related to the treasurer, who shall be its full-time executive officer.*

*b. This office shall have the sole authority and responsibility to establish and maintain banking relationships.*

*c. This office shall have the authority to borrow; issue bonds, notes, certificates, or other evidence of obligation; or increase contingent liabilities within the overall limits determined by the Churchwide Assembly and the more restrictive limits established by the Church Council. No churchwide board or program committee shall make a*

*commitment that binds the churchwide organization to an outside lending or other similar institution or which creates a liability of this church to such an institution without prior approval of the Office of the Treasurer.*

- d. This office, through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council, shall recommend to the Church Council a certified public accounting firm to audit the financial records of the churchwide organization. Synodical financial reports shall be submitted to this office for compilation.*
- e. This office shall provide for internal audit procedures of the churchwide organization.*
- f. This office shall provide legal documents pertaining to the financial and property management matters of the churchwide organization. These legal documents shall be signed by the officers authorized by the Church Council.*
- g. This office shall be authorized, within policies established by this church, to purchase or otherwise acquire title to real property; to mortgage, lease, sell, or otherwise dispose of the same; and to act on behalf of the units of the churchwide organization after receiving their direction regarding the purchase or disposition of real property.*
- h. This office shall provide for a common system of financial reporting from synods and regions.*
- i. This office shall provide, upon request, a financial management system for synods.*
- j. This office shall provide, upon request, counsel in financial matters to the women's organization, congregations, synods, regions, and institutions.*
- k. This office, within the policies established by the Church Council, shall assure the implementation of a donor gift acknowledgment process in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*
- l. This office, in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall recommend:*
  - 1) approved policy for the valuation process for noncash gifts;*
  - 2) the management of assets of life-income agreements;*
  - 3) the establishment and management of memorial funds received by the foundation; and*
  - 4) the distribution of earned-income payments to remainder beneficiaries as regulated by the life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.*
- m. This office shall provide for the management of capital funds.*

- n. *This office shall manage capital loan funds established by the Church Council. The management shall be within policies established jointly by the Office of the Treasurer and other affected churchwide units.*
- o. *This office, in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary, shall examine the risk management and insurance needs of the churchwide organization and synods.*

**13.52.B05. Responsibility for Information Technology**

*The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of this church and the operation of Chicago-based churchwide units. In so doing, the treasurer shall have an executive for information technology, appointed by the treasurer, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church.*

**13.52.C05. Responsibility for Operational Support**

*The treasurer shall make provision for facilities management in support of the operation of the Lutheran Center and the function of Chicago-based churchwide units and, in so doing, the treasurer shall maintain management services with an executive for management services appointed by the treasurer who shall be responsible for building management for the churchwide organization and the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units.*

**13.60. DEATH, RESIGNATION, OR DISABILITY OF AN OFFICER**

**13.61.** **Should the presiding bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president shall convene the Church Council to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the presiding bishop until an election of a new presiding bishop can be held or until the presiding bishop is able to serve again. The term of the successor presiding bishop, elected by the next Churchwide Assembly, or a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be six years, with the subsequent election to take place at the assembly closest to the expiration of such a term.**

**13.62.** **Should the vice president, secretary, or treasurer die, resign, or be unable to serve, the presiding bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held or until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor vice president or secretary, elected by the next Churchwide Assembly, shall be six years. The Church Council shall elect the successor treasurer for a term of six years.**

**13.63.** The Executive Committee of the Church Council shall determine whether an officer is unable to serve; the officer may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee by requesting a hearing before the Church Council. A meeting to determine the ability of an officer to serve shall be called upon the request of at least three members of the Executive Committee and prior notice of the meeting shall be given to the officer in question.

**13.70. OFFICERS OF PREDECESSOR CONTINUING CORPORATIONS**

**13.71.** Whenever an existing but inactive corporate entity that previously functioned as a predecessor or more remote predecessor of this church or as an incorporated board, agency, or synod related to such predecessors, and such entity is otherwise without officers or directors, the officers of this church shall constitute the directors of such entity and shall hold the same office as they hold in this church.

**Chapter 14.**  
**CHURCH COUNCIL**

**14.10. PURPOSE AND MEETINGS**

**14.11.** This church shall have a Church Council which shall be the board of directors of this church and shall serve as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly.

**14.12.** The Church Council shall meet at least two times each year.

**14.13.** “Interim legislative authority” is defined to mean that between meetings of the Churchwide Assemblies, the Church Council may exercise the authority of the Churchwide Assembly so long as:

- a. the actions of the Church Council do not conflict with the actions of and policies established by the Churchwide Assembly; and
- b. the Church Council is not precluded by constitutional or bylaw provisions from taking action on the matter.

**14.14.** The Church Council shall elect the treasurer of this church.

**14.15.** The Church Council shall fulfill responsibilities for elections as provided in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and, in the event that a vacancy on the council or on a board or committee of the churchwide organization is declared by the secretary of this church, the Church Council shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term.

**14.16.** The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may remove for cause a voting member of the Church Council, other than an officer, at a duly held regular meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the Church Council, provided that at least 30 days written notice shall be given to each voting member of the Church Council that removal of a specific member of the Church Council will be on the agenda for such a meeting. The Church Council may remove an advisory member for cause, provided notice has been given as specified in this provision, by a majority vote of the voting members of the council.

**14.20. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

**14.21.** The specific duties of the Church Council shall be listed in the bylaws.

**14.21.01.** The Church Council shall act on the policies proposed by churchwide units, subject to review by the Churchwide Assembly.

**14.21.02.** The Church Council shall review the procedures and programs of the churchwide units to assure that churchwide purposes, policies, and objectives are being fulfilled. Each unit shall recommend policy and develop strategies in its particular areas of responsibility after consultation with other units of the churchwide organization and affected synods, congregations, agencies, and institutions.



- a. Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific responsibilities of the unit that have no implications for other units, congregations, synods, agencies, or institutions may be approved by the unit, subject to ratification by the Church Council.
  - b. All other policies shall be submitted to the Church Council for approval.
- 14.21.03.** The Church Council shall review all recommendations from churchwide units for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly.
- 14.21.04.** The Church Council may adopt policies in accord with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- 14.21.05.** The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets.
- 14.21.06.** The Church Council shall adopt personnel policies for this church. Salary structures of churchwide units shall be within the personnel policies of this church, unless exceptions are granted by the Church Council.
- 14.21.07.** Consistent with applicable personnel policies, churchwide units will have staff persons, some of whom shall be executive staff and others of whom shall be support staff. In conformity with this church's commitment to inclusive practice, churchwide units will assure that staff include a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and persons on the roster of ordained ministers. This balance is to be evident in terms of both executive staff and support staff consistent with the inclusive policy of this church.
- 14.21.08.** The Church Council shall report its actions to the Churchwide Assembly.
- 14.21.09.** Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted at meetings of the Church Council.
- 14.21.10. OTHER DUTIES OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL**
- 14.21.11.** The Church Council shall act on resolutions from synod councils.
- 14.21.12.** The Church Council shall provide for the installation of the churchwide officers. At the installation of a newly elected presiding bishop of this church, the presiding minister shall be the retiring presiding bishop of this church or, where that is not possible, a synodical bishop designated by the Church Council.
- 14.21.13.** The Church Council shall establish ranges for the salaries for the presiding bishop, secretary, and treasurer.
- 14.21.14.** The Church Council, acting through the designated churchwide unit, shall have responsibility for the corporate social responsibility of this church and shall have the authority to file shareholder resolutions and cast proxy ballots thereon on stocks held by the churchwide units that are not separately incorporated. In addition, the Church Council may make recommendations to the churchwide units that are separately incorporated concerning the filing of shareholder resolutions and the casting of ballots on stocks held by those units.

- 14.21.15.** The Church Council shall determine, unless otherwise specified in this church's bylaws, the appropriate churchwide unit for the fulfillment of particular program or policy responsibilities identified in the bylaws.
- 14.21.16.** The Church Council shall establish the criteria and policies for the relationship between this church and independent, cooperative, and related Lutheran organizations. The policies adopted by the Church Council shall be administered by the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization. The determination of which organization shall relate to a specific unit of the churchwide organization shall be made by the Church Council.

**14.21.20. ELECTIONS BY THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

- 14.21.21.** Unless otherwise specified in this constitution and bylaws, the Church Council shall elect the executive director for each churchwide program unit to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for election shall be made by the presiding bishop after consultation with the appropriate program committee for each position. The presiding bishop, as chief executive officer, shall arrange within the policy of this church for an annual review of each executive director. A unit executive director shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the executive director may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of this church and the Executive Committee of the Church Council. With the prior consent of the presiding bishop of this church, the Church Council may elect two executive directors for a program unit in the manner provided in this bylaw.
- 14.21.22.** The Church Council shall arrange the process for all elections as specified in this constitution and bylaws for churchwide units to assure conformity with established criteria.

**14.30. COMPOSITION OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

- 14.31. The voting members of the Church Council shall consist of the four churchwide officers and 33 other persons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly.**
- 14.32. Church Council members shall be elected to one six-year term and shall not be eligible for consecutive reelection.**
- 14.32.01.** The Church Council shall have as liaison members nine synodical bishops, each elected by the Conference of Bishops to one four-year term. One bishop shall be elected from each region. In addition, the chair of the Conference of Bishops shall be present for meetings of the Church Council.
- 14.32.02.** The Church Council shall have two youth advisory members, each elected by the board of the youth organization of this church to a three-year term.
- 14.32.03.** The Church Council shall have as advisory members each president, or the designated representative of the president, of the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA, the Association of Lutherans of Arab

and Middle Eastern Heritage, the Association of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the ELCA, the Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA, the American Indian and Alaska Native Association in the ELCA, and the European-American Association in the ELCA.

**14.32.04.** One individual representing this church's seminaries, one individual representing the ELCA-related colleges and universities, and one individual representing the social ministry organizations, chosen by the respective associations of these institutions and agencies, shall serve as advisory members of the Church Council.

**14.32.05.** Advisory members of the Church Council shall have voice but not vote.

**14.32.A05.** *The chairs of the program committees for the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, Global Mission unit, Vocation and Education unit, Church in Society unit, and Multicultural Ministries unit shall serve as advisory members of the Church Council with voice but not vote. In addition, the chairs of the respective boards of trustees of the separately incorporated program units (i.e., Publishing House of the ELCA and Women of the ELCA) shall serve as advisory members of the Church Council with voice by not vote.*

**14.32.B05.** *The chair of the consulting committee on work on behalf of women—as provided in continuing resolution 16.12.D05.d. as part of the Church in Society unit—shall serve as an advisory member of the Church Council with voice but not vote.*

**14.32.C05.** *One voting member of the Church Council shall be selected in each biennium to serve as a liaison with voice but not vote on each program committee of the program units. In addition, a member of the Church Council, upon invitation, may serve as liaison for the respective boards of trustees of the separately incorporated program units (i.e., Publishing House of the ELCA and Women of the ELCA).*

**14.32.D05.** *One voting member of the Church Council shall be selected in each biennium to serve—in accord with bylaw 17.31.11.—as a member of the Advisory Committee for the Church Periodical.*

#### **14.40. CHURCH COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

**14.41. The Church Council shall establish committees and nominate or elect such persons as necessary to carry out the functions assigned to it. The description of such committees shall be set forth in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.**

##### **14.41.10. Executive Committee**

**14.41.11.** The Church Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the churchwide officers and seven members of the Church Council elected by the council. The vice president of this church shall chair this committee. The Executive Committee shall:

- a. perform those functions of the Church Council assigned to it by the Church Council;

- b. transmit resolutions from synods to the appropriate unit or units of the churchwide organization;
- c. fulfill the responsibilities of the Church Council related to nominations, with staff services for the nomination and election processes of the Church Council provided by the Office of the Secretary;
- d. provide advice and counsel for the officers;
- e. review the work of the officers and, with the absence of the salaried officers from such deliberations, set salaries of the presiding bishop, secretary, and treasurer within the ranges established by the Church Council; and
- f. demonstrate concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the full-time salaried officers of this church.

**14.41.A05. Budget and Finance Committee**

*A Budget and Finance Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council and the treasurer of this church as an ex officio member of the committee. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer. The committee shall prepare and present a comprehensive budget to the Church Council for its consideration and presentation to the Churchwide Assembly. In addition, the committee shall relate to the work of the Office of the Treasurer and the Development Services unit.*

**14.41.B05. Legal and Constitutional Review Committee**

*A Legal and Constitutional Review Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council, shall include the secretary of this church as an ex officio member of the committee, and shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Secretary. This committee shall provide ongoing review of legal and constitutional matters. It shall review all proposed amendments to the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.*

**14.41.C05. Planning and Evaluation Committee**

*A Planning and Evaluation Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council and shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. This committee shall assist the presiding bishop in coordinated, strategic planning for the work of the churchwide organization. This committee also shall be responsible for the ongoing evaluation of churchwide units and the structure of the churchwide organization, making recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council. This committee shall establish a process for a periodic review of all churchwide units. Further, in consultation with the executive for administration, this committee shall evaluate and report annually to the Church Council and biennially to the Churchwide Assembly on how the churchwide organization complies with and implements commitments and policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council.*

#### **14.41.D99. Program and Services Committee**

*A Program and Services Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council and shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. This committee shall assist the council in assuring that churchwide purposes, policies, and objectives are being fulfilled through the programs and services of the units of the churchwide organization. All churchwide policies and strategies recommended by units that have implications for congregations, synods, other churchwide units, or institutions and agencies of this church shall be considered by this committee for recommendation to the Church Council.*

#### **14.41.E02. Audit Committee**

*An Audit Committee—composed of six members appointed by the Budget and Finance Committee and approved by the Church Council for two-year, renewable terms—shall assist the Budget and Finance Committee and the Church Council in fulfilling oversight of the churchwide organization’s accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems, and audit functions, consistent with its responsibilities as specified in the charter recommended by the Audit Committee, reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee, and approved by the Church Council. A minimum of two members of the Audit Committee shall be members of the Budget and Finance Committee. The chair of the Audit Committee shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee and shall be appointed by the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. In consultation with the executive for administration, the Audit Committee approves the appointment and dismissal of the director for internal auditing.*

#### **14.41.F07. Board Development Committee**

*A Board Development Committee—composed of six members, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Executive Committee—shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Church Council for two-year, renewable terms to assist the presiding bishop and the Church Council in developing and implementing efforts to help members of the Church Council to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the council’s role and fiduciary responsibility as the board of directors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The executive for administration shall relate to this committee, with staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. Members appointed to the Board Development Committee shall be eligible for service on other committees of the Church Council.*

## Chapter 15.

### CHURCHWIDE OFFICES AND ADMINISTRATION

#### 15.10. OFFICES

**15.11.** An office is a unit of the churchwide organization directly related to and under the authority of a full-time officer of this church. Each office is related to the Church Council through the officer, who reports to the Church Council in the interim between regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. Each office may have executive assistants to undergird the officer in the performance of specified functions that are the responsibility of that officer.

**15.11.01.** There shall be the following offices:

- a. Office of the Presiding Bishop;
- b. Office of the Secretary; and
- c. Office of the Treasurer.

**15.11.02. *Administrative Team.*** The presiding bishop, secretary, treasurer, and executive for administration shall function as an administrative team, directed by the presiding bishop. This administrative team shall assist the presiding bishop in the fulfillment of the presiding bishop's responsibilities for oversight, management, supervision, and coordination in the operation of the churchwide organization.

**15.11.03. *Responsibility for Planning and Evaluation.*** The Office of the Presiding Bishop shall provide coordinated, strategic planning for, and review and evaluation of, the work of the churchwide organization and shall coordinate this planning process with the budget-development process.

#### **15.11.A04. *Duties of the Executive for Administration***

*The executive for administration shall be accountable to the presiding bishop and shall serve as chief administrator of the churchwide organization. The executive for administration shall be elected by the Church Council upon nomination of the presiding bishop and shall have an appointment coterminous with the term of the presiding bishop. At the direction of the presiding bishop, the executive for administration shall:*

- a. *supervise the day-to-day functioning of the churchwide organization and coordinate the work of churchwide units;*
- b. *coordinate the strategic planning and day-to-day staff activities within the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the functioning of the administrative team;*
- c. *facilitate the interdependent functioning of churchwide units in the fulfillment of the responsibilities assigned to them;*
- d. *develop the budget for the churchwide organization and report to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council with regard to the preparation of the budget;*

- e. *provide staff services and documentation to the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council; and*
- f. *oversee the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units.*

**15.11.B05. *Responsibility for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations***

*Responsibility for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.*

- a. *An executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall coordinate the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious activities of this church, and shall recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies relative thereto to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall:*
  - 1) *assist the presiding bishop of this church in carrying out the presiding bishop's role as the chief ecumenical officer of this church;*
  - 2) *administer the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious discussions (including bilateral dialogues) in which this church is involved;*
  - 3) *administer (including personnel and financial support) the membership of this church in ecumenical organizations, such as World Council of Churches, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and Lutheran World Federation;*
  - 4) *study and give advice in matters of fellowship and unity with other Lutheran churches;*
  - 5) *guide the process of reception of theological agreements;*
  - 6) *encourage the study of theological topics of common concern; and*
  - 7) *assist the synods, congregations, and churchwide units of this church in carrying out their ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious responsibilities by giving guidance and by preparing guidelines for action.*
- b. *From time to time as necessary, the Executive Committee of the Church Council shall convene as the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. In serving in such capacity, the committee shall be augmented by the members of this church and the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diaspora who serve as voting members of the council of the Lutheran World Federation. One staff member of the Global Mission unit shall serve as a consultant to the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation.*

**15.11.C05. Responsibility for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries**

*To assist in the fulfillment of constitutional provision 13.21.j., the presiding bishop shall have a staff member appointed by the presiding bishop who shall be an assistant to the presiding bishop of this church to carry out duties related to the chaplaincies of this church in the U.S. armed forces, the Veterans Affairs Administration, and other federal agencies and institutions. The assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries shall:*

- a. supervise the operation of the Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;*
- b. fulfill the requirements for endorsement of candidates for services in federal chaplaincies; and*
- c. seek periodically the advice and counsel of the inter-Lutheran committee for federal chaplaincies whose members of this church shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.*

**15.11.D05. Responsibility for Human Resources**

*Responsibility for human resources shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide management of the personnel policies for the churchwide organization, except as otherwise determined, including equal-employment opportunity and affirmative action, recruitment, interview, and selection, compensation and benefits, fair-employment practices, staff position description, performance evaluation, and training.*

- a. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for human resources shall:
  - 1) recommend personnel policies, procedures, and standards to the presiding bishop for submission to the Church Council, and, upon approval by the Church Council, be responsible for the implementation, administration, and evaluation of personnel policies, procedures, and standards for units, as applicable, of the churchwide organization;*
  - 2) guide the recruitment, personnel interviews, and process of selection of staff;*
  - 3) authorize necessary research to update compensation packages and make recommendations to the Church Council for upgrading pension and other benefits plans;*
  - 4) make employee assistance programs, such as family-crisis counseling and retirement-planning services, available to the employees of this church;*
  - 5) recommend policy and procedures to the Church Council for ongoing performance evaluation;*
  - 6) provide for just and equitable employee-relations practices, including grievance procedures, and provide employee services appropriate to the churchwide office;**



- 7) *maintain personnel records for all employees, including employee-performance evaluations; and*
  - 8) *offer such policies to the synods and congregations as guidelines and be available to counsel and advise the synods as requested.*
- b. *The executive for human resources shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.*

**15.11.E05. Responsibility for Anti-Racism and Diversity Training**

*Responsibility for anti-racism and diversity training shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop in working toward the goal of full partnership and participation of African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people in the life of this church and society. To fulfill this responsibility, the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with the Human Resources section and the Multicultural Ministries unit, shall assist the churchwide organization and other expressions of this church to dismantle racism and to minister in a diverse and pluralistic context.*

**15.11.F05. Responsibility for Research and Evaluation**

*Responsibility for research and evaluation shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide reliable and valid research, relevant information, and appropriate evaluation related to the purposes of this church in order to assist the presiding bishop, other leaders, and staff of the churchwide organization to accomplish their duties.*

- a. *To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for research and evaluation shall:*
- 1) *recommend research and evaluation policies, processes, procedures, and standards through the presiding bishop to the Church Council and implement them upon approval by the Church Council.*
  - 2) *serve as the center for this church in the area of research and evaluation by:*
    - a) *conducting systematic, ongoing research on issues, attitudes, and contextual developments;*
    - b) *conducting individual research projects on behalf of the churchwide organization and its units;*
    - c) *overseeing the development and execution of research plans for each unit; and*
    - d) *providing consultation to all churchwide units on matters related to research and evaluation.*
  - 3) *undertake at the direction of the presiding bishop coordinated comprehensive research and evaluation of the work of the churchwide organization.*
  - 4) *provide interpretation of the results of research conducted or reviewed in support of the work of churchwide units.*

- 5) *provide the churchwide organization, its units, and other expressions of this church with demographic data and analysis.*
  - 6) *offer upon request counsel and advice about research and evaluation to congregations, synods, regions, agencies, and institutions of this church.*
- b. *The executive for research and evaluation shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.*

**15.11.G05 Responsibility for Synodical Relations**

*Responsibility for synodical relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to coordinate the relationships between the churchwide organization and synods, develop and implement synodical-churchwide consultations and services, render support for synodical bishops and synodical staff, and provide staff services for the Conference of Bishops. To fulfill these responsibilities, an executive for synodical relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall:*

- a. *relate to the Conference of Bishops in fulfillment of the conference's assigned responsibilities and provide staff services for development of programs and other needs;*
- b. *relate to the Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries and the assistant to the presiding bishop of this church for federal chaplaincy ministries;*
- c. *plan and coordinate synodical-churchwide consultations and churchwide participation in synodical assemblies;*
- d. *provide for synodical services, including assistance to synods for organizational concerns, long-range planning, and ongoing evaluation;*
- e. *direct efforts for growth and strength in mission-support contributions from congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries;*
- f. *coordinate the interaction of churchwide units with synodical responsibilities and programs; and*
- g. *oversee churchwide participation in regions.*

**15.11.H05 Responsibility for Worship and Liturgical Resources**

*Responsibility for leadership of the worship life of this church shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. In so doing, efforts shall be undertaken to support the worship ministry of this church, oversee the development and review of worship resources intended for use throughout this church, and recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies related to worship and sacramental practices to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly.*

- a. *To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for worship and liturgical resources, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall:*
  - 1) *assist the presiding bishop of this church in carrying out the role of presiding over the ministry of Word and Sacrament;*

- 2) *introduce and interpret worship resources developed for use throughout this church;*
  - 3) *direct this church's process for liturgical review in accord with policy adopted by the Church Council;*
  - 4) *study and advise this church in matters of sacramental practices;*
  - 5) *assist the synods, congregations, and churchwide units of this church in carrying out the ministry of worship, maintaining a network of partners in order to be responsive to the diversity of worship practices within this church;*
  - 6) *develop and implement worship for churchwide assemblies and other churchwide events;*
  - 7) *represent the presiding bishop and the churchwide organization to other church bodies on matters related to worship; and*
  - 8) *be responsible for the Lutheran Center Chapel and for providing worship opportunities for the churchwide organization.*
- b. *The executive for worship and liturgical resources shall provide, through the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, worship resources and shall support the development of a variety of congregational resources that are consistent with the proclamation, prayer, worship, and sacramental practices of this church.*

**15.20. STAFF**

**15.21. The churchwide units shall employ staff according to churchwide policy.**

**15.21.01.** The presiding bishop shall recommend to the Church Council the personnel policies of this church. Such policies shall be binding on all churchwide units unless exceptions are granted by the Church Council or specified in the constitution and bylaws of this church.

**15.21.02.** Approval by the presiding bishop, upon recommendation of the executive for administration, shall be required to authorize staff positions in churchwide units.

**15.21.A05. Staffing Assumptions**

*Wherever practical, staff should be shared between churchwide units and synods, either as deployed staff or shared-time staff. When staff are "deployed" or are "shared synodical-churchwide" staff, this shall occur only after all affected organizations of this church in use of such staff have agreed to the purposes and details of such an arrangement.*

- a. *Deployed staff shall be understood to mean fully funded by the deploying churchwide unit(s).*
- b. *Shared synodical-churchwide staff shall be understood to mean shared funding by the deploying churchwide unit(s) and the synod(s).*

**15.21.B05.Appointment by Presiding Bishop**

*The executive for a unit, section, or function for whom selection is not otherwise provided in the bylaws shall be appointed by the presiding bishop for a defined term to a maximum of four years. The appointment may be renewed for a defined term upon the decision of the presiding bishop. Service of an executive for a unit, section, or function, who was appointed by the presiding bishop, may be terminated by the presiding bishop, consistent with the personnel policies of the churchwide organization.*

**15.30. CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS**

**15.31. The Conference of Bishops shall be composed of the bishops of the synods, the presiding bishop of this church, and the secretary of this church.**

**15.31.01.** The Conference of Bishops shall report to the Church Council, and may make recommendations to the presiding bishop of this church and to the Church Council. Members of the conference shall assemble at least two times each year.

**15.31.02.** Staff services for the functions and responsibilities of the conference shall be provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

**15.31.03.** The responsibilities of the Conference of Bishops shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution. The resolution may be amended by majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the conference disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.

**15.31.A07.Responsibilities of the Conference of Bishops**

*The Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall provide opportunities for worship, spiritual renewal, and theological enrichment for those elected to the office of bishop of a synod, the presiding bishop of this church, and the secretary of this church. To fulfill these responsibilities, the Conference of Bishops shall:*

- a. be a forum in which goals, objectives, and strategies may be developed and shared concerning pastoral leadership, care, and counsel for the synods;*
- b. review recommendations from the appropriate churchwide unit pertaining to standards for the admission to the rosters of ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, and for their retention on those rosters;*
- c. review recommendations and foster programs, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, pertaining to policies related to ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, and their families for pastoral care in such areas as call review, guidance, mobility, intervention, discipline, rehabilitation, and spiritual growth;*

- d. *work with the appropriate churchwide unit in the processes for first call for candidates for the ordained ministry of this church, first call for persons certified as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, mobility of rostered persons, and pastoral care;*
- e. *carry out programs, under the leadership of the appropriate churchwide unit, related to ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, and their families for pastoral care, including call review, guidance, mobility, intervention, discipline, rehabilitation, and spiritual growth;*
- f. *offer programs for orientation and continuing education for bishops, officers, and their spouses;*
- g. *assist the bishops in their role as teachers by being a forum for serious reflections on the theological and ethical implications of issues that affect the life of this church;*
- h. *participate in the development and study of ecumenical documents and assist the bishops to promote the unity of this church through leadership and ecumenical worship, fellowship, and interaction; and*
- i. *assist the bishops in their role as leaders in fostering support for the work of this church by being a forum for discussion of annual mission-support plans and serving as a means of providing advice and counsel to the Church Council in the council's responsibility for approval of those plans.*

**15.31.B03. Organization of the Conference of Bishops**

*The Conference of Bishops may establish committees as the members, from time to time, may determine to assist in fulfillment of assigned responsibilities. Quadrennially, the Conference of Bishops shall elect a chair and vice chair to preside at meetings and serve as ex officio members of the executive committee of the conference with the presiding bishop and secretary. Three synodical bishops also shall be elected by the conference as members of the executive committee.*

**15.31.C03. Staff Services for the Conference of Bishops**

*Staff services for meetings of the Conference of Bishops shall be provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary. The executive assistant to the presiding bishop for synodical ministries shall coordinate the operation of the Conference of Bishops.*

## Chapter 16.

### PROGRAM UNITS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

#### 16.10. PROGRAM UNITS

**16.11. A program unit is a unit of the churchwide organization to which is assigned responsibility for a major, identified portion of the program of this church.**

#### 16.11.A05. *Program Units*

*Program units of the churchwide organization—which shall function in cooperation, coordination, and collaboration—are the:*

- a. Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit;*
- b. Global Mission unit;*
- c. Vocation and Education unit;*
- d. Church in Society unit;*
- e. Multicultural Ministries unit;*
- f. Publishing House of the ELCA unit; and*
- g. Women of the ELCA unit.*

**16.12. Each unit shall be responsible to the Churchwide Assembly and will report to the Church Council in the interim. The policies, procedures, and operation of each unit shall be reviewed by the Church Council in order to assure conformity with the governing documents of this church and with Churchwide Assembly actions.**

#### 16.12.10. Program Committees

**16.12.11.** Each program committee, which normally shall meet two times each year, shall function as specified in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding its responsibilities in relation to a particular unit of the churchwide organization.

**16.12.12.** Each program committee shall be composed of 15 persons elected to one six-year term, with no consecutive reelection, and with one-third of the members being elected every biennium, as provided in Chapter 19. The presiding bishop of this church, or the presiding bishop's designee, shall serve as an advisory member of each program committee. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop to serve as an advisory member of each program committee. A member of the Church Council shall be appointed by the Church Council to serve as a liaison member of each program committee with voice but not vote.

**16.12.13.** Each program committee shall review proposed policies and strategies for its areas of responsibility in the preparation of such policies and strategies for submission by the executive director of the unit to the appropriate committee of the Church Council, for presentation to the Church Council.

**16.12.14.** Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted.

**16.12.15.** Each program committee shall seek to ensure that the unit operates within the expenditure authorization established by the Church Council.

**16.12.16.** The responsibilities of the program units shall be enumerated in continuing resolutions.

**16.12.A05. Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission Unit**

*The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit shall foster and facilitate the efforts of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies in reaching out in witness to the Gospel to people in all contexts and cultures within the territory of this church. It will do so by equipping existing congregations and ministries; developing new ministries and congregations; seeking to renew strategic ministries; and working with congregations and synods in programs and strategies for renewal and evangelical outreach. To fulfill these responsibilities, this program unit shall:*

- a. *develop, coordinate, and carry out programs of evangelism, faith formation, and discipleship, including life-long learning and focus on prayer, and implementation of the evangelism strategy.*
- b. *recommend policy for, and then foster and facilitate, development of new ministries and congregations.*
- c. *recommend policy as well as foster and facilitate work for renewal of strategic ministries. To do so, this program unit will:*
  - 1) *function in cooperation with synods and congregations; and*
  - 2) *have primary responsibility in working with synods to determine where and when new congregations of this church shall be developed and to recommend ministries for recognition and reception as congregations of this church.*
- d. *establish, support, and plan, in partnership with the Multicultural Ministries unit, for the outreach and discipleship of this church among persons of color and those whose primary language is other than English and, in so doing:*
  - 1) *have primary responsibility for development of partnerships with people of African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native ethnic heritage that help this church to bring the Gospel to all people; and*
  - 2) *assist in the leadership development and support of African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native leaders.*
- e. *develop and deliver programs to enable members and congregations to respond financially in support of this church's ministry in congregations, synods, agencies, institutions, and the churchwide organization, and, in so doing:*
  - 1) *foster stewardship education endeavors;*
  - 2) *work in coordination with the efforts of the Development Services unit; and*

- 3) *provide, upon request, counsel and assistance to congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions of this church to develop and strengthen financial stewardship.*
- f. *relate to the Mission Investment Fund.*
  - g. *be responsible for representing this church in churchwide cooperative planning for outreach and discipleship together with other church bodies and ecumenical organizations serving in the geographic territory of this church's synods.*
  - h. *cooperate, under the coordination of the Global Mission unit, with Lutheran church bodies based in other nations that desire to carry out ministry in the U.S.A., and consult with synods of this church in planning and implementing such ministry.*
  - i. *cooperate with other churchwide units and the synods of this church in providing programs of education for domestic mission and for witness to persons of other religions.*
  - j. *support specialized outreach ministries, such as border and maritime ministries in partnership with other churchwide units.*
  - k. *relate on behalf of the churchwide organization to Lutheran Men in Mission as a self-supporting entity.*
  - l. *develop resources for congregational use in partnership with the Publishing House of the ELCA and other appropriate churchwide units.*
  - m. *develop multilingual and culture-specific programs and resources in cooperation with the Multicultural Ministries unit, Publishing House of the ELCA, and other churchwide units.*
  - n. *be responsible, in coordination with synods and appropriate churchwide units, for the Mission Partners, Mission Founders, and Mission Builders programs for support of new and renewing congregations.*

**16.12.B05.Global Mission Unit**

*The Global Mission unit shall be responsible for this church's mission in other countries and shall be the channel through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society. To fulfill these responsibilities, this program unit shall:*

- a. *engage the members and resources of this church in mission outside the territory of this church through involvement in evangelism, witness, education, promotion of justice, service, relief, and development. In so doing, the unit will:*
  - 1) *establish relationships and cooperate in mission with Lutheran and other Christian churches, agencies, institutions, mission societies, and movements in other countries;*
  - 2) *develop and recommend policies and programs for this church's mission in other countries;*



- 3) *facilitate contacts and the exchange of human and material resources among churches, institutions, and agencies outside the U.S.A. with which this unit cooperates;*
  - 4) *recruit, call, prepare, and send missionary personnel, including volunteers;*
  - 5) *develop personnel policies for long-term missionaries in consultation with the Human Resources section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and administer such policies after their approval by the Church Council;*
  - 6) *participate in development and relief with Lutheran World Relief, the Lutheran World Federation, and other ecumenical organizations and agencies;*
  - 7) *administer the allocation of funds to combat hunger outside the U.S.A. in accordance with World Hunger Program guidelines, in consultation with the Church in Society unit; and*
  - 8) *cooperate with global companions in promoting justice and the equitable sharing of resources and enable the perspectives of companions to enhance and deepen the ELCA's public witness.*
- b. *be responsible for this church's relationship to mission societies, organizations, and movements in North America that focus on mission in other countries.*
  - c. *foster global leadership-development programs and administer international scholarship programs on behalf of this church, in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation and churches in other countries.*
  - d. *encourage and enable companion churches to build this church's capacity for mission in the U.S.A. and coordinate their work with program units, synods, and congregations.*
  - e. *cooperate with other units of this church, under the coordination of the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, in programs of education about and witness to persons of other faiths within the territory of this church.*
  - f. *share with this church insights and expertise gained from Christian relationships around the globe and inter-cultural experiences.*
  - g. *provide programs of global mission education and global companionship for this church in cooperation with other churchwide units and the synods of this church.*
  - h. *work in collaboration with appropriate churchwide units for border and immigrant ministries.*

#### **16.12.C06.Vocation and Education Unit**

*The Vocation and Education unit shall be responsible for development and support of faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in the world; and shall assist this church and its institutions*

*in equipping people to practice their callings under the Gospel for the sake of the world. To fulfill these responsibilities, this program unit shall:*

- a. articulate and exemplify for this church a guiding vision that cultivates the Lutheran understanding of the vocation of all the baptized and the place of education and knowledge in the context of faith; and, thereby,*
  - 1) initiate and promote theological reflection among all people of this church;*
  - 2) urge continuing attention in this church to the callings of every Christian for service of the neighbor in daily life;*
  - 3) advocate for a vocation-based understanding of servant leadership that recognizes the work of Christians in the world and in the Church; collaborate with other churchwide units, institutions, and synods to assist this church in identifying, inviting, and equipping potential leaders for callings in the Church and the world;*
  - 4) encourage this church and its members to express the faith by supporting and nurturing public, private, and parochial education; and*
  - 5) give focused attention to the multicultural, racial, economic, gender, and age diversity of God's people.*
- b. relate to and assist ministries, organizations, programs, and movements that support members of this church in discerning and practicing their callings under the Gospel; and, thereby,*
  - 1) nurture efforts of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies to engage youth in the ongoing witness and service of this church;*
  - 2) guide and support the Lutheran Youth Organization, which shall operate with youth leadership elected by its members and with a constitution submitted by the Lutheran Youth Organization for possible approval by the Church Council, and review policies, budget requests, and resolutions of the Lutheran Youth Organization and submit recommendations on such matters, as appropriate, to the Church Council;*
  - 3) relate on behalf of the churchwide organization to outdoor ministries;*
  - 4) support involvement of young adults in the life of this church and their preparation for leadership and service in the world;*
  - 5) foster, in coordination with synods, campus ministries at public and non-ELCA colleges and universities, in accordance with the established campus ministry policies and procedures;*

- 6) *foster relationships with Lutheran student movements, ecumenical student movements, and other denominational campus ministries; and*
  - 7) *relate on behalf of the churchwide organization to ministries that seek to encourage and support vocation-based understandings of Christian identity in daily life.*
- c. *be a steward of the educational institutions and networks of this church; and, thereby,*
- 1) *relate on behalf of the churchwide organization to early childhood education centers, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by ELCA congregations or associations of congregations;*
  - 2) *nurture relationships on behalf of the churchwide organization with the colleges and universities of this church;*
  - 3) *facilitate this church's sponsorship, support, and provision for oversight of seminaries;*
  - 4) *develop and monitor—in consultation with synods, seminaries, and other churchwide units—standards for education and formation programs that prepare persons for rostered ministry;*
  - 5) *encourage and facilitate the theological education network of this church for cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among its seminaries and clusters, colleges and universities, life-long learning programs, and other theological education providers;*
  - 6) *convene a regular convocation of theologians involved in the teaching ministry of this church, including representatives from the churchwide staff and the synodical bishops; and, in partnership with the Multicultural Ministries unit, convene a regular gathering of teaching theologians of color; and*
  - 7) *represent the colleges, universities, and schools of this church in public policy matters, in consultation with the Church in Society unit, and encourage, support, and promote relationships with associations and entities related to higher education and to schools.*
  - 8) *convene a council of college and university presidents and gather regularly the presidents of ELCA seminaries to explore shared needs and concerns; and*
  - 9) *provide risk management services for the colleges, universities, and seminaries of this church.*
- d. *facilitate the calling forth and support of leaders for mission, provide them with life-long learning opportunities, and coordinate the planning, policies, and procedures by which persons will be recruited,*

*prepared, evaluated, and deployed for rostered ministry; and, thereby,*

- 1) monitor the leadership needs and opportunities of this church and sustain a vision of adaptable, diverse, and inter-connected cadres of rostered and other leaders as means to serving God's mission for the world;*
- 2) recommend and monitor, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, ecclesiastical standards for admission of persons to and the continuation of persons on this church's roster of ordained ministers and its rosters of commissioned associates in ministry, consecrated deaconesses, and consecrated diaconal ministers;*
- 3) develop and monitor—in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and the Conference of Bishops—policies for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers between churches with which the ELCA has established a relationship of full communion;*
- 4) oversee and support a candidacy system for this church, in cooperation with the synods and seminaries, for the recruitment, preparation, evaluation, and support of candidates for these rosters;*
- 5) facilitate the provision of opportunities for rostered and other leaders to be healthy, faithful, and engaged in continued learning;*
- 6) assist synods and seminaries in providing programs and resources for maintaining healthy boundaries and preventing and responding to sexual misconduct by rostered persons;*
- 7) assist synods, institutions, and other churchwide units in preparing and supporting persons for various ministries, including mission development, ministries of chaplaincy, pastoral care and clinical education, and synodically authorized ministries;*
- 8) collaborate with the Multicultural Ministries unit and other churchwide units, synods, and institutions of this church in the identification, recruitment, development, and support of African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native leadership, particularly for discerning calls to rostered or authorized ministry and with focused attention on young adults and women;*
- 9) foster, in cooperation with other churchwide units and synods, the leadership of women and women of color or primary language other than English;*
- 10) assist this church in inclusive ministry with and among persons with disabilities;*

- 11) *relate to and advise the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and*
- 12) *implement processes, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, for helping this church match the resources of its leadership rosters with mission opportunities of congregations and other ministries, including the assignment to synods of approved candidates for rostered ministry, and the mobility of rostered persons within the ELCA.*

#### **16.12.D06.Church in Society Unit**

*The Church in Society unit shall assist this church to discern, understand, and respond to the needs of human beings, communities, society, and the whole creation through direct human services and through addressing systems, structures, and policies of society, seeking to promote justice, peace, and the care of the earth. To fulfill these responsibilities, this program unit shall:*

- a. *develop and coordinate this church's theological and ethical study and analysis of social issues as part of its social witness.*
- b. *develop this church's social statements for action by the Church Council and Churchwide Assembly; and prepare, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and appropriate churchwide units, messages and resolutions on social issues for action by the Church Council.*
- c. *support, encourage, and facilitate communication among formal and informal networks of people throughout this church committed to study, service, and advocacy concerning social issues.*
- d. *work to enable this church to realize the full participation of women; to create equal opportunity for women of all cultures; to foster partnership between men and women; to assist this church to address sexism; and to advocate justice for women in this church and society. In so doing, this program unit shall:*
  - 1) *present a program plan annually to the Church Council and biennially to the Churchwide Assembly on these efforts; and*
  - 2) *convene a consulting committee related to this task.*
- e. *devote attention, in cooperation with other units, to concerns for peace and the environment.*
- f. *develop—through this church's membership in Lutheran Services in America and in cooperation with synods, congregations, churchwide units, community and social ministry organizations, other church bodies, and institutions—a comprehensive system for human services to carry out this church's ministry with persons in poverty and other persons with limited options and special needs. To do so, this program unit will:*
  - 1) *recommend overall policy for the social ministry activity of this church;*

- 2) *establish criteria to grant and maintain affiliation with social ministry organizations, and administer the granting of affiliation to such organizations;*
  - 3) *provide, through Lutheran Services in America, a comprehensive range of technical and programmatic support services for social ministry organizations;*
  - 4) *administer this church's participation in Lutheran Services in America and recommend to the Church Council election of this church's members to the board of Lutheran Services in America;*
  - 5) *maintain standards, in cooperation with the appropriate program unit, for chaplains serving in affiliated social ministry organizations;*
  - 6) *work with the Mission Investment Fund in the administration of loans to affiliated social ministry organizations; and*
  - 7) *support the Office of the Secretary in maintaining the list of affiliated social ministry organizations that seek and qualify for participation in this church's group tax exemption.*
- g. *coordinate this church's relationship with community organizations and community-economic development activities in cooperation with the Multicultural Ministries unit.*
- h. *direct and implement this church's public-policy advocacy to national and international governmental bodies in consultation with other churchwide units, and coordinate its public-policy advocacy to state governmental bodies. To do so, this program unit will:*
- 1) *maintain a Washington, D.C., office on behalf of this church, for advocacy to the U.S. and foreign governments;*
  - 2) *maintain the Lutheran Office for World Community in New York, on behalf of this church, for advocacy to the United Nations and other international and national governmental bodies; and shall represent, at the request of the Lutheran World Federation, the concerns of the Lutheran World Federation in the United Nations; and*
  - 3) *establish and maintain, in partnership with synods and social ministry organizations, state public-policy offices for advocacy to state governments on behalf of this church.*
- i. *give expression to this church's concern for corporate social responsibility, both in its internal affairs and its interaction in the broader society. To do so, this program unit will:*
- 1) *exercise, at the direction of the Church Council, the rights of this church as a corporate shareholder on issues of social concern on stocks held by the churchwide units that are not separately incorporated. In addition, the Church Council may make recommendations to the churchwide units that are separately incor-*

- porated concerning the filing of shareholder resolutions and the casting of proxy ballots on stocks held by those units;
- 2) facilitate the formation of an Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility that will include representatives from the Board of Pensions, the Church Council, and other units of this church and that will give counsel and advice to all appropriate units of this church on corporate social responsibility; and
- 3) work with national ecumenical groups on issues of corporate responsibility.
- j. be responsible for this church's program to combat world hunger; administer, in cooperation with appropriate units, a hunger grants program to combat hunger and poverty in the United States through relief and development; administer hunger education and hunger advocacy grants; and direct this church's hunger education in cooperation with appropriate churchwide units.
- k. relate on behalf of this church to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and the Lutheran Disaster Response.
- l. coordinate this church's domestic disaster response.

**16.12.E07. Multicultural Ministries Unit**

*The Multicultural Ministries unit shall guide the churchwide organization in the multicultural dimensions of its work. To fulfill these responsibilities, this program unit shall:*

- a. foster programs of the churchwide organization with synods, regions, and agencies and institutions as they identify, develop, and strengthen the multicultural dimensions of their work.
- b. coordinate the churchwide implementation of ethnic-specific ministry strategies.
- c. review and monitor all churchwide programs to maintain and enhance the ELCA's central commitment in becoming an anti-racist, multicultural church.
- d. present annually to the Church Council and biennially to the Churchwide Assembly a program plan, including ongoing evaluation of the churchwide organization's work in the area of multicultural ministries.
- e. provide programs of multicultural education and education on racial justice for this church in cooperation with ecumenical and global multicultural ministry partners.
- f. relate to and assist the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA, the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association in the ELCA, the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, the Association of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the ELCA, the Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA, and the European-American Association in the ELCA, and encourage and

- support associations in their relationship with other churchwide units.*
- g. convene and guide an internal multicultural ministries alliance of all program areas in the churchwide organization.*
  - h. cooperate with other churchwide units and appropriate synods to undergird maritime ministries.*
  - i. work with other program units and synods in ethnic specific leadership development.*
  - j. work with other appropriate program units for border and immigrant ministries.*
  - k. work with the Church in Society unit in its coordination of ethnic-specific and racial-justice advocacy.*
  - l. provide advice, counsel, and recommendations to other churchwide units concerning the development of multicultural and community-specific programs and resources.*
  - m. assist this church in developing and implementing cooperative efforts among the African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, Alaska Native, and European-American communities in society, in other Christian communions, and in other religious traditions.*
  - n. assist this church in working toward the goal of full partnership and participation of African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people in the life of this church and society.*

**16.20. SEPARATELY INCORPORATED PROGRAM UNITS**

**16.21. Provision shall be made and maintained for the separate incorporation of the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as program units of the churchwide organization.**

**16.30. PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE ELCA**

**16.31. This church shall have a publishing house to carry out the publishing ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be incorporated. The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer. Upon authorization of the Church Council, portions of the activities of this church's publishing house may be conducted through separate corporations.**

**16.31.01.** This publishing house shall have a board of trustees of 15 members, elected for one six-year term with no consecutive reelection and with one-third elected every two years as provided in Chapter 19.

- a. The board of trustees shall be composed of laypersons with expertise in publishing, education, business management, finance and invest-



ment, and ordained ministers with expertise in rural, urban, and suburban parish ministry in small and large congregations and advanced theological study.

- b. The presiding bishop shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees, with voice but not vote, or shall designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative as provided in constitutional provision 13.21.
- c. The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of the publishing house with voice but not vote.
- d. The board of trustees of the publishing house shall serve as the board of any separate corporation of this church's publishing house and the president of the publishing house shall be the chief executive officer of any such corporation.

**16.31.02.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., 16.12.11., and 16.12.14. shall apply to this publishing house.

**16.31.03.** The president shall be elected by the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for president shall be made jointly by the presiding bishop and the search committee of the board. The board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the president. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The board shall establish the salary of the president with the concurrence of the presiding bishop. The president may be terminated at any time jointly by the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA and the presiding bishop of this church, following recommendation by the executive committee of the board of trustees.

**16.31.04.** The specific responsibilities of this publishing house shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution. The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.

**16.31.A05. Responsibilities of the Publishing House of the ELCA**

*The Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—also known as Augsburg Fortress, Publishers—shall:*

- a. *be responsible for the publishing, production, and distribution of publications to be sold to accomplish the mission of this church.*
- b. *work in close cooperation with congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to provide a diversity of published resources.*
- c. *relate to other churchwide units through resource planning groups. Materials published to assist congregations in fulfilling their life in mission shall be developed in coordination with other appropriate*

- churchwide units. Development costs will be paid by the unit developing the publication.*
- d. develop, produce, and distribute materials required to carry out its functions.*
  - e. be financed from the distribution of materials, not from the budget of this church.*
  - f. create, develop, and publish a diversity of resources in various media; make available other publications, materials, and church supplies; produce the official documents and publications of this church; and produce materials in a manner that assures their ready availability.*
  - g. establish a distribution center, as well as utilize other means for the wide distribution of resources within and beyond this church.*
  - h. manage its finances and other resources in a manner that assures the continuity and extension of its activities. This publishing house shall maintain its own accounting, data processing, personnel, pension, and other functions essential to a cohesive, efficient, and effective operation.*
  - i. identify and nurture talented authors, composers, artists, and others involved in creating various media.*
  - j. produce and distribute the church periodical in accord with provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.*
  - k. determine its necessary financial reserves, appropriations, and publishing subsidies.*
  - l. make available resources to meet unique language and cultural needs.*
  - m. provide for production and distribution services for materials that originate in churchwide units, including the option of providing for competitive printing costs and delivery from independent printers, with costs for these services paid by the originating unit.*

**16.40. WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION**

**16.41. This church shall have a women's organization to assist its women to commit themselves to full discipleship, affirm their gifts, and support each other in their particular callings.**

**16.41.01.** Membership of this organization shall be women of this church who wish to participate through local and other groupings that affirm the purposes of this organization. This organization shall function in local, synodical, and churchwide settings.

**16.41.02.** This organization shall be incorporated, self-supporting financially, and shall manage its own assets within the policies of this church. The personnel policies and salary structures of the churchwide organization shall be followed.

- 16.41.03.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., 14.21.06., 16.12.11., 16.12.13, and 16.12.14. shall apply to this organization. Bylaw 14.21.07. shall apply to the women’s organization with the exception of the balance provisions for women and men and for laypersons and persons on the roster of ordained ministers.
- 16.41.04.** This organization shall have a board of 21 members elected by the assembly of this organization for one three-year term with eligibility for one consecutive reelection. At least 10 percent of the members of this board shall be persons of color or primary language other than English. No more than one elected board member shall be from any one synod. Board members are to serve with the perspective of the interdependence of all units of this church. In the event of a vacancy, the board shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of this organization with voice but not vote.
- 16.41.05.** The board of this organization shall meet at least two times per year and shall be responsible to the assembly that elected it. The assembly of this organization shall be representative of local and other groupings of women who are members of the women’s organization. Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the board, a board member’s position shall be declared vacant and the board shall arrange for election to fill the vacancy under Article I, Section 4, Item 9, of the constitution and bylaws of the women’s organization.
- 16.41.06.** This organization’s board shall elect its executive director to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. This board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the executive director. The executive director shall be eligible for reelection. Consistent with applicable personnel policies, the board shall establish the salary of the executive director with the concurrence of the presiding bishop. The board may terminate the employment of the executive director in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church.
- 16.41.07.** The specific responsibilities of the women’s organization shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution. The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority of the Churchwide Assembly or two-thirds of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.

**16.41.A05. Responsibilities of the Women’s Organization**

*The Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as the program unit for the women’s organization, shall:*

- a. enable its members to grow through biblical study, theological reflection, and prayer.*
- b. cooperate with other units of this church in advocating for the oppressed and voiceless, urging change in systems and structures*

- that exclude and alienate, and working for peace and justice as messengers of hope.*
- c. provide for development and distribution of resources for and to its members, including a magazine.*
  - d. facilitate local initiative in creating programs and identifying alternative structural models that encourage and support flexibility.*
  - e. design and implement a leadership development program for its members, assisting its members to identify, develop, and express their gifts for ministry.*
  - f. develop networks for communication among women locally, ecumenically, and globally.*
  - g. relate to other women's organizations ecumenically and globally.*
  - h. work interdependently with all units of this church in program development, research, and planning in order to enhance the ministries and participation of women in church and in society.*
  - i. develop working arrangements in areas of mutual responsibility with the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

## Chapter 17.

### SERVICE UNITS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

#### 17.10. SERVICE UNITS

**17.11. A service unit is a unit of the churchwide organization to which is assigned particular identified responsibility for services on behalf of churchwide programs and, in certain units, for specific services to members, congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies.**

#### 17.11.A05 *Identification of Service Units*

*The service units of the churchwide organization are:*

- a. Communication Services;*
- b. The Lutheran magazine;*
- c. Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;*
- d. Development Services;*
- e. Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and*
- f. Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

**17.12. Separate incorporation shall be maintained for the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in addition to the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

#### 17.20.01. Accountability of Service Units

**17.21.01.** Except as otherwise stated in bylaws, the requirements of constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.01. through 14.21.07. and 16.12.14. shall apply to service units of the churchwide organization.

#### 17.21.A06 *Communication Services*

*The Communication Services unit shall interpret the work of this church, provide for this church's presence in public media, and coordinate the communication activities of this church's units.*

- a. To fulfill these responsibilities, the Communication Services unit shall:*
  - 1) implement an overall communication strategy for this church and recommend communication policies, procedures, and standards under the oversight of the presiding bishop and with the approval of the Church Council;*
  - 2) maintain a news and information service to gather and disseminate news about this church and its members, and respond to inquiries about this church, its policies, and its programs;*
  - 3) interpret the work of the churchwide organization to the members of this church and the public;*

- 4) *develop and carry out a communication system for sharing information and resources among congregations, synods, regions, and the churchwide organization;*
  - 5) *provide administrative and budget counsel for The Lutheran magazine;*
  - 6) *cooperate with the network of resource centers of this church.*
  - 7) *coordinate multimedia production for the churchwide organization;*
  - 8) *develop, promote, and distribute public media-ministry programs of this church;*
  - 9) *make appropriate provisions for translation, as determined by policy established by the Church Council, of church communication into languages other than English and into non-visual and non-verbal versions;*
  - 10) *provide public relations counsel and support to this church; and*
  - 11) *maintain relationships with communication offices of other church bodies and ecumenical agencies and engage in cooperative efforts as appropriate.*
- b. *The executive director for communication services shall be appointed by the presiding bishop and be accountable to the presiding bishop.*

**17.30. CHURCH PERIODICAL**

**17.31. The church periodical, *The Lutheran*, shall be published by this church through the Publishing House of the ELCA and shall be identified as a magazine of this church.**

**17.31.01.** An advisory committee for *The Lutheran* shall have the responsibility for the church periodical. The advisory committee, in consultation with the presiding bishop of this church, shall nominate the editor for the church periodical.

**17.31.02.** The Church Council shall elect the editor of the church periodical by a two-thirds vote to a four-year term. The editor shall be eligible for reelection. Employment of the editor may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of this church and a two-thirds vote of the members of the Church Council present and voting.

**17.31.03.** The editor shall be responsible to the Church Council. The editor shall select the editorial staff of the church periodical and shall be solely responsible for the periodical's editorial content.

**17.31.04.** Official notices of this church shall be published in the periodical.

**17.31.10. Advisory Committee for the Church Periodical**

**17.31.11.** The advisory committee of the church periodical shall be composed of nine members elected by the Church Council.

- a. The members of the advisory committee of the church periodical, who shall be nominated through the Church Council's nomination

process, shall include persons chosen for their understanding of periodical publishing.

- b. Each member of the advisory committee for *The Lutheran* shall be elected for one six-year term, with no consecutive reelection and with one-third of the members elected every two years.
- c. The terms of office of persons so elected to regular terms on the advisory committee of the church periodical shall begin on the first day of the month following each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly.
- d. The Church Council shall appoint one voting member of the council to serve as an advisory member of this committee.
- e. The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of this committee.

**17.31.12.** The specific responsibilities of the advisory committee shall be specified in a continuing resolution.

**17.31.A06.** *The publishing house, in consultation with the editor, shall produce and distribute the church periodical, and provide such services as mutually agreed by the president of the publishing house and the editor of the church periodical.*

**17.31.B05.** *The advisory committee of the church periodical shall:*

- a. *develop editorial and advertising guidelines.*
- b. *receive periodic reports from the editor.*
- c. *consult with the editor from the perspective of the expertise of committee members.*
- d. *be responsible, together with the presiding bishop of this church, for the annual performance review of the editor.*

**17.40. FOUNDATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

**17.41. This church shall provide major gift and deferred giving programs for individual donors, pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church and its related congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions, and educational and support services in major gift and deferred giving programs to congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions of this church. These programs and activities may be conducted through a separate corporation known as the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**17.41.01.** The program and activities of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be coordinated with the Development Services unit of the churchwide organization.

**17.41.02.** The Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees that shall be comprised of at least nine but not more than 12 persons elected to six-year terms by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with no consecutive

reelection and with approximately one-third of the members elected each biennium. In addition to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the board may identify advisors as it may deem appropriate from time to time. A synodical bishop elected by the Conference of Bishops shall serve as an advisory member of the board with voice but not vote.

- 17.41.03.** The president of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be elected by the board of trustees to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the president may be terminated jointly by the board of trustees of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the presiding bishop of this church.
- 17.41.04.** The board of trustees of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall consult with the Office of the Treasurer with regard to the assessment of management fees or provision of other assets available for the budget of the foundation.
- 17.41.05.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., 14.21.07., 16.12.11., 16.12.13., and 16.12.14. shall apply to the operation of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 17.41.06.** The specific responsibilities of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution.

**17.41.A05. *Responsibilities of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America***

*The Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:*

- a. conduct—on behalf of this church, its congregations, synods, church-wide units, and institutions—a program of major gifts and deferred giving.*
- b. provide consultation, support, and guidance to members of this church in the areas of major gifts and deferred giving.*
- c. provide coordination and support in major gifts and deferred giving to this church, including congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions.*
- d. provide educational materials, seminars, and workshops in the area of deferred giving.*
- e. coordinate its programs and ministries with the objectives and programs of other stewardship and financial-resource development activities of this church.*
- f. consult with the Office of the Treasurer in the recommendation and establishment within that office of policies and procedures for processes governing valuation of noncash gifts, the management of assets of life-income agreements and endowment funds, and the distribution of earned-income payments to donors and to remainder*



*beneficiaries as regulated by life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.*

- g. engage—in cooperation with congregations, synods, and agencies and institutions of this church—in efforts to:
  - 1) identify and cultivate prospective major and deferred-gift donors;*
  - 2) seek gifts, bequests, and investments for the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;*
  - 3) seek gifts, bequests, and investments for endowment funds that support ministries of this church; and*
  - 4) coordinate the programs of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the ministry objectives of the churchwide organization and the synods of this church.**
- h. offer pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church and its congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions.*
- i. provide assistance for the establishment and growth of mission endowment funds in congregations.*
- j. coordinate the operation of the Foundation of the ELCA with the Development Services unit.*

#### **17.41.B05. Development Services**

*The Development Services unit shall oversee and direct efforts for support of the churchwide ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and coordinate the work of development for the churchwide organization.*

- a. To accomplish these responsibilities, the Development Services unit shall:
  - 1) develop and maintain an integrated donor database to enhance coordination of the various gift opportunities offered to members and congregations of this church through the churchwide organization; and*
  - 2) determine the pattern of staff leadership for the various development efforts and programs.**
- b. All solicitations of restricted gifts for any of the churchwide ministries shall be coordinated by the Development Services unit.*
- c. Operation of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be coordinated with the Development Services unit.*
- d. The executive director for development services shall be appointed by the presiding bishop and be accountable to the presiding bishop.*

**17.41.C09.** *To implement staggered terms for board members, if more than four persons will be elected in 2009, the fifth person elected will serve a four-year term, and the sixth person will serve a two-year term.*

- 17.50. MISSION INVESTMENT FUND  
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
- 17.51. This church shall have a fund, known as the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to provide investment opportunities to individuals, congregations, synods, institutions, agencies, and organizations, and administer loans to congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other organizations and institutions that are related to this church. The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be incorporated.**
- 17.51.01.** The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees of at least nine but not more than 12 members, who shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly for six-year terms with no consecutive reelection and with approximately one-third elected each biennium as provided in Chapter 19.
- 17.51.02.** Unless the Church Council determines that the treasurer of this church shall be the president of the Mission Investment Fund corporation, the president shall be elected by the board of trustees of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for president of the Mission Investment Fund shall be made jointly by the presiding bishop and the search committee of the board. The board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the president. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the president may be terminated jointly by the board of trustees of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the presiding bishop of this church, following recommendation by the executive committee of the board of trustees.
- 17.51.03.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., 14.21.06., 14.21.07., 16.12.11., 16.12.13., and 16.12.14. shall apply to the operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 17.51.04.** The specific responsibilities of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution.
- 17.51.A05. *Operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA***  
*The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:*
- a. have primary responsibility for the development, administration, and promotion of Mission Investments.*
  - b. relate to the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, which shall request real estate acquisition for new and existing*

*ministries within the limits of the capital funds available and within established criteria.*

- c. provide expertise for management of real property and execute all necessary documents for the acquisition and disposition of such property.*
- d. establish, in consultation with the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, an annual capital budget for ministry development.*
- e. have responsibility, within established guidelines for determining which congregations shall receive loans, the amount of each loan, and the repayment schedule; and shall confer with the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit on any loans to developing ministries.*
- f. execute the loans, ensure safekeeping for the legal documents, provide accounting services for the repayment, and supervise collection.*
- g. offer building and architectural consultative services to new congregations entering first-unit construction, to congregations relocating with synodical approval, to other congregations, and to other organizations and institutions that are affiliated with this church.*

**17.51.B09.** *To implement staggered terms for board members, if more than four persons will be elected in 2009, the fifth person elected will serve a four-year term, and the sixth person will serve a two-year term.*

**17.60. BOARD OF PENSIONS**

**17.61. This church shall have a church pension and other benefits plans unit. This Board of Pensions shall be incorporated. The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer.**

**17.61.01.** The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. approve the documents governing the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program that have been referred by the Church Council; and
- b. refer any amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of members with respect to their pension accumulations.

**17.61.02.** The Church Council shall:

- a. review policy established by the board and take action on any policy that would change significantly the documents establishing and governing the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.
- b. approve any changes in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program when there is to be:

- 1) a significant increase in cost to the employers or members; or
  - 2) a significant increase or decrease in benefits to the members.
- c. refer any amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program initiated by the Church Council to the board for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of members with respect to their pension accumulations.
  - d. refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program to the Churchwide Assembly for final action.
- 17.61.03.** The Board of Pensions shall have a board of trustees composed of 15 persons elected for one six-year term with no consecutive reelection and with one-third elected each biennium as provided in Chapter 19.
- a. The board of trustees of the Board of Pensions shall include persons with expertise in investments, insurance, and pensions, and two to five persons who are members of the plan, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister who is a plan member.
  - b. The presiding bishop shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees, with voice but not vote, or shall designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative as provided in constitutional provision 13.21.
  - c. The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees with voice but not vote.
  - d. The treasurer of this church shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees with voice but not vote.
- 17.61.04.** The board shall organize itself as it deems necessary.
- 17.61.05.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.07., 16.12.11., and 16.12.14. shall apply to this board.
- 17.61.06.** The president shall be elected by the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for president shall be made jointly by the presiding bishop and the search committee of the board. The board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the president. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The board shall establish the salary of the president with the concurrence of the presiding bishop. The president may be terminated at any time jointly by the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions and the presiding bishop of this church, following recommendation by the executive committee of the board of trustees.
- 17.61.07.** The specific responsibilities of the Board of Pensions shall be enumerated in continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote

of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.

**17.61.A05. Responsibilities of the Board of Pensions**

*The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:*

- a. manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes, and shall invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts.*
- b. provide pension, health, and other benefits exclusively for the benefit of eligible members working within the structure of this church and other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes.*
- c. provide summary plan descriptions outlining all benefits to be provided as a part of the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.*
- d. report to the appropriate committee of the Church Council on the financial effect of changes to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.*
- e. report to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council, with the Church Council making comments on all board actions needing approval of the Churchwide Assembly.*
- f. maintain appropriate communication with other units of this church.*
- g. be self-supporting, except for certain ELCA minimum pensions and post-retirement health benefits of certain ELCA retirees, with all costs being paid from the administrative and management charges to the employers and members utilizing the plans and from investment income.*
- h. manage its finances in a manner that assures an efficient and effective administration of the plans for pension and other benefits. The board shall maintain its own accounting, data processing, personnel, and other administrative functions essential to the ongoing work of this organization.*
- i. not be responsible, nor assume any liability for, health-insurance programs provided by colleges and universities of this church through voluntary employees' beneficiary associations or similar arrangements.*
- j. manage and operate those portions of The American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America plans requiring continuation in this church.*
- k. provide an appeal process with the Board of Pensions to enable members in the plans to appeal decisions.*
- l. make editorial and administrative changes and routine modifications to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program, as well as changes required to comply with federal and state law.*

- m. set contribution rates for the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan, the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, and the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan, and establish interest crediting rates for the ELCA Retirement Plans.*
- n. manage assets, as requested, for the ELCA and other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes.*

**17.61.B05.** *The Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board of Pensions shall receive advice and counsel from the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility formed by the appropriate churchwide unit and within the context of fiduciary responsibility for ELCA assets make appropriate recommendations to the board.*

**17.61.C09.** *To implement staggered terms for plan members and plan recipients on the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions and to move to a board consisting of at least four plan members, at least one of whom is a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits, at least two people, one ordained minister who is a plan member and one lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits, shall be elected by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Thereafter, at least one plan member shall be elected as a trustee by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, and one additional plan member shall be elected by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. An amendment to 17.61.03.a. shall be proposed to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to provide that the board shall include at least four persons who are members of the plans, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister who is a plan member.*

## **Chapter 18.**

### **REGIONS**

**18.01.** This church shall have regions as a partnership between groups of synods and the churchwide organization for the purpose of exercising mutual responsibilities.

**18.01.A08.** *The regions shall be numbered 1 through 9 and comprised of the following synods (as designated in bylaw 10.01.11.):*

*Region 1—Alaska Synod; Northwest Washington Synod; Southwestern Washington Synod; Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod; Oregon Synod; and Montana Synod.*

*Region 2—Sierra Pacific Synod; Southwest California Synod; Pacifica Synod; Grand Canyon Synod; and Rocky Mountain Synod.*

*Region 3—Western North Dakota Synod; Eastern North Dakota Synod; South Dakota Synod; Northwestern Minnesota Synod; Northeastern Minnesota Synod; Southwestern Minnesota Synod; Minneapolis Area Synod; Saint Paul Area Synod; and Southeastern Minnesota Synod.*

*Region 4—Nebraska Synod; Central States Synod; Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod; Southwestern Texas Synod; Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod.*

*Region 5—Metropolitan Chicago Synod; Northern Illinois Synod; Central/Southern Illinois Synod; Southeastern Iowa Synod; Western Iowa Synod; Northeastern Iowa Synod; Northern Great Lakes Synod; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee Synod; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; and La Crosse Area Synod.*

*Region 6—Southeast Michigan Synod; North/West Lower Michigan Synod; Indiana-Kentucky Synod; Northwestern Ohio Synod; Northeastern Ohio Synod; and Southern Ohio Synod.*

*Region 7—New Jersey Synod; New England Synod; Metropolitan New York Synod; Upstate New York Synod; Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod; Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod; and Slovak Zion Synod.*

*Region 8—Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod; Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod; Allegheny Synod; Lower Susquehanna Synod; Upper Susquehanna Synod; Delaware-Maryland Synod; Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod; and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod.*

*Region 9—Virginia Synod; North Carolina Synod; South Carolina Synod; Southeastern Synod; Florida-Bahamas Synod; and Caribbean Synod.*

#### **18.10.10. Functions**

**18.11.11.** The regions shall be a means for coordinated responses by synods and the churchwide organization to mission and program opportunities within the region.

**18.11.A91.***In fulfilling the region's function and the purposes of this church, each region may assist in:*

- a. planning for this church's participation in God's mission in the region, with special attention to the opportunities for outreach with the Gospel;*
- b. providing for ongoing dialogue between the synods of the region and churchwide units for the purpose of identifying functions that may be done together;*
- c. forming resource planning groups to recommend resources and services needed for congregations;*
- d. facilitating, when requested, relationships with colleges, universities, and campus ministries and partnership funding responsibilities of the synods and churchwide organization on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries;*
- e. facilitating gatherings of synodical bishops, synodical staff, and regional staff; and*
- f. coordinating the work of the churchwide staff within the territory of the region.*

**18.11.B91.***Additional functions may include:*

- a. relating to seminaries;*
- b. relating to camps and other outdoor ministries;*
- c. developing communication plans and projects;*
- d. planning for and coordinating continuing education programs;*
- e. providing for various services to congregations;*
- f. facilitating global mission education and interpretation;*
- g. providing for stewardship and evangelism events;*
- h. providing for events for the growth and equipping of God's people for their ministries in the world;*
- i. compiling lists of personnel that may be used by synods for interim ministries;*
- j. providing a financial service bureau for the cooperating synods for banking, payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable;*
- k. providing for regional archives, associated with institutions of this church wherever possible;*
- l. coordinating resources for youth ministry;*
- m. assisting synods in facilitating the mobility of ordained ministers and associates in ministry and providing such resources as crisis-intervention services and psychodiagnostic-treatment programs;*
- n. facilitating, when requested, relationships with social ministry organizations and assisting in advocacy work; and*
- o. addressing other functions, as deemed appropriate by synods and the churchwide organization.*



- 18.11.12.** The region shall be a forum where the synods and the churchwide organization may study, plan, and share together in developing common programs unique to the region. Responsibilities carried out together will vary from region to region depending on the decision of the synods and churchwide units.
- 18.11.13.** Additional programs or services may be developed in each region upon the request of two or more synods, or upon the request of the churchwide organization and one or more synods, providing that each requesting synod and the churchwide organization supply the necessary financial support for the services requested.
- 18.11.14.** The funding of the region shall be shared by the participating synods and the churchwide organization according to a cost allocation as decided jointly by the synods and the churchwide organization.

## Chapter 19.

### NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION PROCESS

- 19.01.** The Churchwide Assembly shall elect the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary of this church and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the constitution and bylaws of this church.
- 19.02.** The members of the Church Council shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly. Each biennium the Church Council shall determine how this church's commitment to inclusive representation will affect the next election to the Church Council. The Nominating Committee shall invite each eligible synod to submit suggested nominees and shall then nominate persons who fulfill the categories assigned by the Church Council. Excluding the churchwide officers, there shall not be more than one member of the Church Council from a synod nor shall more than two-thirds of the synods in a region have members on the Church Council at the same time. The Church Council shall have at least one member from each region. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Church Council by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected.
- 19.03.** In the event an interim vacancy on a board, committee, or council is declared by the secretary of this church, the Church Council shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term.
- 19.04.** Other than elections of officers and executive directors of units, elections shall be for one six-year term, without consecutive reelection, and with one-third of the members of the Church Council and of each board, program committee, or advisory committee elected each biennium.

#### **19.04.A05. Implementation Process**

*To implement the adjustment in the size of the program committees and boards, the Churchwide Assembly shall engage in the following pattern of elections:*

- a. Commencing in 2005, the Churchwide Assembly shall elect five persons to fill the vacant positions on the program committees related to the Global Mission unit and Church in Society unit. Those committees, therefore, shall each have 19 persons in the 2005-2006 biennium, 17 persons in the 2007-2008 biennium, and 15 persons from 2009 forward.*
- b. Commencing in 2005, the Churchwide Assembly shall elect fifteen persons to the program committee for the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit and fifteen persons to the program committee for the Vocation and Education unit. On each of those committees, five persons shall be elected to two-year terms, five*

*persons to four-year terms, and five persons to six-year terms. In 2007, five persons shall be elected to those program committees to six-year terms.*

- c. Commencing in 2005, the Churchwide Assembly shall elect five persons to fill vacant positions on the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA and five persons to fill vacant positions on the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions. These boards, therefore, shall each have 19 persons in the 2005-2006 biennium, 17 persons in the 2007-2008 biennium, and 15 persons from 2009 forward.*
- d. This continuing resolution shall expire upon the adjournment of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.*

**19.05. Each nominee for an elected or appointed position in this church shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church.**

**19.05.01.** Each voting member of the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee of this church shall cease to be a member of the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church. Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee, a member's position shall be declared vacant by the secretary of this church, who shall arrange for election by the Church Council to fill the unexpired term.

**19.05.02.** For purposes of nomination to and service on the Church Council, a program committee, or a board of a churchwide unit, "synodical membership" shall be defined as follows:

- a. A layperson shall be recorded in the synod that includes the congregation in which such a person holds membership, with the recognition that such a person shall reside within the territory of the synod or in an area immediately adjacent to the territory in the case of border areas.
- b. An ordained minister shall be recorded in the synod on whose roster such an ordained minister's name is maintained.
- c. A diaconal minister, associate in ministry, or deaconess shall be recorded in the synod on whose roster such a rostered layperson's name is maintained.

**19.05.03.** A board of trustees of a separately incorporated churchwide unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may remove a trustee from the board at a duly held meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the total number of trustees, provided that not less than five and not more than thirty days written notice shall be given to each trustee that removal of a specific trustee will be on the agenda for such a meeting. No such removal of a trustee shall be effective without the approval of the Church Council by a majority of those present and voting. The decision of the Church Council is final.

**19.10. NOMINATION AND ELECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

**19.11.01.** In the nomination and election process the following general considerations shall be observed:

- a. It shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to assure that this church maintain its commitment to inclusive representation.
- b. In all elections by the Churchwide Assembly, other than for the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for election. If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the second ballot. On the second ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- c. Members of the boards or committees of churchwide units, other than those in restricted categories, who have served less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for election to one full term to be served consecutively upon the conclusion of the partial term.
- d. Before electing a member to a vacancy on a board or committee, the Church Council shall consult with the board or committee.
- e. On the final ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary of this church, when only two names appear on the ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- f. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop from each region to serve a four-year term as a liaison member of the Church Council. Each biennium the Conference of Bishops shall select a bishop to serve as an advisory member of each board, program committee, and advisory committee of the churchwide organization. No synodical bishop shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit.
- g. The youth organization of this church shall elect for terms of two years two persons to serve as advisory members of the Church Council.
- h. An advisory member of a board, committee, or the Church Council shall have voice but not vote.

**19.20. NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

**19.21.01.** There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of 18 members elected by the Churchwide Assembly. Each member shall be elected to one six-year term and shall not be eligible for consecutive reelection. Six members of the committee shall be elected each biennium. The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position. The committee shall consist of at least one member but no more than three members from any region. Nominations from the floor shall also be permitted, but each floor nomination shall be presented as an

alternative to a specific category named by the Church Council and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Church Council shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.

- 19.21.02.** The Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council, board, or committee position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.
- 19.21.03.** In each case in which there are floor nominations, there shall be a preliminary ballot that shall include the names of the nominees presented by the Nominating Committee or the Church Council, and the person or persons nominated from the floor, where permitted. The names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the final ballot.
- 19.21.04.** It shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to make certain that every synod has at least one person serving on the churchwide boards or committees. Among those persons elected by the assembly, no more than two persons from any one synod shall serve on any one board or committee.
- 19.21.05.** The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that all persons nominated for any position possess the necessary competence and experience for the position. All persons elected to any position, whether nominated by the Nominating Committee or not, shall strive to represent this church and not just a particular geographic area.
- 19.21.A98.** *The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that at least two of the voting membership of the Church Council shall have been younger than 30 years of age at the time of their election.*
- 19.21.B05.** *On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the first half of the biennium preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly—shall solicit from eligible synods on a rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the representation principles of this church, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their selection by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall submit a replacement name from the same synod as the original nominee. In the*

*event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.*

**19.21.C05.** *For purposes of nominations for the Church Council on a rotating basis, the following pairing of synods shall be observed insofar as possible: Alaska Synod and Northwest Washington Synod; Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod and Montana Synod; Southwestern Washington Synod and Oregon Synod; Sierra Pacific Synod and Southwest California Synod; Pacifica Synod and Grand Canyon Synod; Rocky Mountain Synod and South Dakota Synod; Western North Dakota Synod and Eastern North Dakota Synod; Northwestern Minnesota Synod and Northeastern Minnesota Synod; Southwestern Minnesota Synod and Southeastern Minnesota Synod; Minneapolis Area Synod and Saint Paul Area Synod; Nebraska Synod and Central States Synod; Arkansas-Oklahoma and Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod; Southwestern Texas Synod and Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and Northern Great Lakes Synod; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin and South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area Synod and Northeastern Iowa Synod; Western Iowa Synod and Southeastern Iowa Synod; Northern Illinois Synod and Central/Southern Illinois Synod; Metropolitan Chicago Synod and Greater Milwaukee Synod; North/West Lower Michigan Synod and Southeast Michigan Synod; Indiana-Kentucky Synod and Northwestern Ohio Synod; Northeastern Ohio Synod and Southern Ohio Synod; New Jersey Synod and New England Synod and Slovak Zion Synod; Metropolitan New York Synod and Upstate New York Synod; Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod; Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod and Allegheny Synod; Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod; Upper Susquehanna Synod and Lower Susquehanna Synod; Delaware-Maryland Synod and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod; Virginia Synod and North Carolina Synod; South Carolina Synod and Southeastern Synod; Florida-Bahamas Synod and Caribbean Synod.*

**19.21.D05.** *In each biennium in preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—on behalf of the Nominating Committee—shall solicit from synods names of persons to serve on the program committees of the following units: Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, Global Mission, Church in Society, and Vocation and Education. Three names of persons in specified categories shall be submitted in each biennium by designated Synod Assemblies of synods in which no person currently with a continuing term sits on the Church Council or the particular program committee. Two nominees shall be chosen by the Nominating Committee, after reviewing the synodical submission, to address matters of balance, representation,*

*and expertise in the composition of the program committees. Floor nominations in specified categories shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.*

**19.30. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**19.31.01.** The churchwide officers shall be elected as follows:

- a. The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot.
- b. The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect.
- c. The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties)

receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.

- d. The treasurer shall be elected by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council.

**19.31.A09.** *Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as churchwide officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Church Council.*

#### **19.40. TERMS OF OFFICE**

**19.41.01.** The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on a committee or board by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the assembly at which such persons were elected. The commencement of terms of office of persons elected to regular terms by the Churchwide Assembly on the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA and the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions shall be specified in the bylaws of these separately incorporated entities.

**19.41.02.** The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly, the Committee on Discipline, and the Committee on Appeals shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected, except as may be specified in continuing resolutions with respect to particular pending discipline matters.

**19.41.A91.** *With respect to committees that consider disciplinary cases or appeals:*

- a. *Any member of the churchwide Committee on Discipline who has been appointed to serve on a discipline hearing committee for a particular pending case shall continue to serve to discharge that appointment notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*
- b. *Any member of the synodical Committee on Discipline who is serving at the time that the Executive Committee of the Church Council appoints members from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to a discipline hearing committee shall continue as a member of that discipline hearing committee for the particular pending case, notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Synod Assembly.*
- c. *Any member of the Committee on Appeals who is serving at the time that an appeal is made shall continue to serve to decide that appeal,*



*notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*

**19.50. EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE**

**19.51.01.** The Churchwide Assembly shall elect all members of each program committee and the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA, the board of trustees of the Mission Investment Fund, and the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions. The Nominating Committee shall seek to ensure that these committees and boards have within their membership persons with the expertise and experience essential to the fulfillment of the work of the unit.

**19.51.02.** The program committee for the Multicultural Ministries unit shall consist of 15 persons, 14 of whom shall be elected to six-year terms by the Churchwide Assembly. The committee shall include two persons from each of the following communities: African American or Black; Arab and Middle Eastern; Asian and Pacific Islander; Latino; American Indian and Alaska Native; European-American; and multiracial or biracial. One person shall be elected to a three-year term on the committee by the Multicultural Advisory Committee of the Lutheran Youth Organization.

**19.51.A09. *Nomination for Multicultural Ministries Program Committee***

*In each biennium in preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—on behalf of the Nominating Committee—shall solicit from the ELCA ethnic associations names of persons for possible election to serve on the program committee for the Multicultural Ministries unit. The names of two persons in specified categories shall be presented in each biennium by designated associations to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations to vacant terms designated for multiracial or biracial members shall be determined in the customary manner by the Nominating Committee. Floor nominations in specified categories shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.*

**19.60. OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

**19.61.01.** The Church Council shall from time to time, by continuing resolution, establish committees and procedures for the conduct of elections at the Churchwide Assembly.

**19.61.02.** No member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a board, a program committee, or other committee of the churchwide organization shall receive emolument for such service, nor shall any member be simultaneously an officer of this church, an elected member of the Church Council, or a voting member of a committee or board of the churchwide organization.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the payment by this church of the costs of insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a

board, or committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by such person in or arising from that capacity, whether or not this church would have been required to indemnify such person against the liability under provisions of law or otherwise.

- 19.61.03.** No employee of the churchwide organization of this church or its regions, nor any individual under contract to any unit of the churchwide organization or a region shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council, a program or advisory committee, a board, the Committee on Appeals, the Committee on Discipline, or the churchwide Nominating Committee during the period of employment or service under contract. (The phrase “under contract” shall not mean short-term contracts for specific, limited purposes, usually not to exceed six months.)
- 19.61.04.** No spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, or in-law (parent, son, or daughter of a spouse, or spouse of a sibling) of an executive director or of an executive staff member of the churchwide organization shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council, board, or committee that oversees the unit in which the person’s relative is employed.
- 19.61.05.** No person employed by an entity, agency, or institution supervised by a board or committee of the churchwide organization shall be a member of that supervising board or committee, except the full-time salaried officers as specified in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- 19.61.A94. Ecclesiastical Ballot.** *An “ecclesiastical ballot” for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an election process:*
- a. in which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;*
  - b. through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;*
  - c. that precludes spoken floor nominations;*
  - d. in which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;*
  - e. in which the first ballot defines the total slates of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations;*
  - f. that does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;*
  - g. in which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;*
  - h. that does not preclude an assembly’s adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of*

*time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and*

- i. in which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents.*

**19.61.B98. Nominations Desk and Nominations Form**

- a. Nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church.*
- b. A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary of this church. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure. This form is also included in each voting member's registration materials.*
- c. The required form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the nominee's name, address, phone number, gender, lay or clergy status, white or person of color or primary language other than English status, congregational membership, synodical membership, and affirmation of willingness to serve, if elected; the name, address, and synodical membership of the voting member who is making the nomination; and such other information as the secretary of this church shall require.*
- d. For purposes of nomination procedures, "synodical membership" means:
  - 1) In the case of a layperson, the synod that includes the congregation in which such person holds membership; and*
  - 2) In the case of an ordained minister, the synod on whose roster such ordained minister's name is maintained.**

**19.61.C05. Floor Nominations**

- a. Floor nominations for positions on a board or committee of a churchwide unit require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least ten other voting members. Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other churchwide committee to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least twenty other voting members.*
- b. A nomination from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary) shall be made by filing the completed nomination form with the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.*
- c. Nominations will be considered made in the order in which filed at the Nominations Desk.*

**19.61.D05. Restrictions on Floor Nominations for Boards**

- a. *Nominations from the floor for positions on churchwide boards or committees shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.*
- b. *So long as the number of incumbent members from a given synod serving on a board or committee with terms not expiring plus the number of positions on the same board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of two individuals from the same synod who may serve on that board or committee, an individual from the same synod may be nominated for another position on that board or committee, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Individuals from the same synod may be nominated for a position on a board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated, provided other criteria and restrictions are met.*

**19.61.E05. Restriction on Nominations for Church Council**

*Nominations for positions on the Church Council shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.*

**19.61.F98. Restriction on Floor Nominations for Nominating Committee**

- a. *Nominations from the floor for positions on the Nominating Committee shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.*
- b. *So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Nominating Committee with terms not expiring plus the number of Nominating Committee positions to which individuals from the same region have already been nominated (whether by the Church Council or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of three individuals from the same region who may serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Nominating Committee position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Nominating Committee position for which someone from the same region has already been nominated.*

**19.61.G02. Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot**

- a. *The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used.*
- b. *For the first common ballot, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the*

*bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from the synod.*

- c. Upon recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, the second common ballot may be conducted by electronic device. Unless the second common ballot is conducted by electronic device, the distribution of ballot forms for the second common ballot will be in the same manner as the first common ballot.*
- d. Any discrepancy between the number of ballots given to a synodical bishop and the number of voting members (including the synodical bishop) from such synod must be reported by the synodical bishop to the Elections Committee.*
- e. Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot.*
- f. A voting member may vote for only one nominee on each ticket.*
- g. Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate a ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked.*
- h. Ballots must be marked in accordance with the instructions presented in plenary session.*
- i. Ballot forms should not be folded.*
- j. Marked ballot forms must be deposited at the designated Ballot Stations at certain exits of the hall in which plenary sessions are held.*
- k. If a ballot is damaged so that it cannot be scanned, a replacement ballot may be obtained at the Ballot Station upon surrender of the damaged ballot.*
- l. Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.*
- m. On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes.*
- n. Unless the second ballot is conducted by electronic device, polls for the second common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure or as otherwise ordered by the assembly.*
- o. On the second ballot, whether by common ballot or by electronic device, the first position on each ticket shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. If two nominees are tied for the highest vote, the first position on the ticket shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee.*

#### **19.61.H07.Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot**

- a. For each election by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, the exact number of appropriate ballot sets equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod.*

*The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each of the voting members from the synod.*

- b. Unless otherwise ordered by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the appropriate ballot set is to be used on each ballot for elections determined by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot. The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the appropriate ballot set that is to be used for each ballot. Failure to use the correct numbered ballot will result in an illegal ballot.*
- c. On the first two ballots for each office being selected by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, both the first and last names of a nominee should be used. Members should endeavor to use correct spelling and should provide, on the first ballot, any additional accurate information identifying the nominee, such as title, synod, or residence.*
- d. On the third and subsequent ballots conducted by written ballot, only the last name of the nominee need be used, provided there is no other nominee with the same or similar name.*
- e. A member may vote for only one nominee on each ballot.*
- f. Ballots should not be marked prior to the time the chair advises the voting members to do so.*
- g. Written ballots should not be folded.*
- h. Written ballots will be collected from the voting members in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.*
- i. When the results of the first ballot are presented, the chair will announce when and how persons nominated may withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot.*
- j. Whenever the number of names of nominees that will appear on a ballot is nine or less, on recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, voting may be by means of electronic device.*
- k. When voting by electronic device, the first position on each ballot shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, with the remaining positions assigned to the other nominees in descending order of the number of votes received on the immediately preceding ballot. If two or more nominees were tied with the same vote on the immediately preceding ballot, their respective positions shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee.*
- l. On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit voting members to record their votes.*

#### **19.61.I98. Breaking Ties in Elections**

- a. On the ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and*

*shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist.*

- b. On the first common ballot, the blank ballots of the treasurer and vice president shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee to be presented to the treasurer for her or his vote only in those elections where a tie would otherwise exist, and to be presented to the vice president for his or her vote only in those elections to break a tie remaining after the ballot of the treasurer has been counted.*
- c. On the second common ballot, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist.*

**19.61.J00.** *A former full-time or part-time employee of the churchwide organization shall not be eligible, for a minimum of six years subsequent to such employment, for nomination or election to the board or committee related to the churchwide unit in which the employee served.*

**Chapter 20.**

**CONSULTATION, DISCIPLINE, APPEALS, AND ADJUDICATION**

**20.10. CONSULTATION AND DISCIPLINE**

**20.11.** There shall be set forth in the bylaws a process of discipline governing officers, ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, congregations, and members of congregations. Except as provided in 20.18. or 20.19., such process shall assure due process and due protection for the accused, other parties, and this church. Since synods have responsibility for admittance of persons into the ordained ministry of this church or onto other rosters of this church and have oversight of pastoral and congregational relationships, the disciplinary process shall be a responsibility of the synod on behalf of this church and jointly with it.

**20.12.** As used in this constitution and bylaws, due process means the right to be given specific written notice of the charges against any person or entity of this church, the right to testify in person or remain silent (at the election of the accused), the right to call witnesses and introduce documentary evidence concerning the pending charges, the right to confront and cross-examine all witnesses in support of such charges, the right to a hearing before a discipline hearing committee as provided in 20.13., the right to a written decision of the discipline hearing committee as provided in the bylaws, and the right to be treated with fundamental procedural fairness. Any violation of these rights shall be grounds for reversal of an unfavorable finding and the right to a new hearing.

**20.12.01.** “Fundamental procedural fairness” means and includes: avoidance by committee members of written communications to or from either the accused or accuser(s) without copy to the other; avoidance by committee members of oral communications with either the accused or accuser(s) outside the presence of the other; maintaining decorum during the hearing; allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to present their cases without unnecessary interruptions; keeping a verbatim record of the hearing, made either by a stenographer or court reporter or by audio or video recording; allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to be accompanied at the hearing by a representative (who may, but need not, be an attorney) who also may participate in the proceedings; impartiality of the committees that consider the charges; and the right to be treated in conformity with the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**20.13.** The accused shall be entitled to a hearing before a discipline hearing committee as described in the bylaws. If the accused is a congregation, the hearing shall be open to the public unless both the accuser and the accused agree to a hearing not open to the public. If the accused is an individual, the hearing shall not be open to the public unless both the accusers and the accused agree to a public hearing. At a hearing not



**open to the public, a limited number of concerned persons may attend as provided in the bylaws.**

- 20.13.01.** In a hearing not open to the public,
- a. the accuser and the accused may each be represented by not more than two representatives who may present or assist in the presentation of the evidence; and
  - b. the discipline hearing committee may permit attendance by a limited number of persons, with the consent of both the accused and the accuser.
- 20.13.02.** Irrespective of whether a hearing is or is not open to the public, the discipline hearing committee may decide that witnesses (other than the accused and the accuser) shall be permitted in the hearing only when testifying. A witness may be accompanied by a friend or advocate.
- 20.14. Once a charge against a person or entity has been considered by a discipline hearing committee, that person or entity shall not be required to answer that charge again except under the circumstances set forth in the bylaws.**
- 20.14.01.** The circumstances in which a person or entity shall be required to answer again charges before a discipline hearing committee shall be limited to the following:
- a. The Committee on Appeals has ordered a rehearing as its disposition of a timely appeal to it.
  - b. The Committee on Appeals has ordered a further hearing after either an accuser or an accused has petitioned for a further hearing on the basis of newly discovered evidence or testimony that was not available at the time of the original hearing.
- 20.14.02.** After a charge against a person or entity has been considered by a discipline hearing committee, evidence related to that charge may be introduced at a subsequent hearing before another discipline hearing committee on a different but related charge. Charges are “related” if they involve similar alleged conduct on the part of the accused.
- 20.15. The procedures for consultation and discipline set forth in the bylaws shall be the exclusive means of resolving all matters pertaining to the discipline of congregations of this church. Neither this church nor a synod of this church shall institute legal proceedings in which conduct described in provision 20.31.01. is the basis of a request for relief consisting of suspension of that congregation from this church or removal of that congregation from the roll of congregations of this church. A congregation of this church shall not institute legal proceedings against this church or a synod of this church seeking injunctive or other relief against the imposition or enforcement of any disciplinary action against that congregation.**
- 20.16. It is the intent of this church that all matters of discipline should be resolved internally to the greatest extent possible. It is the policy of**

**this church not to resort to the civil courts of this land until all internal procedures and appeals have been exhausted, except for emergency situations involving a significant imminent risk of physical injury or severe loss or damage to property.**

**20.17. None of the provisions of this chapter is intended nor shall be construed to limit the authority of a Synod Council to remove, under the bylaws of this church, from the rosters of this church an ordained minister or other person who is without regular call and not retired, for any reason, even though such reason might also be the basis for disciplinary proceedings under this chapter.**

**20.18. The authority to administer private censure and admonition upon an individual or public censure and admonition upon a congregation is inherent in the office of bishop. Proceedings under this chapter or any other provision of the constitutions and bylaws of this church or of its synods are not required for the exercise of such authority.**

**20.19. Where the written notice of charges specifically requests that the discipline to be imposed shall consist of suspension for not more than three months (during which time requirements for evaluation, therapy, continuing education, or similar experience may be imposed), the due process and due protection provisions of this constitution shall apply only as specified in the bylaws.**

## **20.20. ORDAINED MINISTERS**

**20.21.01.** Ordained ministers shall be subject to discipline for:

- a. preaching and teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church;
- b. conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office;
- c. willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for the office of Word and Sacrament;
- d. willfully disregarding the provisions of the constitution or bylaws of this church; or
- e. willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.

**20.21.02.** The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:

- a. private censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;
- b. suspension from the office and functions of the ordained ministry in this church for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or
- c. removal from the ordained ministry of this church.

**20.21.03.** Charges against an ordained minister which could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:

- a. at least two-thirds of the members of the congregation's council, submitted to the synodical bishop;

- b. at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - c. at least two-thirds of the members of the governing body to which the ordained minister, if not a parish pastor, is accountable, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - d. at least 10 ordained ministers of the synod on whose roster the accused ordained minister is listed, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - e. the synodical bishop; or
  - f. the presiding bishop of this church, but only with respect to an accused who is a synodical bishop (or who was a synodical bishop at any time during the 12 months preceding the filing of written charges), submitted to the secretary of this church.
- 20.21.04.** When there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation; for assistance in these efforts, the bishop may utilize either a consultation panel or an advisory panel as herein provided:
- a. When requested by the synodical bishop, a consultation panel consisting of five persons (three ordained ministers and two laypersons) appointed from the members of the Consultation Committee of the synod by the synodical bishop, or, at the request of the synodical bishop, by the Synod Council's Executive Committee or other committee authorized to do so by the Synod Council, shall assist the synodical bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
  - b. When requested by the synodical bishop, an advisory panel consisting of five persons (three ordained ministers and two laypersons) appointed by the synodical bishop shall assist the synodical bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
- 20.21.05.** If appointed, a consultation panel or advisory panel shall advise the synodical bishop as to whether or not the bishop should bring charges or may make other recommendation for resolution of the controversy that would not involve proceedings before a discipline hearing committee. To these ends, the panel may meet with complaining witnesses as well as with the concerned ordained minister. If requested by the synodical bishop, members of the panel also may assist, as representatives of the accuser, in the presentation of evidence and examination of witnesses before a discipline hearing committee.
- 20.21.06.** When charges are brought other than by the synodical bishop or the presiding bishop of this church, the synodical bishop may refer such charges to a consultation panel as provided in 20.21.04.a.
- a. If as a result of meeting with a consultation panel the charges are withdrawn by the accuser(s), no further proceedings shall be required.
  - b. Upon recommendation of the consultation panel that the charges be dismissed, the synodical bishop may dismiss the charges, in which case no further proceedings shall be required.

- c. Upon recommendation of the consultation panel that some of the allegations supporting the charges be stricken, the synodical bishop may strike some or all of such allegations, and further proceedings shall be required on the remaining allegations.
  - d. In the case of charges that do not anticipate disciplinary action, the consultation panel shall submit a report in writing to the synodical bishop that sets forth the action or actions recommended by the consultation panel, and the synodical bishop shall convey the recommendations to the parties. If either party does not accept the recommendations, that party may appeal to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.
  - e. In the case of charges that anticipate disciplinary action that have not been withdrawn or dismissed as a result of 20.21.06.a. or b. above, the charges shall be referred to a discipline hearing committee for a hearing.
  - f. The work of a consultation panel under this section shall be completed within 30 days from the time the panel was constituted.
- 20.21.07.** When charges are brought by a synodical bishop or the presiding bishop of this church, or when charges are brought other than by a synodical bishop and have not been withdrawn or dismissed or otherwise disposed of as provided in 20.21.06., the synodical bishop or the presiding bishop, as appropriate, shall deliver a copy of the charges to the accused and the secretary of this church.
- 20.21.08.** A discipline hearing committee shall be convened to conduct a hearing. The voting members of this committee shall be composed of 12 persons of whom six shall be selected by the Synod Council's Executive Committee from the Committee on Discipline of the synod and six shall be selected from the churchwide Committee on Discipline under the process described in 20.21.12. The rules authorized in 20.21.16. shall establish the method, based upon the remainder of the term, for determining which members of the synodical committee shall serve as the voting members and which shall serve as alternates. A hearing officer selected from the churchwide Committee of Hearing Officers under the process described in 20.21.14. shall preside as the non-voting chair of the discipline hearing committee.
- 20.21.11.** The churchwide Committee on Discipline shall consist of 36 persons, 19 of whom shall be laypersons and 17 of whom shall be ordained ministers, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, each without consecutive reelection, to serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods in this church.
- 20.21.12.** The accused shall have the privilege of selecting two persons (one clergy and one lay) and their alternates of the six persons from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to serve on a discipline hearing committee. The remaining four persons (two clergy and two lay) and their alternates, or

six, if the accused does not exercise the privilege, and their alternates shall be selected by the Executive Committee of the Church Council.

- 20.21.13.** The churchwide Committee of Hearing Officers shall consist of nine persons elected by the Church Council for a term of six years, each without consecutive reelection, to serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods of this church.
- 20.21.14.** The presiding bishop of this church shall select one member of the churchwide Committee of Hearing Officers to serve as the non-voting chair of a discipline hearing committee.
- 20.21.15.** The presiding bishop of this church may appoint one or more persons as facilitators to make arrangements for, and to provide technical assistance to, a discipline hearing committee.
- 20.21.16.** The Church Council shall appoint three members from the Committee on Appeals who shall recommend rules of procedure for the performance of the duties of hearing officers and discipline hearing committees. The rules shall become effective when ratified by the Church Council.
- 20.21.17.** In each specific case for which a discipline hearing committee has been constituted, the committee shall, within 60 days after the secretary of this church has given notice of the selection by the Executive Committee of the Church Council of the members of the churchwide Committee on Discipline to serve on a discipline hearing committee, meet with the accused and the accuser(s) to hold a hearing. The committee shall render its written decision within 15 days after the committee concludes the hearing. The 60-day period may be extended one or more times to a specified date by a written stipulation signed by the accuser(s), the accused, and the hearing officer prior to the expiration of the original 60-day period or prior to the extended specified date.
- 20.21.18.** Written notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing and a copy of the charges shall be delivered to the accused and to the accuser(s) at least 20 days prior to the date of the hearing.
- 20.21.19.** At the hearing, the accuser(s) may present evidence in support of the charges and thereafter the accused shall be entitled to present evidence. The accused and the accuser(s), or other person acting on behalf of either of them, shall be entitled to question the other party or any of the witnesses appearing on behalf of the other party. A verbatim record shall be made by a stenographer or court reporter or by audio or video recording of the hearing.
- 20.21.21.** The discipline hearing committee shall render its decision in writing. The written decision shall be in two parts:
  - a. Findings of Fact. In this part, the committee shall set forth what it has found to be the relevant facts, that is, what it believes to be the truth of the matter.

- b. Determination. In this part, the committee shall state whether, based upon the facts that it has found, it believes discipline should be imposed and, if so, what discipline it has chosen to impose.
- 20.21.22.** The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be made by a majority vote of its members who were present at the hearing. The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be final on the date it is issued by the committee. Within 30 days, one of the parties may appeal to the Committee on Appeals and may request the Committee on Appeals to stay the effective date of the decision. A stay may be granted in whole or in part and subject to such conditions, if any, as the Committee on Appeals may require. The decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be final.
- 20.21.23.** If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of the proceedings it should become apparent to the bishop of the synod that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions or that local conditions may be adversely affected by the continued service by the ordained minister, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).
- 20.21.24.** If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of proceedings it becomes apparent to the bishop of the synod that the circumstances require, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend an ordained minister serving under letter of call issued other than by a congregation from the office and functions of ordained ministry without prejudice and without affecting compensation and housing.

**20.22. LAY ROSTERED MINISTERS**

- 20.22.01.** Laypersons on official rosters shall be subject to discipline for:
- a. confessing and teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church;
  - b. conduct incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church;
  - c. willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for the lay roster or rosters;
  - d. willfully disregarding the provisions of the constitution or bylaws of this church; or
  - e. willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.
- 20.22.02.** The disciplinary actions that may be imposed are:
- a. private censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;

- b. suspension from the role and functions of an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or
  - c. removal from the official roster for laypersons of this church.
- 20.22.03.** Charges against a layperson on an official roster of this church that could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:
- a. at least two-thirds of the members of the Congregation Council of the congregation in which the layperson is serving, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - b. at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation in which the layperson is serving, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - c. at least two-thirds of the members of the governing body to which the layperson is accountable, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - d. at least 10 ordained ministers or laypersons on official rosters of the synod on whose roster the accused layperson is listed, submitted to the synodical bishop; or
  - e. the synodical bishop.
- 20.22.04.** When there are indications that a cause for discipline exists, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation in the same manner as set forth above for ordained ministers in 20.21.04. through 20.21.06.
- 20.22.05.** If those efforts fail, the procedures for discipline shall be the same as that set forth above for ordained ministers in 20.21.07. through 20.21.22.
- 20.22.06.** If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of the proceedings it should become apparent to the bishop of the synod that the role and function of the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by a rostered layperson due to local conditions or that local conditions may be adversely affected by the continued service by a rostered layperson, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend a rostered layperson from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint churchwide-synodical-congregation fund.
- 20.22.07.** If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of proceedings it becomes apparent to the bishop of the synod that the circumstances require, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend a rostered layperson serving under letter of call issued other than by a congregation from the office and functions of a rostered layperson without prejudice and without affecting compensation.
- 20.23. LIMITED DISCIPLINE**
- 20.23.01.** Where the written charges specify that the accuser will not seek, in the case of an ordained minister, removal from the ordained ministry of this church or suspension from the office and functions of the ordained ministry in this church for a period exceeding three months, or, in the case

of a layperson on one of the rosters of this church, removal from such roster or suspension from the role and functions of a person on such roster for a period not exceeding three months, 20.23.01. through 20.23.09. shall apply to the exclusion of 20.21.08. through 20.21.24. and 20.22.05. through 20.22.07.

- 20.23.02.** The voting members of a discipline hearing committee convened to conduct a hearing on charges described in 20.23.01. shall be six members of the synod's Committee on Discipline selected by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. A hearing officer selected from the churchwide Committee of Hearing Officers by the secretary of this church shall preside as the nonvoting chair of the discipline hearing committee described in this 20.23.02.
- 20.23.03.** The secretary of this church may appoint one or more persons as facilitators to make arrangements for, and to provide technical assistance to, a discipline hearing committee considering charges described in 20.23.01.
- 20.23.04.** Three members of the Committee on Appeals, appointed by the Church Council, shall develop rules of procedure for the performance of the duties of hearing officers and discipline hearing committees considering charges described in 20.23.01. The rules become effective when adopted by the Church Council.
- 20.23.05.** In each case for which a discipline hearing committee has been constituted, the committee shall, within 60 days after the secretary of this church has given notice of the selection of the hearing officer to serve on a discipline hearing committee, commence a meeting or series of meetings with the accused and the accuser(s) to receive testimony or other evidence offered by the accused or the accuser(s). The 60-day period may be extended one or more times to a specified date by a written stipulation signed by the accuser(s), the accused, and the hearing officer prior to the expiration of the original 60-day period or prior to the extended specified date.
- 20.23.06.** Written notice of the date, time, and place of the first meeting of the discipline hearing committee at which testimony will be received, and a copy of the charges, shall be delivered to the accused and to the accuser(s) at least 20 days prior to the date of the meeting.
- 20.23.07.** The discipline hearing committee shall decide, consistent with rules adopted under 20.23.04., to what extent the accused shall be able to confront or cross-examine witnesses testifying on behalf of the accuser and to what extent the accuser shall be able to confront or cross-examine witnesses testifying on behalf of the accused. A verbatim record shall be made by a stenographer or court reporter or by audio or video recording of all meetings of the committee at which testimony is presented. The accused and the accuser may be accompanied at the meeting(s) by a friend or advisor. Such friend or advisor shall not participate in the proceedings before the committee.



**20.23.08.** The discipline hearing committee shall conclude its meeting(s) and render its decision in writing within 45 days of the commencement of the meeting for which written notice was given under 20.23.06. The written decision shall be in two parts:

- a. Findings of Fact. In this part, the committee shall set forth what it has found to be the relevant facts, that is, what it believes to be the truth of the matter.
- b. Determination. In this part, the committee shall state whether, based upon the facts that it has found, it believes discipline should be imposed and if so, which one or more of the following should be imposed:
  - 1) private censure and admonition by the synodical bishop.
  - 2) suspension for a period not exceeding three months from the office and functions of the ordained ministry in the case of an ordained minister or from the role and functions of a rostered layperson in the case of a layperson on a roster of this church.
  - 3) participation in such programs of evaluation, therapy, continuing education, or similar experience as the committee may direct.
  - 4) referral of written charges (amended to reflect additional evidence presented to the committee) to a discipline hearing committee convened under 20.21.08. through 20.21.24. or 20.22.05. through 20.22.07.

**20.23.09.** The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be made by a majority vote of its members who were present at the hearing. The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be final on the date it is issued by the committee. Within 30 days of that date, one of the parties may appeal to the Committee on Appeals and may request the Committee on Appeals to stay the effective date of the decision. A stay may be granted in whole or in part and subject to such conditions, if any, as the Committee on Appeals may require. The decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be final.

## **20.30. CONGREGATIONS**

**20.31.01.** Congregations shall be subject to discipline for:

- a. departing from the faith confessed by this church;
- b. willfully disregarding or violating the criteria for recognition as congregations of this church; or
- c. willfully disregarding or violating the provisions of the constitution or bylaws of this church.

**20.31.02.** The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:

- a. censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;
- b. suspension from this church for a designated period, the consequences of such suspension being the loss of voting rights of any member (including ordained ministers) of the congregation at synod

or churchwide assemblies, the loss of the right to petition, and the forfeiture of eligibility by any member of the congregation to serve on any council, board, committee, or other group of this church, any of its synods, or any other subdivision thereof;

- c. suspension of the congregation from this church for a designated period (with the same consequences as in b.) during which the congregation shall be under the administration of the synod, provided that a congregation may refuse to accept such administration in which case it shall be removed from the roster of congregations of this church; or
- d. removal from the roster of congregations of this church.

**20.31.03.** Charges against a congregation which could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:

- a. at least one-fifth of the voting members of the congregation, submitted to the synodical bishop;
- b. at least three other congregations of the synod, submitted to the synodical bishop;
- c. the Synod Council; or
- d. the synodical bishop.

**20.31.04.** When there are indications that a cause for discipline exists, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation in the same manner as set forth above for ordained ministers in 20.21.04. and 20.21.05.

**20.31.05.** If those efforts fail, the procedures for discipline shall be the same as that set forth above for ordained ministers in 20.21.07. through 20.21.22.

## **20.40. MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONS**

**20.41.01.** The offenses for which a member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline are:

- a. denial of the Christian faith;
- b. conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ; or
- c. persistent trouble-making within the congregation.

**20.41.02.** Discipline shall be administered by the Congregation Council on behalf of the congregation. The procedure which Christ instructed his disciples to follow (Matthew 18:15-17) shall be adhered to in every case, proceeding through these successive steps:

- a. private admonition by the pastor;
- b. admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses; and
- c. written citation to appear before the Congregation Council, serving as a discipline hearing committee, having been received by the member at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

If for any reason the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.

- 20.41.03.** If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused.
- 20.41.04.** To assure due process and due protection for the accused as required in 20.11., members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. In addition, due process requires the following:
- a. the right to be given a specific written statement of the charges;
  - b. the right to a hearing by the Congregation Council;
  - c. the right of the accused to testify in person or remain silent;
  - d. the right to call witnesses;
  - e. the right to introduce documentary evidence;
  - f. the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses;
  - g. the right to a hearing closed to the public unless both the accuser(s) and the accused agree to a public hearing;
  - h. the right to a written decision as required by these bylaws;
  - i. the right to be treated with fundamental procedural fairness, which means:
    - 1) avoidance by council members of written communications to or from either accused or accuser(s) without copy to the other;
    - 2) avoidance by council members of other communications with either the accused or the accuser(s) outside of the presence of the other;
    - 3) maintaining proper decorum during the hearing;
    - 4) allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to present their cases without unnecessary interruptions;
    - 5) keeping a verbatim record of the hearing, made either by a stenographer or court reporter or by audio or video recording; and
    - 6) allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to be accompanied at the hearing by a representative (who may, but need not, be an attorney) who may also participate in the proceedings.

**20.41.05.** The accused can be found guilty by the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified and who are present and voting. Should renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the council or the congregation;
- b. suspension from stated privileges of membership for a definite designated period of time; or
- c. termination of membership.

A resolution of the council suspending or terminating the membership of a member of this congregation shall be delivered to the person in writing.

**20.41.06.** Appeal from any disciplinary action imposed by the Congregation Council may be made to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

**20.41.07.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of:

- a. evidence that injustice has been done; or
- b. evidence of repentance and amendment.

**20.41.08.** No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.

**20.41.A09. Rules for Appeals to a Synod Council**

- a. *Any appeal to the Synod Council must be made by written notice within 30 days after the decision of the Congregation Council has been delivered to the accused member(s). The written notice of the intent to appeal must be given by certified or registered mail to the Synod Council (in care of the vice president of the synod), with a copy to the chair of the Congregation Council and the congregation's pastor.*
- b. *Any party who has appealed to the Synod Council for review of a decision of a Congregation Council may request a stay in the effective date or other provision contained in the decision pending the appeal. The request must be in writing and shall set forth the reasons why the requested stay is advisable. The request shall be forwarded to the Synod Council (in care of the vice president of the synod) with copy to the other party. The Synod Council may grant the other party an opportunity to respond in writing. The Synod Council may grant a stay for the period, and may renew the stay for further periods, as it determines to be appropriate. The Synod Council may make the grant of a stay subject to such conditions as it determines to be appropriate.*
- c. *The chair of the Congregation Council must furnish the record on appeal to the Synod Council (in care of the vice president of the synod), certifying to the completeness and accuracy of the record on appeal, within 30 days of the receipt of the written notice, unless the*

*vice president allows additional time for compelling reasons. The record on appeal will consist of the following:*

- 1) the citation and specific written charges as served upon the accused member(s) prior to the hearing before the Congregation Council;*
  - 2) the congregation's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and a copy of any rules governing the hearing before the Congregation Council;*
  - 3) identities of the person(s) who prepared the written charges and of the members of the Congregation Council who heard the case;*
  - 4) the verbatim record made by the stenographer or court reporter or the audio or video recording of the hearing before the Congregation Council;*
  - 5) all documents or physical evidence presented at the hearing before the Congregation Council;*
  - 6) the written decision of the Congregation Council;*
  - 7) proof that the written decision was delivered to the accused member(s); and*
  - 8) certification that the successive steps required by Matthew 18:15-17 were followed, as specified in bylaw 20.41.02. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*
- d. If the Synod Council has reason to believe or doubt that a required action was taken by the Congregation Council, but the action is not revealed in the record on appeal, the Synod Council may solicit, by written request to the chair of the Congregation Council with copies to the accused member(s), written confirmation of the action. Copies of the confirmation shall be supplied to the accused member(s).*
- e. The party making an appeal must present a written statement of reasons why the decision of the Congregation Council should be reversed or set aside. The Congregation Council will then submit a written response to the Synod Council. The party making an appeal may present a brief written rebuttal. Appropriate page limitations and due dates for these statements will be established by the vice president of the synod. Parties shall promptly give each other copies of any written statements filed with the Synod Council.*
- f. Members of the Congregation Council and the accused members shall refrain from discussing appeals made to the Synod Council, except as required to discharge their duties under these rules. Members of the Synod Council shall refrain from discussing appeals, except as required to discharge their duty to decide the appeal. Members of the Congregation Council and the accused member(s) will not communicate with Synod Council members concerning the appeal unless all parties are included in the communication.*

- g. *No member of the Synod Council may participate in any appeal if such a member is related to the accused member(s), to any witness who testified before the Congregation Council, or to a member of the Congregation Council, or where such Synod Council member is a current or recent member of the congregation. For good cause, a member of the Synod Council may voluntarily disqualify himself or herself from participation.*
- h. *The Synod Council will meet in executive session and consider the appeal solely on the basis of the record and written statements. Normally, the Synod Council will meet and render its written decision within 60 days from the due date for the last written statement to be submitted by the parties.*
- i. *The Synod Council will affirm the decision of the Congregation Council unless it finds that:*
  - 1) *the requirements of due process or fundamental procedural fairness were not met;*
  - 2) *the Congregation Council's decision was not supported by any evidence in the record; or*
  - 3) *the record on appeal is insufficient to make a determination.*
- j. *Final decisions of the Synod Council require an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting. The decision of the Synod Council shall be delivered in writing to the accused member(s), the chair of the Congregation Council, the congregation's pastor, the synodical bishop, and the secretary of this church.*

**20.50. RECALL OR DISMISSAL**

**20.51. The recall or dismissal of the presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary of this church and the vacating of office may be effected:**

- a. **for willful disregard or violation of the constitution and bylaws of this church;**
- b. **for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or**
- c. **for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as an ordained minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.**

**20.52. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of such an officer shall be instituted by petition by:**

- a. **the Church Council on a vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members; or**
- b. **the Churchwide Assembly on a vote of at least two-thirds of its members.**

**The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.**

### **20.52.A05. Recall or Dismissal of a Churchwide Officer**

- a. *The petition for recall or dismissal described in 20.52. shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631, except if the subject of the petition is the secretary, the petition shall be in care of the presiding bishop of this church at the same address).*
- b. *In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the officer,*
  - 1) *with respect to the officer the procedures outlined in 13.63. shall first be followed, and if such officer does not accept the decision of the Church Council, the Church Council may proceed to petition for proceedings for recall or dismissal.*
  - 2) *in the event of such petition, four members of the Committee on Appeals, designated by the committee chair and consisting of two ordained ministers and two laypersons, shall*
    - a) *investigate such conditions in person;*
    - b) *seek competent medical testimony;*
    - c) *seek the counsel and advice of the other officers of this church; and*
    - d) *submit a written report of their findings to the other members of the Committee on Appeals.*
  - 3) *the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who investigated the conditions and other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings of the investigation committee and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.*
- c. *If the officer is an ordained minister, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.71.11. and 20.71.12. for discipline of ordained ministers. If the officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.41.01.*
- d. *In the case of alleged willful disregard or violation of the constitution and bylaws of this church or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:*
  - 1) *The petition shall be referred to the Committee on Appeals which shall function as the discipline hearing committee that shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the rules provided for in 20.21.16., except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with 20.51., 20.52., 20.53., or with the provisions of this continuing resolution; and*

- 2) *the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who are disqualified, may grant the petition by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting.*
- e. *Upon the filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Church Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee. Appeals from such temporary suspension shall be provided in 13.63.*

**20.53. Notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the accused person, the Church Council shall be notified of the entry of such judgment, and the office shall be vacated.**

**20.53.11.** The Church Council shall appoint three members from the Committee on Appeals who shall recommend a similar process for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, which process shall become operative when ratified by the Church Council.

**20.53.A92. Recall or Dismissal of a Synod Officer**

- a. *The recall or dismissal of the bishop, vice president, secretary, or treasurer of a synod of this church and the vacating of office may be effected:*
  - 1) *for willful disregard or violation of the constitution and bylaws of this church or the constitution and bylaws of the synod;*
  - 2) *for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or*
  - 3) *for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as an ordained minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.*
- b. *Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of a synodical bishop shall be instituted by written petition by:*
  - 1) *the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;*
  - 2) *the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting;*
  - 3) *at least 10 synodical bishops; or*
  - 4) *the presiding bishop of this church.*

*The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631) and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.*
- c. *Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, other than the synodical bishop, shall be instituted by written petition by:*



- 1) *the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;*
- 2) *the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting; or*
- 3) *the synodical bishop.*

*The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631) and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.*

- d. *In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of a synod,*
  - 1) *the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall first be followed, and if such officer does not accept the decision of the Synod Council, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for proceedings for recall or dismissal.*
  - 2) *four members of the Committee on Appeals, designated by the committee chair and consisting of two ordained ministers and two laypersons, shall*
    - a) *investigate such conditions in person;*
    - b) *seek competent medical testimony;*
    - c) *seek the counsel and advice of the presiding bishop of this church if such officer is the synodical bishop;*
    - d) *seek the counsel and advice of the synodical bishop if such officer is the vice president, secretary, or treasurer of the synod; and*
    - e) *submit a written report of their findings to the other members of the Committee on Appeals.*
  - 3) *the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who investigated the conditions and other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings of the investigation committee and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting shall adopt the findings and grant the petition.*
- e. *If the synod officer is an ordained minister, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.71.11. and 20.71.12. for discipline of ordained ministers.*
- f. *If the synod officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.41.01.*
- g. *If the case of alleged willful disregard or violation of the constitution and bylaws of this church or the constitution and bylaws of the synod or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:*

- 1) *if the proceedings were instituted by the presiding bishop of this church, the synodical bishop, or at least 10 other synodical bishops, the petitioner shall first meet with the Executive Committee of the Synod Council in which the officer serves. The Executive Committee shall function as a consultation panel to give advice to the petitioner;*
  - 2) *if as a result of the consultation the petition is not filed, no further proceedings shall be required;*
  - 3) *if as a result of the consultation the petition is filed or if the proceedings were instituted by the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council, the petition shall be referred to the Committee on Appeals, which shall function as the discipline hearing committee that shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the rules provided for in 20.21.16. except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with the provisions of this continuing resolution; and*
  - 4) *the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who are disqualified, may grant the petition by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting.*
- h. Upon the filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Synod Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service in the synod without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee of the synod. Appeals from such temporary suspension shall be provided in †S8.56.*
- i. Written notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the affected officer. The Synod Council shall be notified of such decision and the office shall be vacated if the charges have been sustained.*

**20.60. COMMITTEE ON APPEALS**

**20.61. There shall be a Committee on Appeals to which may be referred appeals from disciplinary proceedings and petitions for the recall of an officer. The Church Council shall appoint three members from the Committee on Appeals who shall recommend rules of procedure for the performance of its duties. The rules shall become effective when ratified by the Church Council.**

**20.61.A09. Rules of the Committee on Appeals**

- a. Any appeal to the Committee on Appeals shall be made in writing within 30 days after the decision of the discipline hearing committee has been delivered to the accused and the accuser(s). Appeals may be made only by the accused or the accuser(s) or their respective designated representative. Notice of the appeal shall be given by certified or registered letter addressed to the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of this church, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631), with a copy to the other party.*

- b. *The Committee on Appeals shall normally render its written decision within 60 days from the due date for the last written statement to be submitted under item h. below.*
- c. *The material that shall be reviewed by the Committee on Appeals (herein referred to as the record on appeal) shall consist of the following:*
  - 1) *a copy of the specific charges referred to the discipline hearing committee;*
  - 2) *copy of any rules governing the hearing before the discipline hearing committee;*
  - 3) *information concerning the composition of the discipline hearing committee that heard the case;*
  - 4) *the verbatim record made by the stenographer or court reporter or the audio or video recording of the hearing before the discipline hearing committee;*
  - 5) *all documents or physical evidence presented at the hearing before the discipline hearing committee;*
  - 6) *the written decision of the discipline hearing committee; and*
  - 7) *proof that the written decision was delivered to the accused and the accuser(s).*
- d. *It shall be the responsibility of the chair of the discipline hearing committee to furnish the record on appeal to the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of this church, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631), certifying to the completeness and accuracy of the record on appeal, within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal, unless the chair of the Committee on Appeals grants additional time for compelling reasons.*
- e. *If the Committee on Appeals has reason to believe that a required action was taken by a discipline hearing committee, but such action is not revealed in the record on appeal, the Committee on Appeals may, by written request to the chair of the discipline hearing committee, with copies to the accused and the accuser(s), solicit written confirmation of such action. Copies of such confirmation shall be supplied to the accused and the accuser(s).*
- f. *The persons or entities who may appeal to the Committee on Appeals are set forth in 20.63.*
- g. *The circumstances for which the Committee on Appeals may reverse or set aside the decision of a discipline hearing committee are set forth in 20.62.01., and consequences of such circumstances are set forth in 20.62.02.*
- h. *The party taking an appeal may present a written statement of reasons why the decision of a discipline hearing committee should be reversed or set aside. The other party shall have an opportunity to make a written response to the Committee on Appeals. The party*

*taking an appeal then may present a written rebuttal. Appropriate limitations and due dates for these statements may be established by the committee chair. In the event of cross appeals, the committee chair may permit the filing of additional statements so that both parties have adequate opportunity to present their respective appeals and respond to the statement of each other. Parties shall promptly give to each other copies of any written statement filed with the Committee on Appeals.*

- i. Final decisions of the Committee on Appeals require an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting.*
- j. Notice of decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be given in writing to the accused, the accuser(s), the chair of the discipline hearing committee, the synodical bishop, and the secretary of this church.*
- k. The Committee on Appeals also shall prepare a brief summary of each appeal, which shall be presented to the Churchwide Assembly. Such summary shall not disclose the names of the accused, the accuser(s), or any witness. If the decision of the discipline hearing committee was reversed or remanded, the summary shall indicate the reasons for such reversal or remand.*
- l. The Committee on Appeals shall elect the following officers: chair, vice-chair, secretary, and assistant secretary. In addition to the duties prescribed in Chapter 20, the chair shall schedule and preside at committee meetings. In the absence of the chair, the vice-chair shall act as chair. The secretary, or assistant secretary, shall keep such record of proceedings of the committee as is necessary.*
- m. Meetings of the Committee on Appeals may be held in person or by conference telephone call.*
- n. A majority of the members of the Committee on Appeals who are not disqualified shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of its business at a scheduled meeting, and three-fourths of the members of the Committee on Appeals who are not disqualified shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of its business by conference telephone call.*
- o. Members of the Committee on Appeals shall refrain from discussing appeals made to the committee, except as required to discharge the duties of the committee membership.*
- p. No member of the Committee on Appeals shall serve on any case if such a member is related (as defined in 19.61.04.) to the accused, the accuser(s), any witness who testified before the discipline hearing committee, or a member of the consultation or discipline hearing committee that considered the case, or where such member is a member or former member of a congregation that was an accuser or an accused. A member of the Committee on Appeals also may voluntarily disqualify himself or herself.*

- q. *See 20.52.A92. and 20.53.A92. for additional rules of procedure applicable in proceedings for recall or dismissal.*
- r. *See 20.61.B95. for additional rules of procedure applicable to stays.*

**20.61.B95.** *Any party who has appealed to the Committee on Appeals for review of a decision of a discipline hearing committee may request a stay in the effective date or other provision contained in said decision pending the appeal. Such request shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons why the requested stay is advisable. The request shall be forwarded to the Committee on Appeals, c/o ELCA Secretary, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631, with copy to the other party. The Committee on Appeals may grant the other party an opportunity to respond in writing. The Committee on Appeals may grant a stay for such period, and may renew the stay for such further periods, as it determines to be appropriate. The Committee on Appeals may make the grant of a stay subject to such conditions as it determines to be appropriate. Such determinations shall be final.*

**20.62.** **The circumstances for which the Committee on Appeals may reverse or set aside the decision of a discipline hearing committee and the consequences of such action shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

**20.62.01.** The judgment of a discipline hearing committee must be sustained unless the Committee on Appeals finds that one of the following conditions exists:

- a. The discipline hearing committee abused its discretion. The discipline hearing committee may not be found to have abused its discretion unless at least one of the following is true:
  - 1) The discipline hearing committee's Determination was not supported by any evidence in the record.
  - 2) One or more of the discipline hearing committee's Findings of Fact is clearly erroneous. A Finding of Fact is clearly erroneous when, although there is evidence to support it, the Committee on Appeals on the entire evidence is left with the definite and firm conviction that a mistake has been committed. The Committee on Appeals may not reverse a finding of the discipline hearing committee simply because the Committee on Appeals concludes that it would have found differently had it been the discipline hearing committee. The Committee on Appeals must give due regard to the opportunity of the discipline hearing committee to judge the credibility of the witnesses.
  - 3) Although the Findings of Fact are not clearly erroneous, the discipline hearing committee's Determination is nevertheless one with which no reasonable person, acting objectively, could agree. The committee's Determination may not be reversed simply because the Committee on Appeals, had it been the discipline hearing committee, would have reached a different con-

clusion. The discipline hearing committee's Determination must be sustained if reasonable people can disagree as to its propriety.

- b. Due process has not been followed.
- c. New evidence has been submitted by one of the parties, which evidence, in the judgment of the Committee on Appeals, should be considered.
- d. The record of the proceedings before the discipline hearing committee is insufficient to permit the Committee on Appeals to determine whether the committee abused its discretion or followed due process.

**20.62.02.** When the Committee on Appeals has decided to reverse or set aside the decision of the discipline hearing committee, the Committee on Appeals shall proceed as follows:

- a. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that one of the conditions listed in 20.62.01.a.1) or 20.62.01.a.2) exists, the Committee on Appeals may return the matter to the discipline hearing committee for further proceedings or render its own decision, which shall be final and unappealable.
- b. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that the condition listed in 20.62.01.a.3) exists, it shall render its own decision, which shall be final and unappealable.
- c. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that one of the conditions listed in 20.62.01.b., 20.62.01.c., or 20.62.01.d. exists, it shall return the matter to the discipline hearing committee for further proceedings.

**20.63.** **The decision of a discipline hearing committee may be appealed to the Committee on Appeals by:**

- a. **the accuser(s) who brought charges upon which a discipline hearing committee has acted;**
- b. **an ordained minister upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee;**
- c. **a congregation upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee; or**
- d. **other persons on the official rosters of this church upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee.**

**20.64.** **The Committee on Appeals shall be comprised of six ordained ministers and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive reelection.**

**20.65.** **The Committee on Appeals shall elect its own officers.**

**20.66.** **Decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be final; an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting shall be necessary to render a decision or opinion. Each decision or opinion shall be reported as soon as practical in writing to the parties con-**

**cerned, and a summary of action taken shall be reported to the Churchwide Assembly.**

**20.70. DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES**

**20.71.11.** The Committee on Appeals shall establish definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline in each of the above categories.

**20.71.12.** The Committee on Appeals shall present to the Church Council for consideration and recommendation a process and definitions, as required in bylaw 20.71.11.

**20.80. ADJUDICATION**

**20.81.** The presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this church.

**20.82.** When there is disagreement on a substantive issue among churchwide units or between or among synods of this church that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council for consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Church Council requesting it to mediate the matter.

**20.83.** When a component or beneficiary of a churchwide unit has a disagreement on a substantive issue which it cannot resolve with the board of its unit, it may address an appeal to the presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council. In this case, the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the Church Council, the decision shall be referred to the Church Council for final action.

**20.84.** When there is disagreement on a substantive issue between a synod or synods and the churchwide organization that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the Committee on Appeals for consultation and adjudication. If this appeal fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Churchwide Assembly, whose decision shall be final.

**20.85.** When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

## **Chapter 21.**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

- 21.01.** Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, indemnification of any person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding is prohibited. For purposes of this chapter, the term, “proceeding,” means a threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding in the right of this church, any other churchwide unit, or any other organization, but excluding (a) a proceeding by this church and (b) a disciplinary hearing or other proceeding described in Chapter 20. For purposes of this chapter, the term, “indemnification,” includes advances of expenses.
- 21.02.** To the full extent permitted from time to time by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Church Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this church shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, and reasonable attorneys’ fees and disbursements incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. While indemnification of any person by reason of that person’s capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of a separately incorporated churchwide unit may be made by such separately incorporated unit, indemnification of such person by this church is prohibited. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person’s capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization is subject to the provisions of section 21.03.
- 21.03.** Where a person who, while a member of the Church Council, officer, employee of the churchwide organization, member of the Conference of Bishops, or committee member of this church, is or was serving at the request of this church as (or whose duties in that position involve or involved service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall not be entitled to indemnification unless (a) the Church Council has established a process for determining whether a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to indemnification.
- 21.04.** This church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this church or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in section 21.02. or section 21.03.



## **Chapter 22.**

### **AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

#### **22.10. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION**

**22.11. The constitution of this church may be amended only through either of the following procedures:**

- a. The Church Council may propose an amendment, with an official notice to be sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of the members of the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting.**
- b. An amendment may be proposed by 25 or more members of the Churchwide Assembly. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation, following which it shall come before the assembly. If such an amendment is approved by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting, such an amendment shall become effective only if adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at the next regular Churchwide Assembly.**

#### **22.20. BYLAWS**

**22.21. Bylaws not in conflict with this constitution may be adopted or amended at any regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly when presented in writing by the Church Council or by at least 15 members of the assembly. An amendment proposed by members of the assembly shall immediately be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation. In no event shall an amendment be placed before the assembly for action sooner than the day following its presentation to the assembly. A two-thirds vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary for adoption.**

#### **22.30. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

**22.31. Continuing resolutions not in conflict with the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Such continuing resolutions become effective immediately upon adoption. Matters related to the administrative functions of this church shall be set forth in the continuing resolutions.**





**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**CONSTITUTION  
for  
SYNODS**

**August 2009**

# Introduction

Placement together of those constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions that pertain to the same matter is recommended.

Each is separately codified, but all are preceded by the letter “S” denoting that they are part of the synodical constitution.

- a. Constitutional provisions are codified by two sets of numbers, as in S9.08. or †S10.01.
- b. A bylaw related to S9.08. would be codified as S9.08.01., and to †S10.01. as S10.01.01. A bylaw under a required provision would not carry the dagger “†” that designates a required constitutional provision.
- c. Continuing resolutions also are codified by three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered †S6. to designate the chapter; †S6.04. to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered B09. in the codification †S6.04.B09. to indicate by the “B” that it is the second continuing resolution regarding that subject and by the “09” that it was adopted in 2009.

## Types of constitutional provisions

Three types of constitutional provisions are found within each synod’s constitution.

- a. Required provisions are designated by a dagger “†”. Such required provisions:
  - (1) may only be adopted or amended by the Churchwide Assembly;
  - (2) may not be altered or amended by the Synod Assembly; and
  - (3) are to be introduced “at once” into the synod’s constitution upon notification of the amendment or adoption of the provision (†S18.11.).
- b. Recommended provisions are provided in this *Constitution for Synods*, as approved by the Churchwide Assembly. Such recommended provisions may be adopted by majority vote at one meeting of the Synod Assembly (†S18.12.).
- c. Other provisions may be initiated in and adopted by each respective synod (†S18.13.), but such provisions may not conflict with required constitutional provisions or with churchwide constitutional provisions and bylaws. Synodical constitutional amendments become effective upon ratification by the Church Council or Churchwide Assembly.

# CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS

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## Chapter 1.

### NAME AND INCORPORATION

- †S1.01. The name of this synod shall be (*name of synod*) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the (*name of synod*) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as “this synod” or “the synod.”
- †S1.11. This synod shall be incorporated. Amendments to the articles of incorporation of this synod shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.
- †S1.21. The seal of this synod is (*describe*).

## Chapter 2.

### STATUS

- †S2.01. This synod possesses the powers conferred upon it, and accepts the duties and responsibilities assigned to it, in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (ELCA or “this church”), which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.
- †S2.02. No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.

## Chapter 3.

### TERRITORY

- †S3.01. The territory of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be: \_\_\_\_\_.
- †S3.02. “Determined by the Churchwide Assembly,” as stipulated by †S3.01., is understood to include the reported changes in synod relationship made by any congregation in a border area agreed under ELCA bylaws 10.01.11. and 10.02.02.

## Chapter 4.

### CONFESSION OF FAITH

- †S4.01. This synod confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- †S4.02. This synod confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
  - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- †S4.03. This synod accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- †S4.04. This synod accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this synod.
- †S4.05. This synod accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- †S4.06. This synod accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- †S4.07. This synod confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

## Chapter 5.

### NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- †S5.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this synod are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- †S5.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknow-

ledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

## **CHAPTER 6.**

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- †**S6.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- †**S6.02.** To participate in God’s mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - b. Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
  - c. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
  - d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
  - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
  - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- †**S6.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in the territory of this synod. In fulfillment of this role, this synod shall:
- a. Provide for the pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church in this synod, including:
    - 1) approving candidates for the ordained ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;
    - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining on behalf of this church;

- 3) approving associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;
  - 4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the consecration of deaconesses, and the consecration of diaconal ministers of this church; and
  - 5) consulting in the calling process for ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.
- b. Provide for leadership recruitment, preparation, and support in accordance with churchwide standards and policies, including:
    - 1) nurturing and supporting congregations and lay leaders;
    - 2) seeking and recruiting qualified candidates for the rostered ministries of this church;
    - 3) making provision for pastoral care, call or appointment review, and guidance;
    - 4) encouraging and supporting persons on the rosters of this church in stewardship of their abilities, care of self, and pursuit of continuing education to undergird their effectiveness of service; and
    - 5) supporting recruitment of leaders for this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and social ministry organizations.
  - c. Provide for discipline of congregations, ordained ministers, and persons on the official lay rosters; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with the procedures established by this church in Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.
  - d. Foster organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities.
  - e. Plan for the mission of this church in this synod, initiating and developing policy and implementing programs, consistent with churchwide policy, including:
    - 1) ecumenical guidance and encouragement;
    - 2) development of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;
    - 3) leadership and encouragement of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
    - 4) development of relationships to and participation in planning for the mission of social ministry organizations and ministries;
    - 5) encouragement of financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;
    - 6) provision for resources for congregational life;



- 7) assistance to the members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world; and
  - 8) interpretation of social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues through (a) Synod Assembly memorials to the Churchwide Assembly or (b) resolutions for referral from the Synod Assembly through the Synod Council to the Church Council and (c) Synod Council resolutions addressed to the Church Council or for referral to a unit of the churchwide organization through the Church Council's Executive Committee.
- f. Promote interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and enter into partnership with other synods in the region.
  - g. Participate in churchwide programs and develop support for the ministry of the churchwide organization.
  - h. Foster the grouping of congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.
  - i. Support relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries.
  - j. Foster relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of social ministry organizations.
  - k. Maintain relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers.
  - l. Foster supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries.
  - m. Foster supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of this synod.
  - n. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public.
  - o. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
  - p. Provide for archives in conjunction with other synods.
  - q. Cooperate with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of this synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.
  - r. Elect members of the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with bylaw 12.41.11. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and according to procedures specified in the bylaws of this constitution.

†S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards,

and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50 percent shall be male; and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both male and female. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

†S6.04.A01. *It is the goal of this synod that 10 percent of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.*

†S6.04.B09. *It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.*

†S6.05. Each assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body of this synod or any synodical units shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body.

## Chapter 7.

### SYNOD ASSEMBLY

†S7.01. This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly’s own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S7.11. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least biennially.

- S7.12.** Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council, and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- a. The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.
  - b. If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in cooperation with the Synod Council.
- S7.13.** Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod.
- S7.14.** One-half of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
- †S7.21.** The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
- a. All ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at this Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
  - b. All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, under call, on the official lay rosters of this synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item †S7.21.c.
  - c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female.
  - d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.
- S7.22.** The synod may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. The synod may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call, or those

designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

- S7.23.** The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.
- S7.24.** Ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the roster of ordained ministers of this synod. Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers of this church serving under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the official lay roster of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †**S7.25.** Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.
- S7.26.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming recognized congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.
- S7.27.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church.
- S7.28.** Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under †S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.

- †S7.31. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod.
- S7.32. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.
- S7.33. “*Ex officio*” as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

## Chapter 8. OFFICERS

- †S8.01. The officers of this synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.
- S8.10. **Bishop**
- †S8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S8.12. As this synod’s pastor, the bishop shall be an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who shall:
- a. Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.
  - b. Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, and its other rostered leaders.
  - c. Exercise solely this church’s power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synodical bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).
  - d. Commission (or provide for the commissioning of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as associates in ministry; consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as deaconesses; and consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as diaconal ministers of this church.
  - e. Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the rosters of this synod called by the Church Council.

- f. Install (or provide for the installation of):
  - 1) the pastors of all congregations of this synod;
  - 2) ordained ministers called to extraparish service within this church; and
  - 3) persons serving in the other rostered ministries within this synod.
- g. Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:
  - 1) Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church;
  - 2) Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod;
  - 3) Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church's life and witness in the areas served by this synod;
  - 4) Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning the synod's life and work; and
  - 5) Advise and counsel this synod's related institutions and organizations.
- h. Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:
  - 1) Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church;
  - 2) Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of controversies and for the discipline of ordained ministers, other rostered leaders, and congregations of this synod;
  - 3) Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;
  - 4) Consult regularly with other synodical bishops and the Conference of Bishops;
  - 5) Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;
  - 6) Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning within the territory of this synod; and
  - 7) Be *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly.
- i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:
  - 1) Serve as the president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive and administrative officer of this synod, who is authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other instruments and to affix the seal of this synod;

- 2) Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the council's Executive Committee;
- 3) Ensure that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;
- 4) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers;
- 5) Coordinate the work of all synodical staff members;
- 6) Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made;
- 7) Be a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution;
- 8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synodical rosters containing:
  - a) the names and addresses of all ordained ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which they become retired or disabled; and
  - b) the names and addresses of all other rostered persons of this synod and a record of the positions to which they have been called or the date on which they become retired or disabled;
- 9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered persons on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution and bylaws of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council;
- 10) Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church of:
  - a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod and the register of congregations;
  - b) the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered persons in good standing who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under the jurisdiction of another synod; and
  - c) the entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been received;
- 11) Provide for preparation and maintenance of a register of the congregations of this synod and the names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and
- 12) Appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the parochial reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.

- S8.14.** The synodical bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.
- †**S8.15.** The presiding bishop of this church, or the appointee of the presiding bishop, shall install into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, each newly elected synodical bishop.
- †**S8.16** **Conflicts of Interest**
- †**S8.16.01.** The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops:
- a. Whenever a synodical bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synodical bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synodical bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
  - b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.13.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synodical bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.
  - c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synodical bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, or in-law (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).
- S8.20.** **Vice President**
- †**S8.21.** The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.
- S8.22.** The vice president shall chair the Synod Council.
- S8.23.** In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.



**S8.30. Secretary**

†S8.31. The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The secretary may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.

†S8.32. The secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for the printing and distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.
- b. Be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to attest all instruments which require the same, and which are signed and sealed by the bishop.
- c. In consultation with the bishop, classify and arrange all important papers and documents and deposit them in the archives of this synod.
- d. Submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly.

**S8.40. Treasurer**

†S8.41. The treasurer shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.

S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

- a. Management of the monies and accounts of this synod, its deeds, mortgages, contracts, evidences of claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same at all times subject to the order of this synod.
- b. Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.
- c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church.
- d. Maintenance of a regular account with each congregation of this synod and informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this account.
- e. Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.
- f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by

this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

**S8.50. General Provisions**

- †S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be:
- a. The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.
  - b. The vice president, secretary, and treasurer of this synod shall be elected to a term of \_\_\_\_\_ years and may be reelected.
- S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the \_\_\_\_\_ month following election.
- †S8.53. Each officer shall be a voting member in a congregation of this synod, except that the bishop need not be a member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.
- †S8.54. Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the bishop until an election of a new bishop can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop is able to serve again. Such arrangements may include the appointment by the Synod Council of an interim bishop, who during the vacancy or period of disability shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop. The term of the successor bishop, elected by the next Synod Assembly or a special meeting of the Synod Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be six years with the subsequent election to take place at the Synod Assembly closest to the expiration of such a term and with the starting date of a successor term to be governed by constitutional provision S8.52.
- S8.55. Should the vice president, secretary, or treasurer die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the next Synod Assembly, shall be \_\_\_\_\_ years.
- †S8.56. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine whether an officer is unable to serve; the officer may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee by requesting a hearing before the Synod Council. A meeting to determine the ability of an officer to serve shall be called upon the request of at least three members of the Executive Committee and prior written notice of the meeting shall be given to the officer in question at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting.
- †S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer may be effected in accordance with the procedure established by the Committee on Appeals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- †**S8.58.** If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period, the bishop, with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period an ordained minister of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

## **Chapter 9.**

### **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

- †**S9.01.** The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.
- †**S9.02.** In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.03.** There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of \_\_\_\_\_ members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.
- S9.04.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.
- S9.05.** The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least two persons for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.06.** The Synod Council shall nominate two persons for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.07.** The Synod Council shall nominate two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.08.** In all elections, except for the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot

to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

**S9.09.** The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.

**S9.11.** The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region.

†**S9.12.** Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synodical officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Synod Council.

## **Chapter 10.**

### **SYNOD COUNCIL**

†**S10.01.** The Synod Council consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.

a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ordained ministers on the roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.

b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be \_\_\_\_ years.

†**S10.02.** The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions which are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or which are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**S10.03.** The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:

a. Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.

b. Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.

c. Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.

d. Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers and of other official rosters, receive and act upon appropriate

recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.

- e. Issue letters of call to ordained ministers and letters of call to associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- f. Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly except as may otherwise be provided in the constitution or bylaws of this synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an officer of this synod.
- g. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- h. Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod, or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Assembly.

- S10.04.** Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council, shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.
- S10.05.** No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.
- S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to be a member in good standing on a roster of this synod, if an ordained minister, or to be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, if a layperson, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- S10.07.** The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.

## **Chapter 11.**

### **COMMITTEES**

#### **(names of other organizational units)**

- †**S11.01.** There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, an Audit Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set forth in this constitution or in the bylaws or continuing resolutions, and shall be subject to any applicable provisions or requirements of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- †S11.02. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be ordained ministers and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.
- †S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons of whom six shall be ordained ministers and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection.
- a. The functions of the Committee on Discipline of this synod are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
  - b. The terms of committee members shall be staggered so that the terms of four committee members (two clergy and two lay) expire every two years.
  - c. The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.
- †S11.04. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.
- †S11.05. The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom are members of the synod staff. Up to half of the committee members may be Synod Council members. The Audit Committee members shall be elected by the Synod Council for a term of three years and be eligible for re-election to a second consecutive three-year term. The terms of the Audit Committee members shall be staggered. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the synod's accounting, financial reporting, internal control systems, and external audit processes as provided in †S15.31.

**S11.10. General Provisions**

- S11.11.** This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ordained ministers on the roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

## Chapter 12. CONFERENCES, CLUSTERS, COALITIONS, OR OTHER AREA SUBDIVISIONS

†S12.01. This synod shall establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions within its territory as specified in the bylaws. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions, and synodical and churchwide units for mission purposes.

## Chapter 13. CONGREGATIONS

†S13.01. Each congregation, except those certified as congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the uniting churches, prior to being listed in the register of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the *Model Constitution for Congregations* or one acceptable to this synod, which is not in contradiction to the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- a. **New congregations.** A congregation newly formed by this church and any congregation seeking recognition and reception by this church shall:
  - 1) Accept the criteria for recognition and reception as a congregation of this church, fulfill the functions of the congregation, and accept the governance provisions as provided in Chapter 9 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.
  - 2) Adopt governing documents that include fully and without alterations the Preamble, Chapter 1, where applicable, and all required provisions of Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* consistent with requirements of this constitution and the constitution of this church. Bylaws and continuing resolutions, appropriate for inclusion in these chapters and not in conflict with these required provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the constitution of this synod, or the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be adopted as described in Chapters 16 and 18 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.
  - 3) Accept the commitments expected of all congregations of the ELCA as stated in \*C6.01., \*C6.02., and \*C6.03. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.
- b. **Congregations from another church body.** If a congregation is a member of another church body, the leaders of the congregation first should consult with the appropriate authorities of that church body before taking action to leave its current church body. After such

consultation, leaders of the congregation should make contact with the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located.

- c. **Recognition and reception.** Recognition and reception into this church of transferring or independent congregations by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the Synod Council and Synod Assembly. The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the register of congregations.

- †S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod annually to choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.
- S13.11. When a pastor or when an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive the letter of resignation, report it to the congregation, and at once notify the bishop of this synod.
- S13.12. A congregation under financial obligation to its former pastor or associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.
- †S13.19. A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.
- †S13.20. A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.
- S13.21. The alignment of congregations in pastoral charges, and all alterations in any alignment, shall be subject to approval by the Synod Assembly or by the Synod Council.
- †S13.22. Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America within the territory of this synod, except those which are in partnership with the Slovak Zion Synod, shall establish and maintain a relationship with this synod.
- †S13.23. Provision 9.71. of the ELCA constitution shall govern the relationship of this synod and a congregation of this synod regarding the property of the congregation. This synod may transfer or convey property to a congregation of the synod, subject to restrictions accepted by the congregation,



including provision that if the Synod Council, in its sole and exclusive discretion, determines (1) that the property is not being used to serve the mission and ministry needs of this church, or (2) that the congregation has transferred, encumbered, mortgaged, or in any way burdened or impaired any right, title, or interest in the property without the prior approval of the Synod Council, then title to the property shall revert to the synod, and the congregation, upon written demand, shall reconvey the property to the synod.

**S13.24.** If any congregation of this synod has disbanded, or if the members of a congregation agree that it is no longer possible for it to function as such, or if it is the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for such a congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized or that it is necessary for this synod to protect the congregation's property from waste and deterioration, the Synod Council, itself or through trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of this synod. The congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Assembly.

**S13.25.** This synod may temporarily assume administration of a congregation upon its request or with its concurrence.

**S13.30. Discipline**

†**S13.31.** Congregations and members of congregations are subject to discipline in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.

**S13.40. Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities**

**S13.41.** Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

**Chapter 14.**

**ORDAINED MINISTERS AND LAY ROSTERED MINISTERS**

†**S14.01.** The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to congregations or extraparish service of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

†**S14.02.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

- a. Every ordained minister shall:
  - 1) preach the Word;

- 2) administer the sacraments;
  - 3) conduct public worship;
  - 4) provide pastoral care; and
  - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
  - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation;
  - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
  - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
  - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
  - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
  - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of this ELCA synod.

**S14.03.** The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**S14.04.** Whenever members of a congregation move to such a distance that regular attendance at its services becomes impractical, it shall be the duty of the pastor to commend them, upon their consent, to the pastoral care of a Lutheran congregation nearer to their place of residence.

**S14.05.** Each ordained minister on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

†**S14.11.** When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the pastoral office in the ordained ministry of this church:

- a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to a prospective pastor.
- b. For issuance of a letter of call to a pastor or pastoral candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds majority ballot vote shall be required of members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.
- c. When the congregation has voted to issue a call to a prospective pastor, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.

**S14.12.** No ordained minister shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. An ordained minister shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

- †**S14.13.**
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
    - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
    - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
    - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
    - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
    - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
    - 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
    - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
  - b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to this synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting

members of the congregation, the bishop shall investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.

- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of this synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of this synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of this synod together with the committee described in †S14.13.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by this synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in †S14.13.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in †S14.13.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of this synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

**†S14.14.** Ordained ministers shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.

**†S14.15.** The parochial records of each congregation shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain its property. The secretary of the congregation

shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

- a. installation in another field of labor, or
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

†S14.16. The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another field of labor, or
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

†S14.17. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any ordained ministers who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the parochial records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.

†S14.18. With the approval of the synodical bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in †S14.13., a congregation may call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.13.

S14.21. All ordained ministers under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

#### **S14.30. Official Rosters of Laypersons**

†S14.31. The provisions in the churchwide documents and such provisions as may be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit governing associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall apply in this synod.

- a. When a congregation of this synod desires to call an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister or a candidate for these official rosters of laypersons of this church:
  - 1) Such a congregation of this synod shall consult the synodical bishop before taking any steps leading to extending such a call.
  - 2) Issuance of such a letter of call shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- 3) When the congregation has voted to issue a call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.
- b. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall confer with the bishop of this synod before accepting a call within this synod.
- c. The call of a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the individual, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod who are serving under call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly.

## **Chapter 15.**

### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

†S15.01. The fiscal year of this synod shall be February 1 through January 31.

†S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent units that share responsibly in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are given to support all parts of this church and thus partnership in this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore:

- a. The mission of this church beyond the congregation is to be supported by such a proportionate share of each congregation's annual budget as each congregation determines. This synod shall develop guidelines for determining "proportionate share," and shall consult with congregational leaders to assist each congregation in making its determination.
- b. This synod shall receive the proportionate share of the mission support from its congregations, and shall transmit that percentage of each congregation's mission support as determined by the Churchwide Assembly to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S15.12. The annual budget of this synod shall reflect the entire range of its own activities and its commitment to partnership funding with other synods and the churchwide organization. Unless an exception is granted upon the

request of this synod by the Church Council, each budget shall include the percentage of congregational mission support assigned to it by the Churchwide Assembly.

- S15.13.** On the basis of estimated income, the Synod Council shall authorize expenditures within the budget for the fiscal year. Expenditure authorizations shall be subject to revision, in light of changing conditions, by the Synod Council.
- S15.14.** Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16 percent of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synodical causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.
- S15.21.** No appeal to congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.
- †**S15.31.** This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.
- †**S15.32.** This synod shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage in accordance with standards recommended by the churchwide organization. Insurance programs offered or endorsed by the churchwide organization shall be deemed to fulfill this obligation.

## **Chapter 16.**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

- †**S16.01.** Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, indemnification of any person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding is prohibited. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "proceeding," means a threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding in the right of this synod or any other organization. Except as otherwise required by law, (a) the term, "proceeding," does not include a proceeding by this synod and (b) indemnification for expenses incurred in a disciplinary hearing or other proceeding described in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* shall be permitted only as provided in

†S16.05. For purposes of this chapter, the term, “indemnification,” includes advances of expenses.

- †S16.02. To the full extent permitted from time to time by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, and reasonable attorney’s fees and disbursements incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person’s capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of section †S16.03.
- †S16.03. Whenever a person who, while a Synod Council member, officer, committee member, or employee of this synod, is or was serving at the request of this synod as (or whose duties in that position involve or involved service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall not be entitled to indemnification unless (a) the Synod Council has established a process for determining whether a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to indemnification.
- †S16.04. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in section †S16.02. or section †S16.03.
- †S16.05. When in proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* written charges against an ordained minister or a layperson on an official roster of this church are made by the synodical bishop or written charges against a congregation are made by the Synod Council or the synodical bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, and such determination is not reversed or set aside if an appeal is taken, then indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney’s fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be decided by the Synod Council.



## Chapter 17. ADJUDICATION

- †S17.01. The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this synod.
- †S17.02. The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of concern from ordained ministers, associates in ministry, or other persons on the official lay rosters of this church, congregations, and organizations within this synod; provide a forum in which the parties concerned can seek to work out matters causing distress or conflict; and make appropriate recommendations for their resolution. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the prescribed procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of an ordained minister or a person on the official lay rosters of this church shall not be addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- †S17.03. When there is disagreement among units of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council for a consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Synod Council requesting it to arbitrate the issue. The decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- †S17.04. When a component or beneficiary of a synod has a disagreement on a substantive issue that it cannot resolve, it may address an appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. In this case the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the Synod Council, the decision shall be referred to the Synod Council for final action.
- S17.10. Adjudication in a Congregation**
- †S17.11. When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of this synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of this synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

## Chapter 18.

### AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

#### †S18.10. Amendments to Constitution

†S18.11. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by this church, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S18.12. Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the *Constitution for Synods*, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a simple majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

†S18.13. Other amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this synod through either of the following procedures:

- a. An amendment may be adopted by a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after having been presented in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Synod Assembly over the signatures of at least \_\_\_\_\_ members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- b. The Synod Council may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

All such amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Churchwide Assembly or by the Church Council.

#### †S18.20. Amendments to Bylaws

†S18.21. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution nor with the constitution and bylaws of this church. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

**†S18.30. Amendments to Continuing Resolutions**

**†S18.31.** This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution and bylaws of this church. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.





# **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**MODEL CONSTITUTION  
FOR  
CONGREGATIONS  
OF THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN  
CHURCH IN AMERICA®**

**2009**

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## INTRODUCTION

The *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* originally was adopted by the Constituting Convention of this church in Columbus, Ohio, on April 30, 1987. This was done as required by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

This current edition of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* contains changes adopted by the 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009 Churchwide Assemblies.

The model is consistent with the requirements of the constitutional governing documents of the ELCA's churchwide organization and synods.

► **Required provisions:** Sections of this constitution marked by an asterisk [\*] are required when a congregation amends its governing documents. These sections must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (neither additions nor deletions). This is in keeping with provision 9.52. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. This provision stipulates that when a congregation of this church “wishes to amend any provision of its governing documents, the governing documents of that congregation shall be so amended to conform to 9.25.b.” in the churchwide constitution. The provisions herein marked by an asterisk are those that are indicated as required in ELCA constitutional provision 9.25.b.

► **Review by synod:** In keeping with provisions that apply to all congregations of this church, each congregation is to provide a copy of its governing documents to the synod. As specified by ELCA bylaw 9.53.03. (numbering as listed in the 1991 and subsequent editions):

All proposed changes in the constitution or incorporation documents of a congregation shall be referred to the synod with which the congregation is affiliated. The synod shall approve or

disapprove the proposed changes within 120 days of receipt thereof, and shall notify the congregation of its decision; in the absence of a decision, the changes shall go into effect.

► **Codification explanation:** A numerical codification indicates (a) general subject, (b) constitutional provisions, (c) bylaws, and (d) continuing resolutions.

- a. Major sectors are designated as chapters. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus, provisions in “Chapter 8. Membership” are preceded by “8.”
- b. Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus, one constitutional provision related to “Membership” is codified \*C8.02.
- c. Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. Thus, one bylaw provision related to “Membership” would be codified C8.02.01. Because bylaws and continuing resolutions normally are so specifically related to details of each congregation’s organization, operation, and life, no model set of bylaws or continuing resolutions is provided. Each congregation may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, but no such bylaws or continuing resolutions may conflict with this constitution, the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the constitution of the synod, as indicated in \*C6.03.e.
- d. The Congregation Council may adopt “continuing resolutions,” which may provide descriptions of operational patterns or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. Within the governing documents of a congregation, continuing resolutions are the provisions most easily amended. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws, continuing resolutions may be updated regularly by the Congregation Council without the necessity of calling a regular or special Congregation Meeting. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered C13. to designate the chapter; C13.07. to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A07. in the codification C13.07.A07. to indicate by the “A” that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and to indicate by the “07” that it was adopted in 2007.

► **Ease of use:** The provisions of your congregation’s constitution, the bylaws, and the continuing resolutions that pertain to the same matter should be placed together for clarity and ease in use.

If chapter numbers are considered the major sequence number, constitution numbers as a fraction of the chapter number, and bylaw numbers as a fraction of the constitution number, then the codification can be said to provide a progressive sequence. Thus, \*C5.01. will precede C5.03.10., and C9.11.16. will precede \*C9.13.

All provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* are prefaced with “C” to distinguish these provisions from comparable ones in the synodical and churchwide constitutions.

► **Missing numbers:** As you work with the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, you may notice that certain numbers seem to be missing from the numbering sequence in some chapters. That is intentional. In the style followed here, the number “.10.” and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use as section headings in future editions. Therefore, in the sequence, for example, of Chapters 1, 9, and 12, these “.10.” numbers do not appear.

► **Selection of options:** Alternatives are provided in certain places within the model. Those are noted by square brackets. For example, \*C9.01. offers the alternative of election of a call committee by the congregation or by the Congregation Council. One alternative should be chosen in each instance where square brackets appear in the text.

Optional texts are provided in separate paragraphs in Chapters 11 and 12 regarding the Congregation Council and its membership. Each congregation will need to select one of those options for council membership or a variation thereof, subject to approval through the synod’s constitutional review process.

► **References to church:** In the governing documents, “Church” with a capital letter is used in references to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. In references to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the words “church” and “this church” in lower case letters are employed, although, for clarity in this constitution, the full name or “ELCA” normally is used.

The specific congregation may be identified, as provided in C1.02., as “this congregation.”

► **Guidelines:** A list of guidelines for a congregation engaging in review and amendment of its constitution is available through each synod office and on the ELCA Web site ([www.elca.org/secretary/Constitutions/ModelGuide.pdf](http://www.elca.org/secretary/Constitutions/ModelGuide.pdf)).

The task of amending a constitution is not easy. It is, however, an important endeavor that merits thoughtful work. In your constitutional responsibilities, God grant you wisdom, mutual love, clear understanding of good order, and commitment to the unity of this church in faithful witness to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

DAVID D. SWARTLING  
Secretary  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

September 4, 2009



**MODEL CONSTITUTION  
for  
CONGREGATIONS  
of the  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN  
CHURCH IN AMERICA®**

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**\*PREAMBLE**

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Chapter 1.**

**NAME AND INCORPORATION**

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be \_\_\_\_\_.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of \_\_\_\_\_ (*Insert full legal name*) is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Chapter 2.**

**CONFESSION OF FAITH**

- \*C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- \*C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.

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\* \* Required provision

- b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- \*C2.03. This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
  - \*C2.04. This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
  - \*C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
  - \*C2.06. This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
  - \*C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

### **Chapter 3.**

#### **NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

- \*C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- \*C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

## **Chapter 4.**

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- \*C4.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- \*C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
  - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
  - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
  - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
  - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
  - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- \*C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
  - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
  - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
  - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
  - d. Teach the Word of God.
  - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
  - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- \*C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. [Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.]
- \*C4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

## **Chapter 5.**

### **POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

- \*C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- \*C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- \*C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16.
  - e. approve the annual budget;
  - f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
  - g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
  - h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
  - i. elect its [officers][,] [and] Congregation Council, [boards, and committees,] and require [them] [the members of the council] to carry

out their duties in accordance with the constitution[,] [and] bylaws[,] [and continuing resolutions]; and

- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

**\*C5.04.** This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the (insert name of synod) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**C5.05.** This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's [bylaws] [continuing resolutions]. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

## **Chapter 6.**

### **CHURCH AFFILIATION**

**\*C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the (insert name of synod) Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**\*C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

**\*C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.
- d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that

all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

- \*C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
  - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
  - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in \*C6.05.
- \*C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
  - b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
  - c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
  - d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
  - e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
  - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
  - g.<sup>1</sup> Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions

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<sup>1</sup> *This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that formerly were a part of the Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.g. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

in \*C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

h.<sup>2</sup> Since this congregation was established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- \*C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.
- \*C6.07. If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

## Chapter 7.

### PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- \*C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the (insert name of synod) Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- \*C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the (insert name of synod) Synod.
- \*C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become

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<sup>2</sup> This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that have been established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.h. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of \*C7.02. and \*C.7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
  - b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the (insert name of synod)—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

## Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

- \*C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- \*C8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
  - b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
  - c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.
  - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other [Lutheran] [Christian] congregations who wish to retain such membership but



desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

- \*C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- \*C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
  - a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
  - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
  - c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- \*C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
  - a. death;
  - b. resignation;
  - c. transfer or release;
  - d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
  - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

## **Chapter 9.**

### **THE PASTOR**

- \*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.02. Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- \*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
  - a. Every ordained minister shall:
    - 1) preach the Word;
    - 2) administer the sacraments;

- 3) conduct public worship;
  - 4) provide pastoral care; and
  - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
  - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
  - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
  - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
  - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
  - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
  - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the (insert name of synod) Synod of the ELCA.
- \*C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.05.** a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
  - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
  - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;

- 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
  - c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
  - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in \*C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
  - e. If, in the course of proceedings described in \*C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop, who may bring charges in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
  - f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in \*C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a

joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

- \*C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- \*C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- \*C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from \*C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.05.a.
- \*C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:

  - a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
  - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
  - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- \*C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that

such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

**C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry**

**C9.21.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

**Chapter 10.**

**CONGREGATION MEETING**

**C10.01.** The [annual][semi-annual][quarterly] meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

**C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of \_\_\_\_\_ [number][percent] of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

**C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all [voting] members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.

**C10.04.** \_\_\_\_\_ voting members shall constitute a quorum.

**C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

**C10.06.** All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.

**C10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

**Chapter 11.**

**OFFICERS**

**C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.

- b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council. [If the treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.]

**C11.02.** The [congregation][Congregation Council] shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

**or**

The pastor shall be *ex officio* president of the congregation and the Congregation Council. The [congregation][Congregation Council] shall elect by written ballot the other officers of the congregation who shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

**or**

The pastor shall be *ex officio* president of the congregation and the Congregation Council. The [congregation][Congregation Council] shall elect by written ballot the other officers of the congregation who shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin on \_\_\_\_\_ (month and day) and end on \_\_\_\_\_ (month and day).

**or**

The officers shall be elected by the [congregation] [Congregation Council] by written ballot and shall serve for one year. The term shall begin on \_\_\_\_\_ (month and day) and end on \_\_\_\_\_ (month and day).

**C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

**Chapter 12.**  
**CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

**C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s)[, the officers of the congregation,] and [ \_\_\_\_\_ members] [not more than \_\_\_\_\_ nor fewer than \_\_\_\_\_ members] of the congregation, at least one of whom shall be a youth and at least one of whom shall be a young adult. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected,

subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

- C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for \_\_\_\_\_ years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

**or**

The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of \_\_\_\_\_. Their term of office shall be for \_\_\_\_\_ years, with the term of office beginning on \_\_\_\_\_ (month and day) and ending on \_\_\_\_\_ (month and day). Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

- C12.03.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.

- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.

- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

**C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of [trustees] [directors] of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of \_\_\_\_\_, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution[,] [and] its bylaws[,] [and the continuing resolutions] are carried out.

**C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.



- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

### **Chapter 13.**

#### **CONGREGATION COMMITTEES**

- C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the *Executive Committee*.
- C13.02.** A *Nominating Committee* of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03.** An *Audit Committee* of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.
- C13.04.** A *Mutual Ministry Committee* (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president [vice president<sup>3</sup>] and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of six voting members shall be elected by [this congregation] [the Congregation Council]. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.

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<sup>3</sup> For use if the pastor is president of the congregation under two of the options in C11.02.

- C13.06.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the [bylaws][continuing resolutions].
- C13.08.** The [senior] pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation. [The president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.]

## **Chapter 14.**

### **ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION**

- C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council [and specified in a continuing resolution].

## **Chapter 15.**

### **DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

- \*C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- \*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the cong-

regation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. The written citation that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council and requests the presence of a member charged with the offense shall be sent at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

**\*C15.03.** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the council or congregation;
- b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- c. exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

**\*C15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

**\*C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

**\*C15.06.** For disciplinary actions in this congregation, "due process" shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

**\*C15.07.** No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.

**\*C15.10. Adjudication**

**\*C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the

synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

## **Chapter 16.**

### **BYLAWS**

- \*C16.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- \*C16.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- \*C16.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- \*C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## **Chapter 17.**

### **AMENDMENTS**

- \*C17.01. Unless provision \*C17.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least \_\_\_\_\_ voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- \*C17.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C17.01., shall:
  - a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
  - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and

- c. have the effective date included in the resolution<sup>4</sup> and noted in the constitution.
- \*C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in \*C17.01. and \*C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the (insert name of synod) Synod of the ELCA.
- \*C17.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*—as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly—by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council’s recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of \_\_\_\_\_ voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

## **Chapter 18.**

### **CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

- \*C18.01.** The congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- \*C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

## **Chapter 19.**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

- \*C19.01.** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such

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<sup>4</sup> Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of \*C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

## **Chapter 20.**

### **PARISH AUTHORIZATION**

*[\* Required provisions when congregation is part of a parish]*

- \*C20.01.** This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in \*C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in \*C20.02. and \*C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council.
- \*C20.02.** Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of a parish, such letter of call shall be first approved by a two-thirds vote at congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve extending this call, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- \*C20.03.** Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor as provided in †S14.13.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- \*C20.04.** Whenever a parish arrangement is terminated, the call of any rostered person serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that formerly was part of the parish arrangement desire to issue a new call to that rostered person, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

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