



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Freed & RENEWED
in Christ 500 YEARS OF GOD'S
GRACE IN ACTION

2016 Churchwide Assembly Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

Friday, August 12, 2016 12:04 PM

Resolution of Appreciation for Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

We, the members of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, give thanks to God for the leadership of our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

We celebrate her dedication to inclusivity, inter-faith relationships, ecumenism, and anti-racism. Her witness of loving our neighbors inspires us to live the gospel in the same way.

We give thanks for her courage in leading us into opposition as we continue to work against racism, from the repudiation of the doctrine of discovery to black lives matter. She, furthermore, led the vote adopting AMMPARO to further accompaniment with children and families in Central America, inspired by her conviction that we are all God's children.

We rejoice, especially as we look to the upcoming 500th anniversary of the Reformation, that our presiding bishop is distinctly Lutheran and reminds us that the Lutheran perspective is one the world needs. At the same time, she showed us the need for humility as she led the church in passing the Declaration on the Way. With her, we commit to the study of Luther's Small Catechism; we look forward to being quizzed and to the opportunity to quiz her!

We congratulate her for expertly presiding over this, her first Churchwide Assembly, and for her eloquent and inspiring report to the Assembly and for sharing with us her intellect, wit, faith, prophetic voice, and love of a certain camp song.

Resolution of Appreciation for Vice President Carlos Peña

The voting members of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America wish to conjoin their voices of gratitude and appreciation with those of subsequent assemblies, Churchwide Councils and executive staff as well as the countless thousands who, to the person serve as the embodiment of the ELCA as we extend our thanks to you, Vice President Carlos Peña.

We are church, we are church together! And through your tireless example of unwavering fortitude as a servant-leader, together we have and are becoming better equipped and positioned to effectuate change for the sake of the world. We do so in our efforts as being judicious

stewards, as advocates for social justice, in our care and protection of God's creation. As we stand in solidarity with and respond to those in need, and most importantly, as we proclaim and share the Gospel that is ours in Jesus Christ.

We profess that a good steward is one who gives of his/her time, talent and treasures. To do so with humility, determination and prayer-inspired guidance is indicative of what we have come to know and appreciate in you.

Thank you Carlos; for you are indeed a "good and faithful servant".

Resolution of Appreciation for Secretary Chris Boerger

We, the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, accept the report of Secretary Chris Boerger, thanking him for the splendor and orchestration extended by he and his office in the pre-planning and facilitation of this year's assembly.

We thank him for his faithful work on behalf of our church and the church worldwide, united in the mission of Christ. His keen knowledge and love of the constitution and his ability to translate it for us are a tremendous asset to our church. His attention to detail and efforts to digitize the records are commendable. Through it all, he manifests his love for Christ's church. A consummate churchman, Secretary Boerger inspires us all to BE THE ELCA.

We extend our gratitude to you for the seamless nature of our daily logistics, the movement of over 1,000 participants to and from the assembly gathering. We are particularly mindful of the triangulation you created between the sites of our hotel lodging and the center of our deliberation at the convention. The simplicity of this triangle is a symbolic reminder of the Trinity in God that sustains and keep us steadfast.

We are indebted to you and those whom you represent for the diligence and resourcefulness you employed in not only attending to the details of constitutional and bylaw revisions but the thoughtfulness that was required in recasting our governing principles with great care and responsiveness to the current and projected needs of the church.

We thank you immensely for the uniformity of these tasks you undertook and the faithfulness in which you dutifully addressed it.

Resolution of Appreciation for Treasurer Linda Norman

We, the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA, accept the report of Treasurer Linda Norman and give thanks to God for her leadership in this church. We have received and approved the 2017-19 budget and affirm the care and stewardship employed by the Treasurer, the Office of the Treasurer, and other Churchwide staff in the financial reflection of and planning for our program services and ministries. The ELCA endeavors to do the work of God in all of the places for

which the Holy Spirit directs. Our approval of the 2017-19 budget attests to this conviction and we are resolved to be faithful stewards of the many gifts of this church. We give thanks for Treasurer Norman's careful attention to detail and diligent oversight of the rich blessings God has bestowed upon us.

Resolution of Appreciation for Churchwide Staff

We, the members of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, give thanks to God for the Churchwide staff. We wish to thank the staff and offices for making this assembly possible and for their day to day work on behalf of this church.

We thank each of the offices and units of the churchwide organization:

Office of the Presiding Bishop

Office of the Secretary

Office of the Treasurer

Mission Advancement

Domestic Mission

Global Mission

We appreciate their tireless work of renewing and growing the church's mission. We continue to keep them and their work, which is our work, in prayer.

Resolution of Appreciation and Thanksgiving for Hospitality

Be it resolved:

The members of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America deeply thank New Orleans and the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod for hosting this assembly. As we started this assembly we were introduced to the original ancestors of this land, the Houma Nation, and in doing so we were made aware not only of these brothers and sisters but of all our siblings in Christ who make New Orleans a diverse setting of hospitality.

The Ernest N. Morial Convention Center hosted us generously with their accommodations and empowered us to worship boldly, assemble earnestly, and give us shelter and safe keeping through the week.

The Sheraton and Marriott Hotel gave us respite and recovery for our long days and presented opportunity for fun and fellowship unique to New Orleans right outside their doors.

The unique hospitality of the week, can only be found in New Orleans and has redefined “service with a smile.” The city of New Orleans has made it possible for each member of this assembly to reimagine hospitality in their own context and given new life for practices of accompaniment and servant leadership, as we strive to be “Church for the Sake of the World.”

We express great thanks for the long and diverse history of New Orleans, the contributions to the arts, cooking, leisure, and home-grown quality of life found on every street corner. We also give thanks for the witness to the resurrection in how New Orleans rose after Hurricane Katrina and the breaking of the levees. We strive to never forget your hard work and how far you have come and what a people can do when they keep their eye on the prize.

We recognize the local and diverse selections of music that filled our worship services. The talented performers made us grateful for New Orleans’ creativity and character, and brought our worship to life in new and unique ways. The Mississippi gave us a perpetual remembrance of our baptism in Christ, but also reminded us of the environmental gifts and ecology which make up New Orleans.

A special thank you for all our volunteers who made this event possible, who came from all over to New Orleans to giving their time and working both seen and unseen, making this assembly a success.

From “second lines” to singing bus drivers, New Orleans created space for the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly and gave of themselves and shaped our time together with their talents and treasures.

In doing so, they have only further endowed the church with experience to, “act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.”