



July 28 – August 2
PHOENIX, ARIZONA



2025 Churchwide Assembly

Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee – Report 4

Saturday, August 2, 2025

Motion K

Resolution of Appreciation for Church Council Members who are Ending their Terms of Service in 2025

We, the members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, give thanks to God for the members of the Church Council who will be concluding their six-year terms at this Assembly. We wish to thank these 22 individuals for their dedicated service to this church during their terms, and to acknowledge that their service included membership on task forces, ad hoc committees, attendance at synod assemblies, and representation of this church in global, national, and local forums:

- Mr. Kevin Anderson
- Ms. Tracey Beasley
- Pr. Benjamin Bergren
- Pr. Marcus Bigott
- Pr. Nick Billardello III
- Ms. Susan Kingrey Boxberger
- Pr. Bill Callister
- Divine
- Pr. Joanne Engquist
- Ms. Kerry Fehrman
- Pr. Emily Hartner
- Pr. Pamela Hoh
- Ms. Cherrish Holland
- Mr. David Lenz
- Pr. Tara Lynn
- Mr. Ethan Miller-Perez
- Mr. Keoni Newman
- Mr. Noah Roux
- Ms. Valerie Shaw
- Ms. Andraine Sinaga
- Mr. Loren Solberg
- Ms. Loni Taylor

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.

Motion L

Resolution of Appreciation for Churchwide Staff

The members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered in Phoenix, Arizona, thank the churchwide organization and staff for their hard work and dedication to the mission of Christ in this church. We thank God for their willingness to serve as a part of the everyday lifeblood of this church both here in the United States and globally.

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
- Christian Community and Leadership
- Service and Justice
- Innovation

We are church together in Christ because of this churchwide organization's willingness to continue renewing and growing our church in both acceptance of others and what it means to truly live the Gospel.

Motion M

Resolution of Appreciation for Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Giving Glory to God, and acknowledging the presence of the Spirit, we the members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, gathered in Phoenix, Arizona, give thanks to God for your leadership as its Presiding Bishop for the past 12 years (2013- 2025), the first woman ever to guide and direct the ELCA in its journey with God. You have served with distinction as its pastor, preacher, faithful servant and minister of Word and Sacrament.

We thank you for leaving a legacy of four foundational pillars "we are church; we are Lutheran; we are church together; we are church for the sake of the world" which will move with us into our future, as church, proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We thank you for your encouragement to read Luther's Small Catechism and spend time with the Word of God and in prayer.

We thank you for your faithful ambassadorship for Jesus Christ and on our behalf in national and worldwide arenas; with our ecumenical and interfaith siblings; in sickness and in health, especially noting our celebration of "500 Years" with events in Washington DC and A Joint Statement with our Catholic Siblings; Your Vice Presidency for the North American Region of the Lutheran World Federation from 2017-2023, Updating the 1994 Declaration of the Jewish Community and its 30th Anniversary celebration and your address to the Parliament of World Religions.

We give thanks for your humor and quick wit especially in tense or difficult situations, not just at this Assembly, but also in other settings giving us a chance to laugh, breathe, and gain perspective.

We give thanks to the Rev. T. Conrad Selnick, your husband and our Episcopal brother and your family for their patience, sacrifices, and support over these past 12 years. It has been a gift and blessing to us.

We wish you well in your retirement and ask God's continued blessings upon you and your family and hold you in prayer as you journey.

Motion N

Resolution of Appreciation for Vice President Imran Siddiqui

We, the members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, give thanks to God for the service of Vice President Imran Siddiqui. We thank him for his dedicated service to this church, his willingness to answer this call, and his tireless leadership and guidance in renewing this church and lifting up the role of lay leaders and lay members (henceforth also known as "under-cover agents for the Gospel"). We continue to keep him, and his work, in prayer.

Motion O

Resolution of Appreciation for Secretary Sue Rothmeyer

Giving Glory to God and acknowledging the presence of the Spirit, we the members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, meeting in Phoenix, Arizona give thanks to God for your leadership as Secretary of the ELCA for the past six years (2019-2025). As the first woman and Deacon to head the Office of Secretary in the ELCA, you have done so with distinction and grace.

We thank you for your attention to detail. Your vocational commitment to serve God and the Gospel through using your administrative skills and abilities has been a blessing to us.

We thank you for your stewardship and care of the governing documents, history, records, rosters and policies of this church, the ELCA. With excellence as your hallmark, you have helped us in the ELCA tell the story of our witness and vocational callings. The wise advice you offer related to the ELCA Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, as well as legal matters, has helped many a congregation and we thank you.

We thank you for your astuteness in parliamentary procedure. As a member of the National Association of Parliamentarians, your understanding and knowledge of the “latest” in Roberts Rules of Order have kept us in order when we gather in assembly, as church councils, committees, boards, task forces, etc. of the ELCA in all three of its expressions. Your guidance as we elected Bishops, other officers, and representatives, helped to forge positive relations between Churchwide and Synodical organizations.

We thank you for your insight, thoughtfulness, kind heart, strong sense of hospitality, passion for campus ministry, and for sharing your extraordinary singing voice and that “Iowan Spirit”, with us over the past 30 years of your Churchwide service. We thank your family and friends for sharing you with us, and we acknowledge their sacrifices in support of your position as Secretary.

We wish you well in your retirement and ask God’s continued blessings in this next chapter of your life. As you journey forth, receive our prayers and gratitude.

Motion P

Resolution of Appreciation for Treasurer Lori Fedyk

The members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thanks to God for the service of Treasurer Lori Fedyk. We thank her for her dedicated service to this church, her financial guidance and expertise, her dedication to explaining financial concepts in language that non-financial people can understand, and her attention to the stewardship of the resources of this church. We continue to keep her, and her work, in prayer.

Motion Q

Resolution of Appreciation for Presiding Bishop Elect Yehiel Curry and Secretary Elect Lucille “CeCee” Mills

The members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered in Phoenix are grateful for the work of the Holy Spirit moving among us as we deliberated, voted, listened, discerned, prayed, and finally celebrated the elections of our Presiding Bishop Elect Yehiel Curry and Secretary Elect Lucille “CeCee” Mills. We commit to holding them and those around them in prayer as they transition to their new calls serving the ELCA

Motion R

Resolution of Appreciation for Nominees for Election

The members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered in Phoenix, Arizona, thank all those who put their names forward for election at this assembly. We thank God for their willingness

to consider taking on important roles within our church. From those nominees for the Office positions of Presiding Bishop and Secretary to those who stood for Church Council, and all those who stood for other churchwide committees and boards of separately incorporated ministries we give thanks. We are church together because of those willing to place their names forward and serve our church in this way.

Motion S

Resolution of Appreciation of Churchwide Committees Roll of Assembly Members

The members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered in Phoenix, Arizona thank all those who served on the committees of this assembly. We thank God for those individuals that gave of their time and talent to ensure the work of this assembly could be carried out.

We thank each of the committees and their members of this assembly for their work:

Churchwide Assembly Planning Committee;

- Credentials Committee;
- Elections Committee;
- Local Arrangements Committee;
- Memorials Committee;
- Minutes Team;
- Nominating Committee;
- Reference and Counsel Committee;
- Ad Hoc Committee for Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust Reconsiderations;
- Ad Hoc Committee for Faith and Civic Life;
- CRLC Task Force;
- Hosts of pre-assembly hearings; and
- Worship Committee and our worship leaders and musicians.

We also extend our deep gratitude to all those volunteers that worked tirelessly throughout the assembly with such good humor and hospitality.

Motion T

Resolution of Appreciation for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Guests, and Ethnic Associations

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America meeting in assembly gives thanks to God for the presence and partnership of our ecumenical guests and those who gathered with us for the AMMPARO Prayer Vigil. The assembly has been blessed by their participation in this assembly, and we give thanks for their contributions to our life together as the church. They embody the global nature of the church and remind us how we are connected globally as the people of God. We give thanks to God for these ecumenical and global partners who have joined with us this week at this assembly either in person or by sharing video greetings.

Furthermore, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America meeting in assembly gives thanks to God for the presence and partnership of our inter-religious guests. Their participation at this assembly reminds us of our commitment to love our neighbor and to deepen our commitment to seek mutual understanding with our neighbors of other religions and worldviews. May their presence continue to assist us on the road with our neighbors of other religions and worldviews as instruments of God's justice and peace.

We give thanks to God for the presence this week of all Ecumenical, Inter-Religious, and Global Guests:

- Dr. Funmi Adeyemi, Moderator and President, Evangelical & Pentecostal Family, Christian Churches Together in the USA
- Rev. Eddy Alemán, General Secretary, Reformed Church in America
- Bishop Sani Ibrahim (Charlie) Azar, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL; a member church of The Lutheran World Federation) *

- Rev. Dr. David Bennett, President, Moravian Church Northern Province
- Rev. Dr. Anne Burghardt, General Secretary, The Lutheran World Federation
- Bishop Guadalupe Cortez, Salvadoran Lutheran Church (ILS; a member church of The Lutheran World Federation)
- Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, Executive Director of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers; Co-Founder, Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign
- Rev. Rock Fremont, President, Arizona Interfaith Movement
- Bishop-elect Imad Mousa Dawood Haddad, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL; a member church of The Lutheran World Federation)
- Ms. Julia Ayala Harris, President, House of Deputies, The Episcopal Church
- Ms. Danielle Hickman, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relationships Manager, United Church of Christ
- Rabbi Rick Jacobs, President, Union for Reform Judaism
- Rev. Susan Johnson, National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC; a member church of The Lutheran World Federation)
- Rev. Protopresbyter Dr. Nicolas Kazarian, Director, Department of Inter-Orthodox, Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
- Bishop Denis J. Madden, Titular Bishop of Baia; Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; Co-chair, Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue in the United States*
- Rev. Russell McDougall, Executive Director, Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President and General Secretary, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
- Rev. Jihyun Oh, Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- Rev. Hilja Ndatala-Eenyofi Nghaangulwa, Bishop, Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN; a member church of The Lutheran World Federation)

The Assembly also gives thanks to the Ethnic Associations of the ELCA, who have joined us in friendship and supported us in many ways throughout the week.

- African Descent Lutheran Association
- American Indian Alaska Native Association, Inc.
- Association of Latino Ministries of the ELCA
- Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage
- Association of Asian and Pacific Islanders
- ELCA Association of White Lutherans for Racial Justice

Motion U

Resolution of Appreciation for Separately Incorporated Ministries and Independent Lutheran Organizations

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America meeting in assembly gives thanks to God for the presence and partnership of our the separately incorporated ministries, including Augsburg Fortress, the ELCA Foundation, Portico Benefit Services, the Women of the ELCA, and the Mission Investment Fund and the ELCA Federal Credit Union as well as our Independent Lutheran Organizations, including the Lutheran Faith Community Nurse Association. Their generosity and presence have made our time together enjoyable and sociable.

Motion V

Resolution of Thanks for Our Seminaries, Colleges, and Universities

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America members in assembly would like to give thanks to God and to the representatives present from our ELCA colleges, universities, and seminaries. We recognize and appreciate the value in educating and fortifying the present and future leaders in our church. We are especially grateful for the time, energy,

and conversations that representatives from these institutions of higher education had with our youth and young adults about discerning their futures on Tuesday evening over ice cream. We are so grateful.

Motion W
Resolution of Thanks for Time in Worship

It is a gift to be able to gather together in word and sacrament. The members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly give thanks to the Worship Committee, and the many leaders, preachers, musicians, and volunteers who helped us gather together in worship throughout the assembly. We give thanks for messages shared by our preaching ministers: Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton, Rev. Nelson Rivera Garcia, Rev. Imad Mousa Dawood Haddad, Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, and Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock.

The Assembly would also like to thank Dr. Chad Rimmer for his powerful theological reflection and our online Bible Study Leaders Willie Korboi, Deacon Clare Josef-Maier, and Rev. Atahualpa Hernández Miranda for grounding us in scripture and the Living Word of God as we prepared to act For the Life of the World. We also express our gratitude to our floor prayer team and music team for preparing our hearts with spirit filled prayer and song as we did our work together.

Motion X
Resolution of and Thanksgiving for Hospitality

As we conclude our fellowship together this week, we acknowledge that we have assembled original and ancestral homelands of the Hohokam, O'odham, and Piipaash peoples. We give thanks for their presence on the land since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call the land their home. Let us remember the Indigenous peoples and tribal nations who were the first to love, pray, grow, celebrate, cry, drum, dance and sing upon the lands.

The members of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America deeply thank the City of Phoenix, the Grand Canyon Synod, and Region 2 for hosting this Assembly, for their hospitality, assistance, warmth, generous spirit, and for all things prickly pear. We acknowledge the tremendous support and work of Bishop Hutterer and the Office of the Bishop's Staff.

We give thanks to the Indigenous leaders of the Phoenix area who led, taught, inspired and gathered us for a PowWow experience, a first for many members of the assembly.

We give thanks for AMMPARO and the local migrant rights and Ecumenical leaders who led us in prayer and advocacy at the prayer Vigil on behalf of the those whose inherent human dignity is being negated in our communities.

We give thanks for the numerous volunteers whose invaluable work has welcomed, assisted, supported and enabled us to participate in and conduct our assembly in an efficient, enjoyable and caring manner.

We give thanks for the Phoenix Convention Center for their accommodations, for their assistance in helping us assemble together in prayer and business, facilitating our ability to worship boldly, and for serving as a focal point in the work of this church. We thank especially those hospitality staff, servers, catering and security who have kept us fed, safe, comfortable and warmly greeted throughout our time.

We give thanks for the Hyatt Regency, Hilton Garden Inn, and Sheraton hotels for giving us a place to rest and reflect on our time together and acknowledge the privilege we have in a comfortable, climate controlled, safe space.

We also give thanks to the hotel staff, restaurant and transportation workers of Phoenix for their hard work and gracious hospitality.

The City of Phoenix embodies a beautiful expression of what it means to be church, and we thank them for welcoming us into their city so warmly.