



Office of the Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.

November 21, 2008

TO: Bishops of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Vice Presidents of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Secretaries of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Members of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Members of the Cabinet of Executives
 Coordinators for Ministry Development

FROM: Secretary David D. Swartling

SUBJECT: Report of Actions of the Church Council (November 14–17, 2008)

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Illinois, on November 14–17, 2008. A variety of matters received attention. Here is a summary of particular actions along with background and explanatory information.

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1. FULL COMMUNION AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Background:

The Lutheran–United Methodist bilateral dialogue began with a first round study on Baptism (1977–79). After seven rounds of dialogue, in April 2005, the Church Council voted (CC05.04.23) to recommend the following for approval by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly:

To welcome and rejoice in the substantial progress of the Lutheran–United Methodist Dialogue, looking toward the future possibility of a relationship of full communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church;

To now recognize The United Methodist

Church as a church in which the Gospel is preached and taught;

To affirm, on the basis of studies conducted by the Lutheran–United Methodist dialogue, that the basic teaching of each respective church is consonant with the Gospel;

To acknowledge, on the same basis, that the central teaching of The United Methodist Church is sufficiently compatible with the teaching of this church;

To encourage common concern throughout the respective churches by such means as:

1. mutual prayer and mutual support by members of congregations;

2. study together of the Holy Scripture as well as the histories and theological traditions of both churches;
3. joint programs of theological discussion, evangelical outreach, and social ministry endeavors; and

To declare, on the basis of these findings, that a relationship of Interim Sharing of the Eucharist is hereby established between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church in the U.S.A., with such an interim sharing to be exercised according to established guidelines

This resolution subsequently was adopted on August 11, 2005, by the Churchwide Assembly (CA05.04.11) by a strong majority (Yes-877; No-60), which established a relationship of Interim Eucharistic Sharing with The United Methodist Church.

A draft document describing a relationship of full communion between the two churches, "Confessing Our Faith Together," was submitted for review by the Conference of Bishops at its September 29–October 3, 2005, meeting with the intention that it would be circulated in a study format for discussion throughout the two churches. The draft also was submitted to the eight ELCA seminaries for review. The deadline for individual, congregational, and seminary responses and recommendations for revisions was January 15, 2007. Since The United Methodist Church was scheduled to consider the proposal for full communion at its General Conference meeting in 2008, the members of the Conference of Bishops discussed at length whether the ELCA should consider the matter at its 2007 or 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Based on this conversation, it was agreed that the proposal should come for a vote in 2009.

At its April 2008 meeting, the ELCA Church Council voted (CC08.04.10):

To give thanks to God for the deepening relationship with The United Methodist Church that has resulted from Interim Eucharistic Sharing;

To thank the members of the Lutheran–United Methodist Dialogue for the final report of the dialogue and the proposal for full communion, "Confessing Our Faith Together";

To encourage continued study of this proposal for full communion throughout this church;

To anticipate action of the United Methodist General Conference on this full-communion

agreement, as it meets April 23–May 2, 2008; and

To request a formal proposal for a full-communion agreement with The United Methodist Church for consideration by the Church Council at its November 2008 meeting for action by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

The United Methodist Church approved the proposal for full communion on April 28, 2008. By a vote of 864–19, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church (UMC) adopted an implementing resolution that will establish full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, if the ELCA adopts the same proposal at the next ELCA Churchwide Assembly, August 17–23, 2009, in Minneapolis.

The General Conference also acted to create a coordinating committee, the Joint Commission on ELCA and UMC Full Communion:

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:

- Coordinate the implementation of action taken by the two churches to achieve full communion.
- 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.
- Report regularly and appropriately to each church.

The United Methodist Church membership of this commission shall be the Ecumenical Officer of the Council of Bishops, the President of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (GCCUIC), if the President is not also the Ecumenical Officer, and one lay and one clergy member of GCCUIC elected by GCCUIC. If the President of GCCUIC is also the Ecumenical Officer, then the Vice President of GCCUIC shall be a member of the commission.

The ELCA will appoint members of the Joint Commission (Coordinating Committee) through the office of the Presiding Bishop.

Church Council Action:

To recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the following action:

RESOLVED, that this Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America accepts the implementing resolution printed below as the basis for a relationship of full communion to be established between The United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America requests that Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America convey this action to Bishop Gregory V. Palmer, president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops:

IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTION FOR FULL COMMUNION

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 on-going 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.

JOINT COMMISSION ON ELCA-UMC FULL COMMUNION

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 actions 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;

- d. report regularly and appropriately to each church.**

2. PROPOSED SOCIAL STATEMENT ON JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

Background:

The ELCA 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.D05.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 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;
- 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:

- Ms. April Almaas, Harvard Divinity School graduate currently finishing a pastoral internship in the Sierra Pacific Synod, at-large member;
- The Rev. Susan Candea, pastor of an ELCA congregation in Colorado, at-large member;

- Ms. Antonia Clemente, co-founder and executive director of a domestic violence center in New York City, at-large member;
- Dr. Kristen Kvam, *chair*, professor at a Methodist seminary in Kansas City, at-large member;
- Ms. Agnes McClain, assistant to the bishop of the Southwest California Synod, at-large member;
- Ms. Mikka McCracken, student at Gustavus Adolphus College, at-large member;
- Ms. A. J. Mell, high school student in Pennsylvania, advisory member;
- Ms. Joyce Schoulte, representative of the Church in Society program committee from Northeastern Iowa Synod, advisory member;
- Mr. David E. Truland, liaison from the Church Council, advisory member;
- [vacant], representative of the Conference of Bishops, advisory member;
- Other advisory members include the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration; Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of Women of the ELCA, and Mr. Douglas Haugen, director of Lutheran Men in Mission;
- Staff members from the Church in Society program unit include the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director; Dr. Mary Streufert, director of justice for women; and Ms. Juli Bey, administrative assistant, justice for women.

One of the main responsibilities of the consulting committee is to advise the director on priorities for implementing the ELCA 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 effectively understand and address a variety of matters of critical concern to this church. These include but are not limited to:

- 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 the 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 around 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.

ELCA 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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 are 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.

It is the recommendation of the program unit for Church in Society that the Church Council recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the topic of justice for women in church and society as a social statement to be received by the Churchwide Assembly for approval in 2015.

Church Council Action:

To recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the following action:

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.

3. 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

Background:

In each biennium, the Church Council submits a recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on proposed rules of organization and procedure. Voting members of the assembly act on the rules in the first plenary session. A two-thirds vote of the assembly is required for adoption of the rules.

These rules 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 proposed changes in the 2009 Rules of Organization and Procedure (Rules) were made to update or reorganize the document or to clarify an issue (e.g., the meaning of "germane motion" or "memorial"). The most substantive amendments are in Part Ten under two headings. Under "Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force," the following Rule was proposed:

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.

Under "Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws," the following Rule was proposed:

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.

The second paragraph is the Rule that was adopted by the 2003, 2005, and 2007 Churchwide Assemblies and is consistent with the constitution of the ELCA.

The Office of the Secretary and the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee proffered these Rules in Part Ten not as advocates of a particular point of view, but primarily to clearly frame the discussion of this section and to address transparently the pending resolution of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod. These Rules also are consistent with what has been proposed in the past and what had been practice with respect to social statements and their implementing resolutions prior to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, as is evident from this review of the following recent history of the rules in this section:

2005 Churchwide Assembly

At the November 2004 Church Council meeting, the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2005 Churchwide Assembly were considered. In Part Ten, "Amendments to and Votes on Major Statements," under the heading "Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Task Force Reports," the following rules were commended to the Churchwide Assembly [CC04.11.65]:

A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report that require amendment of a constitution or bylaw provision for implementation.

A two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force that would establish for this church a new practice or policy that is contrary to a social statement of this church on the subject

of the policy or social statements received from the immediate predecessor church bodies of this church that have not been replaced or superseded by social statements or decisions of this church.

A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report that would establish for this church a new practice or policy that is contrary to an existing policy that has been adopted by the Church Council upon recommendation of a board or committee, as authorized by the constitution or bylaws of this church.

A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report that the Church Council recommended to the Churchwide Assembly and specified that a two-thirds affirmative vote of the assembly will be necessary for adoption.

A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report that would establish policy for the oversight by synods of the official rosters of this church.

A majority vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report that are provided as advice to congregations of this church, except recommendations in implementing resolutions for a social statement for which a two-thirds vote is required.

At the first plenary session of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, the assembly considered the Rules. It voted initially to adopt the Rules, exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force, and the material removed for separate consideration [CA05.01.01]. The Rules approved in the section "Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Task Force Reports" included only the following:

A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report that require amendment of a constitution or bylaw provision for implementation.

Paragraphs two–six were removed for separate consideration.

After considerable debate on those paragraphs, the assembly voted to adopt the Rules of Organization and Procedure, Section I, page 13, Part Ten, paragraph 3, “Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Task Force Reports”:

A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report that would establish for this church a new practice or policy that is contrary to an existing policy that has been adopted by the Church Council upon recommendation of a board or committee, as authorized by the constitution or bylaws of this church.

No other proposed rule in this section was adopted, nor were amendments to them approved.

2007 Churchwide Assembly

At its April 2007 meeting, the Church Council considered the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly. In Part Ten, “Amendments to and Votes on Major Statements,” under the heading “Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Task Force Reports,” the following rules had been proposed:

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

A two-thirds vote of the members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report or amendments or substitute resolutions related to them that would establish for this church a new practice or policy that is contrary to an existing policy that has been adopted by the Church Council upon recommendation of a board or committee, as authorized by the constitution or bylaws of this church.

After extensive debate, the Church Council voted to recommend that the Churchwide Assembly adopt the Rules of Organization and Procedure (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force) [CC07.04.24]. Under the heading in Part Ten “Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from

Task Force Reports,” the following rule was recommended:

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

At the first plenary session of the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, the assembly considered the Rules of Organization and Procedure. In Part Ten under the heading “Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Task Force Reports,” the following rule was adopted:

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

Social Statements and Implementing Resolutions

Bylaw 12.12.01. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* states:

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.

Up until 2007, social statements and their implementing resolutions were combined in a single action, which required a two-thirds vote for approval. Specifically, only a single action on “Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor,” combining approval of the social statement and implementing resolutions, was taken by the 2003 Churchwide Assembly [CA03.05.13]. Similarly, only a single action on “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All,” combining approval of the social statement and implementing resolutions, was taken by the 1999 Churchwide Assembly [CA99.05.14]. Again, only a single action on “For Peace in God’s World,” combining

approval of the social statement and implementing resolutions, was taken by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly [CA95.05.24]. The 1993 Churchwide Assembly voted a single action [CA93.04.06], combining approval of the social statement and implementing resolutions, on "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice." It also took a single action on "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture" [CA93.07.43]. The 1991 Churchwide Assembly voted a single action on the social statement on abortion [CA91.06.38], combining approval of the social statement and implementing resolutions. It also took a single action on "Social Practice Statement on the Death Penalty" [CA91.03.09] and a single action on "The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective" [CA91.02.04].

In 2007, the practice was altered. The 2007 Churchwide Assembly took separate actions on the social statement "Our Calling in Education" and its implementing resolutions. It approved (Yes-949; No-35) the social statement in one action [CA07.05.21], which required a two-thirds vote, and approved (Yes-996; No-17) the implementing resolutions in another [CA07.07.22] on a simple majority.

Church Council November 2008 Action

Following debate, the Church Council voted to recommend adoption of the Rules, as amended, to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly (see below).

The Churchwide Assembly will debate and vote on the Rules during the first plenary session. Amendments and substitute motions to the recommendation of the Church Council are in order at that time.

Church Council Action:

To recommend adoption of the following resolution by the voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:

To adopt the Rules of Organization and Procedure, with the exception of Part Ten, for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force); and

To authorize the presiding bishop and secretary of this church to prepare revisions that may be found necessary for the rules prior to their publication in the *Pre-Assembly Report* and to report any changes to the Church Council at its March 2009 meeting.

Church Council Action:

To recommend adoption of the following resolution by the voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:

To adopt Part Ten, as amended, of 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):

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 Committee of Reference and Counsel 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 simple majority vote, may consent to the consideration of such an amendment.

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.

4. APPOINTMENT OF THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

Background:

Churchwide bylaw 12.51.21., in regard to the Churchwide Assembly, provides for the appointment of a Memorials Committee to review memorials from synodical assemblies and make recommendations for assembly action. The 15-member committee includes four members of the Church Council, nine voting members of the assembly, and two representatives of the Conference of Bishops. The Church Council appoints the committee at its November meeting prior to the Churchwide Assembly to allow for adequate notice to people for their participation in the meeting of the Memorials Committee subsequent to the completion of the 2008 synodical assemblies.

Church Council Action:

To appoint the members of the Memorials Committee for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

1. Bp. Wm. Chris Boerger (1B)
2. Ms. Erika M. Canham (4F)
3. Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth (1E)
4. Pr. Joseph G. Crippen (3I)
5. Mr. Jason S. Glombicki (5A)
6. Bp. H. Julian Gordy (9D)
7. Pr. Jonathan W. Linman (8B)
8. Ms. Gail M. Olson (3H)
9. Mr. John M. Pederson (3B)
10. Mr. John E. Prabhakar (5B)
11. Pr. John C. Richter, *co-chair* (7E)
12. Pr. Kay S. Richter (5I)
13. Mr. Willie G. Scott (6A)
14. Ms. Judith Tutt-Starr, *co-chair* (2B)
15. Ms. Suzanne G. Wise (9B)

5. APPOINTMENT OF THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY REFERENCE AND COUNSEL COMMITTEE

Background:

Churchwide bylaw 12.51.11., in regard to the Churchwide Assembly, provides for the appointment of a Committee of Reference and Counsel to review items—proposed resolutions—that are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly and also to review all changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws submitted by voting members at the assembly. The 15-member committee includes members of the Church Council, voting members of the assembly, and two representatives of the Conference of Bishops.

Church Council Action:

To appoint the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

1. Ms. Linda M. Chinnia (8F)
2. Bp. Jessica R. Crist (1F)
3. Pr. Drew E. Flathmann (3G)
4. Mr. Mark S. Helmke, *co-chair* (4E)
5. Mr. William B. Horne (9E)
6. Ms. Julie R. Johnson (3B)
7. Bp. James A. Justman (5I)
8. Pr. Susan Langhauser, *co-chair* (4B)
9. Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr. (8C)
10. Pr. Fred B. Opalinski (7E)

11. Ms. Lynette M. Reitz (8E)
12. Ms. Lori J. Splinter (2B)
13. Pr. Melissa L. Stoller (3E)
14. Mr. Joshua D. Thornton (6F)
15. Ms. Susan A. Zahrböck (5H)

6. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS AND BYLAWS

Background:

The Church Council has the responsibility for submitting recommendations for action by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. For constitutional amendments, a six-month notice to the synods is required for adoption of such amendments in one Churchwide Assembly (churchwide constitutional provision 22.11.a.). Notice of proposed bylaws also is provided to the synods as information. The proposed amendments also are distributed to the voting members in the *Pre-Assembly Report*.

Among the proposed amendments were a number that pertained to increasing the participation of youth and young adults in the governance of the ELCA.

Church Council Action:

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt, with the exception of those amendments that may be considered separately, the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as detailed below:

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.A09.

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]*.

7. SUPPORT FOR MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

Background:

The Lutheran–Episcopal Coordinating Committee, at its October 2008 meeting, met with the Rev. Darrell D. Morton, assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries and his counterpart in The Episcopal Church to discuss concerns related to military chaplaincy. The following resolution was approved unanimously and will be brought to both church bodies for discussion and possible action: “The Lutheran–Episcopal Coordinating Committee was deeply concerned to learn of episodes of insensitivity by the Armed Forces by neglecting to provide liturgical and sacramental worship opportunities appropriate for Lutherans and Episcopalians. The LECC recommends that the executive bodies of our churches call upon the Department of Defense to take measures to ensure that the sacramental needs of Lutherans and Episcopalians are met by providing a minimum of a weekly celebration of the Eucharist under an officially ordained person recognized by the two churches.”

Church Council Action:

To call upon the Department of Defense to take measures to ensure that the sacramental needs of Lutherans and Episcopalians are met by providing a minimum of one weekly celebration of the Eucharist under an officially ordained person recognized by the two churches.

8. 2008 CURRENT FUND AND WORLD HUNGER SPENDING AUTHORIZATIONS

Background:

The Office of the Treasurer provided to the Church Council income estimates of \$82,017,500 for the current unrestricted operating fund and \$22,700,000 for the World Hunger fund. No change in the current unrestricted operating fund estimate was proposed.

The current World Hunger income estimate approved in April 2008 is anticipated to be surpassed by \$3.1 million in bequests and trust income. Other income is projected to be less than originally budgeted by \$400,000. A process was initiated to identify, review, and propose an increased distribution of up to \$2.7 million in additional World Hunger project support in 2008 for international and domestic projects. Any balance of income not allocated and distributed prior to year end, plus any income over estimates or expenditures below plan, will become part of a pool available for allocation and distribution in 2009 following the established process for allocating World Hunger “overages.”

Church Council Action:

To approve a revised World Hunger spending authorization for fiscal year 2008 of \$22,700,000.

9. 2009 CURRENT FUND AND WORLD HUNGER SPENDING AUTHORIZATIONS

Background:

Current fund income is estimated to increase by \$527,200 to \$82,447,200 from the 2007 Churchwide Assembly-approved 2009 income proposal. This is an increase of \$430,050 from the revised 2008 income estimate. The largest budget increase is in mission-support income, with an expected increase of \$900,000 to \$67,200,000. This is an increase of \$600,000 from the revised 2008 fiscal year estimate and equals 97 percent of synod mission-support plans. Endowment distributions are expected to increase \$252,600 from the assembly-approved estimate due to the identification of additional endowments available for support of the current operating budget.

Gifts expected for Vision for Mission have been reduced by \$150,000 from the assembly-approved estimate and \$100,000 from the revised 2008 estimate. Investment income estimates reflect a decrease of \$200,000 as a result of lower cash balances. The \$75,400 decrease in rental income is due primarily to the adjusted estimate of available lease space in the Lutheran Center. Bequests and trust income has been reduced by \$100,000 in both unrestricted and temporarily restricted income, reflecting the decision to maintain a constant \$2.5 million combined budget level.

The proposed 2009 expenditure authorization reflects an allocation to units of \$1,060,000 for increased compensation and benefit costs based on an average salary increase of 3.5 percent for approximately 511 full-time, part-time, and term staff; 185 missionaries; 159 mission developers supported either on the churchwide payroll or through grants; and increases in the cost of benefits, especially health care premiums.

Increases were made in the allocation to the Office of the Treasurer in order to maintain information technologies at required levels, as well as a net increase for the costs of management of the Lutheran Center and the Washington, D.C., offices after realizing savings in mortgage interest expense.

The strategic initiative fund is budgeted at \$309,425, including a \$200,000 amount reserved for the implementation of the new staffing structure in the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit.

The revised income proposal does not keep pace with the expenditure increases identified above. In order to

create a balanced budget, 5.5 vacant positions were eliminated and other program reductions were identified in many units, including a \$100,000 reduction in the subsidy support of the ELCA Foundation.

World Hunger income is anticipated to increase \$600,000 from the amount approved at the 2007 Churchwide Assembly. The unusually large bequests in 2008 that led to the 2008 increased spending authorization are not expected to be recurring; therefore, the total income projected for the World Hunger appeal in 2009 is less than the 2008 revised estimate.

Church Council Action:

To approve an initial current fund spending authorization for fiscal year 2009 of \$82,447,200; and

To approve an initial World Hunger spending authorization for fiscal year 2009 of \$20,600,000.

10. SYNODICAL-CHURCHWIDE CONSULTATION ON MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

Background:

The ELCA Church Council has responsibility for reviewing and approving or withholding approval for synods regarding mission-support plans.

Revisions in synod plans following the April 2008 meeting of the Church Council were as follows:

REVISIONS TO 2008 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

Since the April 2008 Church Council meeting, revisions for 2008 mission support plans have been received from seventeen synods.

Church Council Action:

To affirm with sincere appreciation the increases in the percentage for the sharing of 2008 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Nebraska, Arkansas-Oklahoma, and Indiana-Kentucky; and

To affirm the revised 2008 mission-support dollar estimates for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Northwest Washington, Eastern Washington-Idaho, South Dakota, Northwestern Minnesota, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Northern Great Lakes,

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee, North/West Lower Michigan, Northwestern Ohio, Upstate New York, Delaware-Maryland, Virginia, and Southeastern.

REVISIONS TO 2009 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

Since the April 2008 Church Council meeting, new or revised 2009 mission-support plans have been received from seventeen synods.

Church Council Action:

To affirm with sincere appreciation the increases in the percentage for the sharing of 2009 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Southwestern Washington, Southwest California, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Indiana-Kentucky, Upstate New York, and North Carolina;

To affirm the revised 2009 mission-support dollar estimates for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Northwest Washington, Pacifica, Central States, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Northern Great Lakes, North/West Lower Michigan, Upper Susquehanna, and West Virginia-Western Maryland; and

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to request a reduction of their previously established percentage for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to affirm their prayerful efforts in continuing to be strong partners; to encourage them to restore their percentage to their previous level in the future; and to commit to supporting them in this process through continuing conversation and collaboration on behalf of our shared ministries: Greater Milwaukee Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, and South-Central Synod of Wisconsin.

11. ELECTION RESULTS

Background:

Between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill unexpired terms on churchwide boards, steering

committees of churchwide commissions, and certain advisory committees.

MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES PROGRAM COMMITTEE
Clergy [Term 2011] - *to fill vacancy created by the resignation of the Rev. Larry J. Jorgenson, Anchorage, Alaska [1A].*

The Rev. Mark A. Cerniglia, Columbia, S.C. [9C]

SEMINARY BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Background:

Bylaw 8.31.02. outlines basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries. Subsection 8.31.02.a. provides that at least one-fifth of board members are to be nominated, in consultation with the seminaries, by the appropriate churchwide unit and elected by the Church Council. This process of nomination and election is accomplished by these steps:

1. The appropriate seminary president notifies the director for theological education of an upcoming board vacancy and the term of that board position (as specified in the seminary's governing documents).
2. The director for theological education contacts the seminary president in order to consult on filling the vacancy and, with the concurrence of the executive director of Vocation and Education, reaches an agreement on a single nomination.
3. The director for theological education submits that nomination in a letter also signed by the executive director to the secretary of the ELCA for inclusion in the agenda of the Church Council. This letter will include a brief candidate *vita* and a summary of the gifts this person brings to this service.
4. The Church Council is asked to ratify the nomination at its next meeting.
5. The Office of the Secretary notifies the seminary president of the action taken on the nomination, sending a copy to the director for theological education for the unit's records.

Church Council Action:

To re-elect as members of the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, to six-year terms expiring in 2014: the Rev. Lawrence J. Clark, Mr. Carl Rausch, and the Rev. Richard "Rick" W. Rouse;

To elect as an at-large member of the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, to a four-year term expiring in 2012: Ms. Elizabeth Baer;

To elect as member of the board of directors of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C., to a three-year term expiring in 2011: the Rev. Robert T. Byrne;

To elect as an at-large member of the board of directors of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., to a four-year term expiring in 2012: Mr. J.A. "Gus" Blanchard III; and

To elect as members of the board of directors of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, Calif, to six-year terms expiring in 2014: Ms. Mary Carlson and the Rev. Ruben F. Duran.

SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS

Background:

The ELCA serves as a corporate member of Lutheran Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York; the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, Sioux Falls, S.D.; Lutheran Services in America, Baltimore, Md.; Mosaic, Inc., Omaha, Neb.; and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Baltimore, Md. In the case of Lutheran Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York, the ELCA's annual election of board members complies with their constitutional requirement that this action constitute an annual meeting of the corporate member. The Church in Society program unit has forwarded to the Church Council the following nominations for positions on the boards of these organizations.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the board of trustees of Lutheran Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York as members-at-large for terms expiring in 2011: Ms. Carol Knuth Sakoian; Mr. Joseph Lodato; Ms. Loretta Lundberg; the Rev. Barbara K. Lundblad; the Rev. Craig A. Miller; Mr. Samuel Fook Wong; Ms. Martha Wolfgang; and Ms. Martha Dietz.

BOARD OF NATIONAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY, INCORPORATED

At the request of the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, the Church Council elects members of the board of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc., as described in ELCA bylaw 14.21.22., "The Church Council shall arrange the process for all elections . . . to assure conformity with established criteria."

The Vocation and Education unit is responsible for relating to and assisting “ministries, organizations, programs and movements that support members of this church in discerning and practicing their callings under the Gospel; and thereby . . . 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. . . .”

Nominations to the board are made by the board of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc., in coordination with unit staff.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the Board of Directors of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc., in accordance with Article III, Section 3.2 of NLCM’s amended bylaws, “The directors shall be nominated by a nominating committee (consisting of the ELCA Director for Campus Ministry or his or her designee, and two members of the Board of Directors) and elected by the ELCA Church Council . . .” the following: Mr. Chuck Frederiksen and the Rev. Linda Boston.