



Recommendation: Amendment of Certain Continuing Resolutions

Background

In a Sept. 1, 2015, memorandum regarding proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, Secretary Wm Chris Boerger provided rationale for the Church Council to propose [CC15.11.54] that the 2016 Churchwide Assembly amend continuing resolution **5.01.A87.**:

The previous language of the continuing resolution established a goal of inclusivity that this church did not achieve. The new continuing resolution changes a goal to a commitment by describing the ongoing work required to achieve it. The proposal also replaces an arbitrary percentage (10 percent) with an ongoing commitment to reflect the real diversity that exists in the places where this church is located.

As the Church Council considered the proposal in November 2015, it discussed this church's commitment to ethnic and racial diversity, as well as efforts to address racism in this church and in society. Members of the council noted the webinars and other activities of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton to address racial justice, especially after the June 17, 2015, shooting of nine members of Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C. Two victims – the Rev. Clementa Pinckney and the Rev. Daniel Simmons – were graduates of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, S.C.

The Church Council voted [CC15.11.55]:

To recognize and affirm the extensive efforts of the presiding bishop to call the entire church to confront racism and to add our voice to that call; and

To invite the presiding bishop to include the current efforts in a broader, comprehensive strategy toward becoming a racially and ethnically diverse church committed to dismantling racism.

Recommended for Assembly Action

To adopt the following amendments to certain continuing resolutions in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

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.A16. *This church commits itself to ethnic and racial diversity. Each expression of this church shall annually assess its ethnic and racial diversity when compared to the demographic data of its community or territory. The churchwide organization will work with synods as they assist congregations to reach out to persons of color or whose primary language is 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.B16. *Each synod shall develop goals and strategies that monitor progress toward reaching the commitment expressed in 5.01.A16 as part of its consultation process with the churchwide organization.*

5.01.D16. *The Churchwide Assembly shall receive reports from the presiding bishop and the secretary that monitor this church's progress toward meeting the commitment expressed in 5.01.A16.*