EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

MINUTES
March 27-30, 2009
Lutheran Center
Chicago, Illinois

The sixty-first meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was convened in the Council Room of the Lutheran Center at Chicago, Illinois. The meeting began on Friday, March 27, 2009, with committee meetings and a service of Evening Prayer, led by the Rev. Robert G. Schaefer, executive for worship and liturgical resources.

ORGANIZATION OF MEETING
(Agenda I.A.-I.F.)

The following persons were present for all or part of the meeting:

Voting Members

Officers:
Pr. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop
Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president
Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary
Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer

Church Council:
Pr. David P. Anderson
Mr. Baron Blanchard
Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke
Ms. Judith Anne Bunker
Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth
Pr. Rachel L. Connelly
Mr. John R. Emery
Ms. Karin L. Graddy
Mr. Mark S. Helmke
Ms. Norma J. Hirsch
Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger
Pr. David E. Jensen
Mr. Mark E. Johnson
Pr. Susan Langhauser
Pr. Jonathan W. Linman
Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr.
Pr. Steven P. Loy
Mr. John S. Munday
Mr. Mark W. Myers
Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus
Pr. J. Pablo Obregon
Pr. J. Paul Rajashekar *(excused)*
Ms. Lynette M. Reitz *(excused)*
Pr. John C. Richter
Ms. Sandra Schlesinger
Pr. Norene A. Smith
Pr. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson
Mr. David Truland
Mr. Richard L. Wahl
Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace
Mr. Gary L. Wipperman

Representatives of the Conference of Bishops
Bp. Allan C. Bjornberg *(excused)*
Bp. Leonard H. Bolick
Bp. Murray D. Finck
Bp. Callon W. Holloway
Bp. Marie C. Jerge
Bp. H. Gerard Knoche *(excused)*
Bp. Gerald L. Mansholt
Bp. Peter Rogness
Bp. Paul Stumme-Diers
Bp. Martin D. Wells

Advisory Members

Youth:

Ms. Arielle Mastellar
Mr. Samuel F. Schlouch

Advisors:

Mr. Michael D. Bash, chair of the Board of Trustees, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers *(excused)*
Pr. Chi Shih Chen, president, Asian and Pacific Islander Association
Pr. Michael L. Cooper-White, ELCA seminaries
Pr. Khader N. El-Yateem, chair, Multicultural Ministries program committee
Ms. Elizabeth Gaskins, president, American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association
Mr. Kent L. Henning, colleges and universities *(excused)*
Ms. Kristin Kvam, chair, Justice for Women consulting committee
Pr. Sarah Lee-Faulkner, chair, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission program committee
Ms. Katherine Long, president, European American Association
Pr. O. Dennis Mims, president, African American Lutheran Association
Mr. Fuad Nijim, president, Arab and Middle Eastern Association *(excused)*
Pr. Nelson H. Rabell-Gonzalez, president, Latino Community Association
Pr. Frederick Strickert, chair, Global Mission program committee
Mr. Kai S. Swanson, chair, Vocation and Education program committee
Pr. Roger A. Thompson, chair, Church in Society program committee
Ms. Suzanne G. Wise, social ministry organizations
Ms. Beth Wrenn, president of the board, Women of the ELCA *(excused)*

Resource Persons

Office of the Presiding Bishop:

Pr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration
Pr. Walter S. May, executive for synodical and constituent relations
Pr. Marcus R. Kunz, executive for discernment of contextual and theological issues
Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, executive for governance and institutional relations

Section Executives and Staff:

Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, executive for research and evaluation
Pr. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations
Pr. Darrell D. Morton, assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries
Pr. A. Craig Settlage, director for mission support
Ms. Else B. Thompson, executive for human resources
Pr. Robert Schaefer, Executive for Worship and Liturgical Resources

Office of the Secretary:

Pr. Karen G. Bockelman, executive assistant to the secretary
Pr. Ruth E. Hamilton, executive for Office of the Secretary administration
Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel
Ms. Mary Beth Nowak, executive assistant to the secretary
Mr. David A. Ullrich, associate general counsel *(excused)*

Office of the Treasurer:

Section Executives and Staff:

Mr. Jonathan Beyer, executive for information technology
Ms. Karen Rathbun, executive for management services
Pr. Jeffrey R. King, support specialist, information technology

Program Unit Executives:
Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director, Women of the ELCA *(excused)*
Pr. Sherman G. Hicks, executive director, Multicultural Ministries
Pr. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director, Church in Society
Ms. Beth A. Lewis, president, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Pr. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission
Pr. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, executive director, Global Mission
Pr. Stanley N. Olson, executive director, Vocation and Education

Service Unit Executives:
Ms. Kristi S. Bangert, executive director, Communication Services
Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, president, Foundation of the ELCA, and executive director, Development Services
Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer, Board of Pensions
Mr. Daniel J. Lehmann, editor, *The Lutheran* magazine
Ms. Eva M. Roby, executive vice president for administration, Mission Investment Fund

Press:
Mr. John R. Brooks, director, ELCA News Service
Ms. Susan Hogan, Communication Services
Ms. Elizabeth M. Hunter, *The Lutheran* magazine
Mr. Frank F. Imhoff, associate director, ELCA News Service
Ms. Melissa Ramirez-Cooper, ELCA News Service

Ecumenical Guests:
Canon Victoria L. Garvey, The Episcopal Church *(excused)*
Pr. Teresita Valeriano, North American representative, Lutheran World Federation
Pr. Mary Ann Neevel, United Church of Christ
Moravian Church in America [position vacant]
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [position vacant]
Reformed Church in America [position vacant]

Saturday, March 28, 2009
Plenary Session I

The first plenary session of the sixty-first meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America began with morning worship, led by the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger. Worship was followed by a time for reading and preparation.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called to order the first plenary session at 8:47 A.M. He welcomed all those present, especially visitors and guests, and asked all present to introduce themselves. He announced two resignations from the council, the Rev. David W. Peters and Ms. Judith Tutt-Starr, and the absence of council members the Rev. J. Paul Rajashekar and Ms. Lynette M. Reitz. Vice President Peña made a number of routine announcements about the council's procedures.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA
(Agenda I.G.)

Background:

Agenda items had been distributed by mail and electronically. Additional items were distributed at the meeting to the members of the Church Council, representatives of the Conference of Bishops, advisory members, and resource persons.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary, to read the action pertaining to adoption of the agenda. Vice President Peña called for a second, then opened the floor to discussion. Mr. Mark S. Helmke noted that the item on approval of committee charters had been duplicated. There being no further discussion, Mr. Peña called for a vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.01 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.

Secretary Swartling reminded council members of the deadline for removal of *en bloc* items and for placing items of new business on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
(Agenda I.H.)

Background:

The minutes of the November 14–17, 2008, meeting of the Church Council had been distributed to council members electronically on the NetCommunity Web site. The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings on November 14, 2008, January 27, 2009, and February 26, 2009, also had been distributed electronically.

Council members were asked to provide in writing to the Office of the Secretary any minor or typographical errors in the distributed text of the minutes so that corrections could be entered into the protocol copies of the minutes.

Church Council Action:

At the request of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, Secretary David D. Swartling read the proposed action. Vice President Peña called for a second, then opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for a vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.02 **To approve the minutes of the November 14–17, 2008, meeting of the Church Council; and**

To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the November 14, 2008, January 27, 2009, and February 26, 2009, meetings.

INTRODUCTION TO PROCESS OBSERVATION

(Agenda V.B.1.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit D, Part 5)

Background:

The Church Council received a report on anti-racism training for the Church Council at its April 2007 meeting. One of the recommendations included in the report related to racial justice monitoring. Following discussion, the Church Council voted (CC07.04.03):

> To assign to the Board Development Committee responsibility for continuing anti-racism training in relation to the Church Council;
>
> To acknowledge that the Board Development Committee may appoint a subcommittee for assistance in addressing issues of anti-racism training; and
>
> To affirm the possibility of engagement of a racial justice monitor or monitors at future meetings of the Church Council to provide observations on the process of deliberations of the council.

Subsequent to this action, the Church Council included anti-racism training sessions at its November 2007 and April 2008 meetings. In addition, the summer 2008 Church Council retreat focused on the "scandalous realities" of racism and sexism.

The Board Development Committee requested a proposal for a racial justice monitoring pilot to be undertaken by the Church Council at its regular meetings from April 2008–April 2009. The committee appointed Ms. Judith Tutt-Starr, Ms. Lynette M. Reitz, and Ms. Shenandoah M. Gale, coordinator for anti-racism education and training, as a design team. The committee approved the final proposal at its February 2008 meeting.

Pilot Method

Process observers observe three two-hour (or equivalent) plenary sessions. Identified categories for observation questions include:

a. Process
b. Who's in the room; who speaks or addresses the plenary and how often; whose voices are brought into the room?
c. Climate: connection between advisors and council; comfort in sharing and speaking in plenary

The reporting process includes the following:

- Just before the end of a session, observers compile information into one report. Observers report to the plenary what they saw and heard.
- A written report of observations is given to the chair of the Board Development Committee.
- At the end of the third observation session, members and advisors complete and submit a pilot evaluation form.
- Upon consideration of this report, the Board Development Committee may make corresponding recommendations to the Executive Committee for consideration.
- Compiled pilot evaluation results are given to the Board Development Committee Chair and incorporated into the pilot design for the Fall 2008 implementation.

Mr. Chuck Wooldridge served as process observer for the Church Council meeting on Saturday, November 15, 2008. In preparation for the March 2009 meeting, five members of the Church Council were trained as process observers by Ms. Paula Cole Jones, who will be present for both the March 2009 and November 2009 meetings.

Church Council Information:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon to introduce the process observation team for

the current meeting. In addition to Pr. Obregon, the team members were Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus, Mr. Baron Blanchard, and Ms. Arielle Mastellar, youth advisor. Ms. Lynette M. Reitz also received the process observation training but had to leave the council meeting due to a family emergency. Pr. Obregon introduced Ms. Paula Cole Jones and Ms. Shenandoah M. Gale, coordinator for anti-racism education and training.

Pr. Obregon reported that council members would receive a full report from Mr. Chuck Wooldridge, the process observer at the November 2008 Church Council meeting. During the current meeting, council members would receive a form to be filled out and turned in at the end of each day. Team members would share their observations at the end of each day. Any questions or concerns about these observations should be put in writing on the report form. Pr. Obregon commented that process observation is not just a tool to be used in Church Council meetings, but also in members' daily callings as observers of justice in this world.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

(Agenda II.A.1.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 1)

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, began his report with the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* psalm prayer for Psalm 39: "Everlasting God, through your Son you taught us not to fear tomorrow but to commit our lives to your care. Take not your Spirit from us, but help us find a life of peace amid days of trouble; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord."

Presiding Bishop Hanson expressed gratitude for the service and leadership of the Church Council class of 2009: "You have had a major hand in shepherding this church's work in response to the mandate to develop a social statement on human sexuality and to develop ministry policies. You have deepened our living into the Plan for Mission. . . . You will help us find stability amidst economic volatility as we remain deeply committed to being a church engaged in God's mission.

"Thank you also to Carlos Peña, our vice president, who will soon complete six years of leading us. You have consistently done that with clarity and grace. You have traveled all over this church, probably the most requested churchwide representative for synod assemblies. You share your faith freely . . . and now, more recently, you have invited us into the reality of living in the aftermath of a hurricane. We are delighted that you are willing to stand for re-election.

"I also want to say 'Thanks be to God' for my colleagues in the churchwide organization. These last few weeks have been difficult, but I have found again in colleagues an absolute commitment to the ministry and work to which this church has called us; a desire not to see that work falter or fail in the midst of a downturn in income; a deep respect for colleagues, some of whom this week heard that their positions had been eliminated, and for partners all over the world, who heard this week their grants had been reduced. I want you to join me in thanking these colleagues for how they serve this church, with special recognition to three who have borne the burden particularly on their shoulders: the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration; Ms Christian Jackson-Skelton, treasurer; and Ms. Else B. Thompson, executive for human resources." Council members responded with applause.

Presiding Bishop Hanson continued: "Since the Bishops' Academy visit, I have been talking about the image I hold that we are living and leading, serving and worshiping at the intersection of fear and hope. It is evidently not a new place since . . . the theme of my [March 2008] oral report was 'leadership in an anxious culture.' I had the fear part; I had not yet gotten to hope.

"What does it mean for us to lead and live at this intersection of fear and hope? Last week we had Dr. Allan G. Johnson, author of *Gender Knot* and *Privilege, Power, and Difference* work with our Cabinet of Executives. He made this interesting statement: 'In an anxious time we must name our fears but not become our fears.' We need to name and hear the fears of our colleagues in this churchwide organization whose positions have been eliminated because of budget reductions. We need, in the course of this meeting, to name and hear the fears of one another, some of you who have in the last couple weeks heard that your positions have been eliminated, your families impacted, your families dealing with the reality of fear. We must hear and name the fears of those who live throughout the world in poverty, those who seek to survive each day on a dollar or two, and who now will be forced by the economic recession to make choices between life and death that we can't even begin to comprehend. UNESCO estimates that because of the economic recession, an increase of 200,000– 400,000 babies will not live to their first birthday. We must hear and name our fears.

But we must also name what fear can do to us, without becoming those fears.

"Fear can easily turn us inward; turn us inward upon on ourselves as persons, turn us inward upon ourselves as congregations, synods, and churchwide organization, as institutions and agencies, focusing on our own survival. Survival in the midst of an economic recession is an admirable thing. But, as people of faith, if we become turned inward, preoccupied with ourselves, I fear we will become immobilized by our fears, if not become our fears altogether. A people immobilized by fear will tend to be possessive of what they have, unable to see and think and act generously and faithfully. A people immobilized by their fears and becoming their fears will be distrustful and suspicious, especially of those whom they have called into leadership. A people immobilized by their fears will be trapped in cycles of judgment: moving between those poles of harsh judgment of ourselves and harsh judgments of others, leading inevitably into a downward spiral of anger and despair. Just witness the cathartic anger in this country towards AIG. A people immobilized by fear, becoming their fears, will tend to become mean-spirited. The very fabric of healthy relationships becomes torn. Finally, as Walter Brueggemann says, we will tend to become downright anti-neighborly. Our voice will be joined to the chorus of voices that express suspicion of others, especially the stranger, the immigrant, forgetting that many of us in this room are descendants of immigrants who came to this country fleeing economic recessions, and others are descendants of immigrants brought to this land against their will to be the bearers of an economic system developed too often on the backs of the poor. If we become our fears, we will become a church nostalgically longing for an idealized past that never existed, but that buffers us from the realities of the present, rather than a church body shaped by a living memory of the past.

"So, at this intersection of fear and hope, we name our fears and we are attentive to what fears do to us, but we do not become our fears. Rather we point to signs of hope. What signs of hope do you see at this intersection of fear and hope in the context in which you live and serve and worship? Share one sign of hope from the context out of which you come.

"Signs of hope. Yesterday I gathered with churchwide colleagues, under the leadership of the Lutheran Disaster Response staff, to get an update on the rising waters that threaten the Dakotas and northwest Minnesota. But in that tragic word we heard stories that became signs of hope. [We heard of] a call from Pr. Ron Unger at Christ the King in New Orleans, offering prayers and the support of that community. We heard of the members of Grace Lutheran Church in New Orleans, still rebuilding after Katrina, wanting to extend a hand of help to colleagues, sisters, and brothers, sending volunteers to Galveston, Texas. We heard of students in Iowa, leaving their communities, still rebuilding from the floods of last summer, and going to sandbag in Fargo and Moorhead. We heard that Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, shut down for a week so their students could be out sandbagging because North Dakota State University and Moorhead State University students were home on spring break. We heard that Concordia opened its facilities to feed volunteers.

"Signs of hope. When the bishops planned to travel to the Middle East with our colleagues from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, we didn't know the trip would be in the midst of a volatile incursion by Israeli troops into Gaza. To be honest, it was hard to see signs of hope, but they were there. As we listened the first night to an Israeli man and a Palestinian man, both of whom who had lost family members to the escalating violence, share their moving stories, [we heard] the deep resolve and commitment they shared to build a just and peaceful two-state solution.

"Signs of hope. We gathered at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, invited by the Franciscans to be the first Lutherans ever to celebrate the Eucharist together in that place.

"Signs of hope. Palestinian and Christian young people at the Hope School in Ramallah dance together and speak of their shared commitment to be adults in a world that lives by nonviolence rather than war.

"Signs of hope. The presidents of our eight seminaries, [along with their] board chairs and financial officers gathered for two days to be very honest and transparent about the challenges each are facing in this economic crisis. But also to commit themselves to collaboration, to working together, out of the conviction that this church has eight strong seminaries, each bringing its contribution to our commitment to raise up leaders, grounded in history, Scripture, the Confessions, the practice of ministry, and worship to lead a church body committed to being evangelical witnesses to Jesus Christ.

"Signs of hope. The *Lutheran Study Bible* is one more evidence that this grassroots initiative, to become fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, is Spirit-led and Spirit-filled and we're trying to catch up.

"Signs of hope. We gathered the seven preachers who will preach each day at the Churchwide Assembly in August

and spent a whole day in Bible study and prayer around those texts that will be the center place of that assembly's work and life.

"Signs of hope. I wish you could have been in the room when our bishops and staff from the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission program unit gathered during the recent Conference of Bishops meeting. The energy was pulsating around the possibilities that are coming with the new directors of evangelical mission and the commitment that they, together with synod bishops and staff, will call together representatives of every congregation in this church to develop a mission plan to be an evangelical center for mission in their context.

"Signs of hope. We continue to deepen our resolve to confront issues of power and privilege as we did as a Church Council last summer, looking at the intersections of racism and sexism, and as we did in January with the transformative theology conference sponsored by our Justice for Women program.

"Signs of hope. Fifty high school students were among the 300 who gathered recently in Tacoma, Washington, for a hunger event. I had lunch with them, offering a free lunch to anyone who asked me a question that I've never been asked. I now owe lunch to the first two questioners. The first question was, 'Bishop, how do you pack for a trip? I'm going to Japan and I don't want to have to check my luggage.' The second question was 'What do you say to a friend who mocks you because your friend is an atheist and wonders why you have to believe in God?' I said, 'Ask that friend about the god in whom they do not believe and therein you will have the opportunity to share your faith in the God in whom you do believe.'

"Signs of hope. The 'No Longer Strangers in the Twenty First Century' conference in Dallas, Texas, brought together leaders of four synods, along with the Multicultural Ministry staff from the churchwide organization, to learn how to deepen our commitment to practice ministry in a diverse, multicultural context.

"Signs of hope. God is raising up new leaders for us in the churchwide organization when we have bid Godspeed to colleagues who have left for other calls. You have met the Rev. Walter May, executive for synodical and constituent relations, and the Rev. Robert Schaefer, executive for worship and liturgical resources.

"Stories and signs of hope. Go to the Web site and read the story about Bridge of Peace Community Church in Camden, New Jersey, the second-poorest city in America with the second-highest crime rate. This new start is a multicultural, multilingual, multiethnic congregation that worships in three languages: Portuguese, Spanish, and English. That's a Pentecost church if I've ever heard one. Pr. Giselle Carvalho Coutinho says, 'We are evangelists here.' There is so much hope in the midst of despair because there is always an opportunity for us to share the Gospel and serve our neighbor.

"Signs of hope. Go to the Web site. Look at the signs of 'God's Work. Our Hands.'

"Finally, the greatest sign of hope will be tomorrow morning when, in over 10,000 congregations, the faithful, the baptized will gather around the means of grace to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"The signs of hope to which we bear witness are from the source of our hope. Hear of the source of our hope from Romans 8: 'For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.' Hear of the source of our hope from 1 Peter: 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.'

"Because Jesus Christ is the source of our hope, I look to the work of this Church Council this weekend, I look to the assemblies that will occur in 65 synods, I look to the Churchwide Assembly in August in Minneapolis in confident hope. Confident hope because I know each day at that Churchwide Assembly what will be the center of our life together. When voting members get up from their tables and leave behind their agendas and their amendments, their *Robert's Rules* and their Committee of the Whole discussions, the red microphones and the green microphones and the voting machines; they will enter into a place of worship. They will pass by the baptismal font, perhaps touching the water with their fingers and making the sign of the cross. They will sit side by side, perhaps not even knowing the person they sit next to, not knowing how they voted or intend to vote, not knowing whether they're clergy or lay, gay or straight, but knowing that in that room we are one in baptism, one in faith, one in the Spirit.

"There, at the center of our life in assembly, together we will confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. Together we will hear and believe the word of absolution. Together we will hear the living Word of God proclaimed as Law and Gospel. Together we will receive the bread and wine of Christ's promised presence and hear 'The body of Christ given for you; each one of you, all of you, for the forgiveness of your sins.' Then each day, a bit

past noon, together we will hear, 'Go in peace. Share the good news.' 'Go in peace. Christ is with you.' 'Go in peace. Remember the poor.' 'Go in peace. Serve the Lord.' And I will not stand up and say, 'Those in favor vote one, those opposed vote two.' Rather, the assembly will joyfully shout, 'Thanks be to God.'

"We can go forward to August in confident hope because we are a Book of Faith church, and we are a praying church. We dwell in the word of Christ richly and the word of Christ dwells in us richly. Therefore, I call upon all the members of this church and all of our ecumenical and global partners to deepen our life of faith, deepen our study of Scripture for the fifty days leading up to that Churchwide Assembly. Each week, we, with colleagues here, will place the text for one of the days of worship on the Web site, along with reflection questions and an invitation to prayer.

"Confident hope. Because as we pray the Scriptures and study the Scriptures, we know that we are facing today what God's people and Christ's body have struggled with for centuries: that interplay between unity and diversity, both of which are God's gifts to us.

"A few weeks ago in Geneva the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Executive Committee met. Professor Barbara Rossing led devotions and the Bible study on 1 Corinthians 12:12: 'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members. . . though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.' She asked the members of the executive committee each to read that verse in the Scriptures of their primary first language. So we heard that passage read in Portuguese and German, Finnish and Spanish, Icelandic and Swahili, Arabic and English: 'Though many, we are of one body. So it is with Christ.' Then she asked, 'How does your language translate that text into English?' It was not all the same. Finally, she argued that there is a better translation of the Greek than the words 'though many.' 'And all the members, *being* many, rather than *though* many, are one body, so it is with Christ.' She argued that 'though many' implies our 'many-ness,' our diversity, is a problem that compromises the unity of the body of Christ. She argued quite the contrary; within the body of Christ, diversity is unity's strength, not its weakness. And, she went on, when diversity becomes a problem, it's our human problem, not God's. Precisely in the way that the other is different from me, the other gives strength to me and does so through our common life in the body of Christ.

"We go forward through our work this weekend and our synod assemblies to the Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis in confident hope. Confident hope because we will continue to be a confessional church, a confessing movement within the Church catholic, joined with 140 other church bodies in 78 countries, 68 million Lutheran Christians in the Lutheran World Federation. We will go forward in confident hope, continuing to be an ecumenical church body, deepening and expanding our full communion partnerships now to a sixth, I trust, with The United Methodist Church. [We are] six full communion partners that do not all agree with each other on human sexuality or ministry policies but do share a common confessing of the faith, a mutual recognition of Baptism and sharing the Lord's Supper, a common commitment to evangelism, witness, and service. We go forward in confident hope because we are committed to continuing our dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church, our discourse with the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. We are committed to sharing our diaconal work with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and to growing in our companionship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

"Confident hope because, if we are serious as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that we are called to be an evangelizing people in an increasingly diverse context, then we will continue to reflect that diversity in membership and leadership.

"Confident hope because we as a church body said very clearly by a vote of 606 to 87 in the 1991 Churchwide Assembly we affirm that gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations of this church. Confident hope because the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, by a wide vote margin of 851 to 127, urged that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—its members, congregations, synods, churchwide organization, agencies, and institutions—concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion we share as members of the body of Christ.

"We can go forward in confident hope because, I think, in these past eight years we have matured as a church body due to our engagement with questions of human sexuality and the place of gay and lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people in our life and in ministry. We can go forward in confident hope and in gratitude for the work of the task force. I hope you express your personal thanks to them, to colleagues in churchwide leadership who have accompanied that process, and to advisers who have worked with them.

"Towards the end of the Conference of Bishops meeting, Bishop Jim Mauney went to the microphone. I paraphrase what he said with his permission. He acknowledged his deeply held convictions about the matters before us in the task

force's proposed social statement and the ministry policies recommendation. He went on to say 'I have come down from the mountain of my certainty and I am walking out across the plain. But I need some of you to come down from your mountain of certainty, you who hold with equal conviction a position quite different from mine. I need you to meet me on the plain, on the plain which is the place of Jesus' crucifixion. There on the plain, I ask you to take my cross and I offer to take your cross; not so we might retreat back up on our respective mountains and build booths to our certainty, but so together we might be the body of Christ on the plain, the place of Jesus' crucifixion.'

"I hear Bishop Mauney saying, pleading, that what the present moment and those that inhabit it with us deserve is the kind of communal discernment that is far better and far different than what happens all too frequently among us in our culture: what Wendell Berry once called following the false logic of a feud in which nobody remembers the cause but only what was last said or done by the other side. This moment, and our witness as a church body in the midst of it, deserves something far better from us. It deserves engaging one another, engaging the other, from a position of respect rather than from a position of advantage. We will make progress toward our commitment to communal discernment rather than toward partisan victories when we seek to find those with whom we differ at their strongest and best, rather than at their weakest and worst. Doing so will allow us to move freely toward one another, just as Bishop Mauney invited and pleaded with us to move beyond our familiar, comfortable, entrenched positions and find each other in new ways and, in so doing, to experience understanding, perhaps even to embody wisdom, and to be a witness to the world. Then we will not only be truer to ourselves and our own convictions but to others. We will be what we are capable of being and called to be and Spirit-gifted and led to be, faithful members of one body of Christ.

"Confident hope. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the world, the members of this church deserve from us not what we become if one partisan faction ultimately triumphs over another, but when we have been most deeply true to each other as sisters and brothers in the one body of Christ. So in confident hope we take up our work. And in confident hope I bless you for that work: 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. Amen."

GREETING FROM THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA
(Agenda VI.E)

Background:

The closest neighbor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). For the last several years, a representative of the ELCIC has been a guest at each spring meeting of the ELCA Church Council, just as a representative of the ELCA has been a guest at each fall meeting of the ELCIC National Church Council.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson introduced the Rev. Susan C. Johnson, the national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), and invited her to bring a greeting to the Church Council.

National Bishop Johnson thanked Presiding Bishop Hanson for his collegial partnership and the Church Council for the ways in which the ELCIC and ELCA are growing closer again. She expressed particular thanks for participation in the Bishops Academy and the trip to the Holy Land, during which Presiding Bishop Hanson served as a mentor to her in meetings with government leaders. She encouraged council members to think about how they can serve as mentors, not only to new members of the Church Council but also in their own places of work, as well as how they can be mentored. National Bishop Johnson also expressed thanks for the closer working relationship in global mission and for opening up the Book of Faith initiative.

National Bishop Johnson spoke about the challenges facing the ELCIC. In the past year and a half, staff in the national office has been reduced by 30 percent, to ten full-time staff. Over the past 23 years, while congregational giving has continued to keep up with the rate of inflation, giving from congregations to synods has remained flat, and giving from synods to the national church has decreased in actual dollars. The national church has one-third the buying power it had in 1986. She reported that a structural renewal task force will be looking at fewer synods and different ways of operating. The ELCIC will be holding its national convention this summer under the theme "In Mission for Others – Signs of Hope." Presiding Bishop Hanson will be present, as will representatives from the churchwide Global Mission unit.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

The Rev. John C. Richter reflected on Dwelling in the Word.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

(Agenda II.A.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 2)

Presiding Bishop Hanson called upon Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for his report.

Vice President Peña began with an update on the situation in Galveston, following the hurricane and floods of the previous year. He commented that, personally, the recovery is going quite well. Repair of the family business is about 75 percent complete. Galveston as a whole is doing remarkably well. About 60 percent of its people have returned. School attendance is about 53 percent. The Board of Regents for the University of Texas Medical System reversed an earlier decision, deciding not only to re-open the hospital in Galveston but to expand it by 150 beds, and 500 employees have been rehired.

While houses and buildings have been rebuilt and jobs are starting to come back, Vice President Peña commented that people's lives are still in a state of disruption. More people are dying than prior to the storm; surviving the storm was apparently easier than coping with life afterwards. Those that had lost everything, particularly the poor, the sick, and the elderly, were not able to cope with the persistent stress, particularly from the difficult living conditions and the grief from the loss of everything. He pointed out that Galveston is not unique. Any community that has suffered through a disaster of this proportion experiences ongoing stress, hard work, irregular hours, disturbed jobs, sleep problems, and uncertainty about insurance. He urged council members to continue to hold in prayer those who have suffered disasters in their lives.

Vice President Peña reported he had attended the Conference of Bishops meeting in Chicago and the meeting of the Committee on Lutheran Cooperation in St. Louis. He thanked the bishops, on behalf of the Church Council, for their bold leadership, specifically for their recent trip to the Holy Land. He also talked with bishops about the upcoming synod assemblies, asking them to invite council members to attend, to recognize and introduce council members during the assembly, and to ask council members to participate, when possible.

In conclusion, Vice President Peña thanked the Church Council, as well as Presiding Bishop Hanson, Secretary Swartling, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton, and the staff of the churchwide organization, for the experience of the past six years of his service as vice president of this church.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.E.3)

CHURCH COUNCIL AGENDA: PROTOCOL FOR SUGGESTED ITEMS

(Agenda III.D.1)

Background:

The Executive Committee has worked to provide clarity about how a Church Council member may place new business on the council's agenda consistent with *Robert's Rules of Order.* The final draft of the document, following review at the Executive Committee meetings in November 2008 and January and February 2009, is printed below. When approved, the document will be added to the end of Section 6, "Church Council Basics," in the Church Council Orientation Manual.

> ***Placing Matters on the Church Council Agenda***
>
> There are multiple ways that business can be proposed for consideration on the agenda of Church Council meetings, consistent with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and fiduciary responsibilities of Church Council members under not-for-profit law. They are as follows:

1. Through the presiding bishop who, in collaboration with the officers of this church and staff, is responsible for the preparation of the agenda of Church Council meetings.
2. Through the action of Synod Councils and Synod Assemblies by means of resolutions and memorials. (Resolutions are processed for action by the Executive Committee, which reports to the Church Council; memorials are processed through the Memorials Committee and transmitted to the Churchwide Assembly, which can recommend that action be taken or evaluated by the Church Council.)
3. Through committees of the Church Council. (If issues have been assigned to a committee or if issues are consistent with the responsibilities of a committee as reflected in its charter, matters relating to these issues may be raised to the Church Council as part of a committee report).
4. Through the Executive Committee. (Because the Executive Committee is composed of the officers and chairs of the other standing committees of the Church Council, council members may ask officers or committee chairs to bring issues or concerns to the Executive Committee, which can recommend their placement on the council's agenda).
5. Through "New Business" on the Church Council agenda. (The agenda will contain a deadline for submission of new business. New business that is proposed by the deadline will be discussed in plenary, as time permits, and normally assigned to an appropriate committee or task force for future consideration and a report to the full council. Action on any matter of new business that is proposed by the deadline will be in order only upon the vote of two-thirds of the voting members present and voting in support of such action. Discussion of and action on any matter of new business that is proposed after the deadline will be in order only upon the vote of two-thirds of the voting members present and voting in support of such discussion and action.

Regardless of the method, requests to place matters on the Church Council agenda shall be made in writing in a timely manner. Recommended actions must be stated with clarity.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Secretary David D. Swartling to introduce the proposed action. Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion; there being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.03 To add "Placing Matters on the Church Council Agenda" to the end of Section 6 of the Church Council Orientation Manual.

PROCESS TO STUDY THE "ECOLOGY" OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

(Agenda III.D.3)

Background:

In 1982, the American Lutheran Church, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and the Lutheran Church in America committed themselves to joining to form a "new Lutheran church" so that the new church would glorify God and faithfully serve Christ's mission in the world. In order to implement this commitment, a Commission for a New Lutheran Church (CNLC) was formed. For five years, the commission faithfully and diligently engaged in study, reflection, and counsel regarding the myriad aspects involved with the merger of predecessor church bodies and the formation and organization of this new church. The recommendations from the CNLC incorporated a bold vision for mission and ministry that were grounded in underlying theological and organizational principles, including the interdependence of the three "expressions" (e.g., congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization) of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its numerous partners in ministry.

The world and this church have changed since the ELCA came into existence in January 1988. After 20 years,

expected growth in membership and mission support in the ELCA have not met expectations. Indeed, the churchwide organization income has remained essentially flat during its history, meaning that fewer dollars, adjusted for inflation, currently exist for ministry than were available in mission support in the first years of its existence. In addition, giving patterns to this church and general philanthropic giving patterns have changed over time. These trends have meant that some parts of the interdependent ecosystems of the ELCA and its partners have thrived, while others have not.

Despite several efforts at restructuring, the underlying ecology of the ELCA and its partners has not changed materially. The current global financial crisis has placed stress upon the interdependent ecosystems that make up this church. The churchwide organization, synods, and congregations are addressing contingency planning as they face an uncertain economic future. Questions abound whether traditional patterns of interrelationships can be sustained and whether they represent the most effective and missional approaches to cooperative ministry.

In this environment, it is critical to be proactive in evaluating the ways that interdependent partners support and accompany one another in their common missional efforts. Such an evaluation must not be myopic and limited only to the churchwide organization but must consider the ecology of all the interdependent ecosystems. At the same time, with current budget limitations, an extensive study of the magnitude of the Commission for the New Lutheran Church would not be financially feasible in the present financial environment.

It is proposed that a study group be formed to begin the assessment process. The study group would be composed of key leaders and representative partners of this church and would be asked to make recommendations regarding such an evaluation, its scope, cost, and timeline. It is anticipated that such a group would form in the near future, begin its work, and bring a report and recommendations to the Church Council in April 2010. It is anticipated that a comprehensive report and recommendations would be brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Secretary David D. Swartling to introduce the proposed action. Vice President Peña then opened the floor for discussion.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson reviewed the background material, focusing on the work of the CNLC, the changes in structure, patterns of mission support, and demographics over the past 20 years. One thing that has not changed, he said, is the understanding of the ELCA as an ecology of interdependent ecosystems. He expressed his concern that with the current recession there will pressure on each of those ecosystems and the members of each ecosystem to become focused on their own viability.

Presiding Bishop Hanson stated his belief that now is the time to stand back, create a group, and develop a process to ask the question of sustainability. He expressed some sense of urgency to look at the whole ecology and put all the questions on the table, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada is doing. He reported that The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod is well down the road in their process of self-analysis, and the emerging proposals are quite dramatic, including reducing the number of districts and significantly restructuring their national organization.

Presiding Bishop Hanson addressed the need not to make assumptions about the outcome of such a study. Rather the study group would consider possible changes. This proposal before the council is to create a group to propose a process for the overall study.

The Rev. Nelson H. Rabell-Gonzalez, president of the Latino Community Association, asked Presiding Bishop Hanson and the Church Council to take into account how painful the 2003–2005 restructuring experience was for people of color. In reply, Presiding Bishop Hanson acknowledged that the earlier restructuring had not been nearly as participatory as it needed to be.

Ms. Judith Anne Bunker encouraged finding some structural way not only to have a group begin to plan the process but to begin the conversation throughout this church at same time. Presiding Bishop Hanson acknowledged that anything like this study will be meet with suspicion, and trust will need to be earned. The study process would not only be about effectiveness and efficiencies of scale, but about how a gifted and wealthy church going forward stewards those gifts for the sake of God's mission.

The Rev. Callon W. Halloway, bishop of the Southern Ohio Synod, welcomed the proposal and expressed hope for a broad description to be shared with the Conference of Bishops.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.04 **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 the 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 Church Council and that 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.

CAPITAL FUND APPEAL: SUMMARY OF READINESS ASSESSMENT AND FEASIBILITY STUDY PROJECT

(Agenda III.D.4)

Background:

At the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, a Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding was formed to study ELCA current development and stewardship programs, and to develop recommendations regarding future ELCA resource development initiatives to fund new ministries.

The Blue Ribbon Committee completed its work in April 2007 with a recommendation to test the feasibility and readiness of a churchwide funding initiative intended to reflect this church's philosophy of mission funding as one church in three expressions where each expression carries out various parts of this church's work.

In order to meet the charge from the Churchwide Assembly, a feasibility study oversight committee selected from key internal and external ELCA constituencies was formed to manage the readiness assessment and feasibility study process.

The primary objectives of the feasibility and readiness assessment project were to:

1. Design, plan and implement a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility and readiness of the ELCA churchwide organization to conduct a successful major churchwide fundraising campaign to coincide with the

25th anniversary of the ELCA; and

2. Conduct research and make specific recommendations regarding: campaign goal; programmatic case for support including specifically the integration of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative and funding of the ELCA HIV and AIDS strategy; volunteer leadership; major gifts prospects; structure and infrastructure; budget, and the external environment.

This feasibility and readiness assessment study process was initiated to deliver a report to the ELCA Church Council in March 2009 with recommendations to the 2009 ELCA Assembly regarding a major churchwide funding initiative for mission.

In May 2008, Growth Design Corporation (GDC) of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was retained as counsel to design and implement a feasibility study and readiness assessment process. The key deliverables expected from GDC's work included:

1. Design and implementation of a comprehensive assessment process (feasibility study and campaign readiness).
2. Oversight Team and volunteer leadership identification, engagement; and communication strategies.
3. Framing of ELCA programmatic initiatives (i.e., prioritization, financial assumptions, and financial goals) to inform development of case(s) for support.
4. Development of ELCA programmatic case package(s) for testing.
5. Assessment of ELCA Development Services' current capacity (structure/infrastructure) and campaign readiness (including Development Services' financial model and capacity building scenarios).
6. Development of an initial ELCA major donor prospect list.
7. Feasibility interview process (i.e., selection of interview candidates, interview guide, and interviews).
8. Feasibility interview analysis (interview themes and findings).
9. Development and processing of a feasibility study and readiness assessment report with appropriate ELCA leadership, including feasibility study findings with recommendations regarding campaign goals, readiness, packages, and organization and Development Services' capacity building scenarios and strategies in relation to campaign positioning and launch.

Key Project Methodologies:

1. Formative Interview Candidate Selection: A matrix was created to frame key ELCA support constituency categories and to identify individuals within those categories who would provide perspective to the framing of churchwide initiative thinking and planning.
2. Formative Interview Candidate Interviews: Formative interview guides for internal and external ELCA constituencies were created to frame formative interviews.
3. Feasibility Interview Candidate Selection: A matrix was created to identify and target key ELCA support constituency categories based on the following broad criteria: gender, diversity, pastors, congregations, churchwide leadership, synod leadership, leaders from ELCA institutions and agencies, and major donors.

Key Project Processes:

1. Counsel met with key ELCA leaders for discovery, framing, and articulation of all parts of the feasibility study process (July 2008).
2. Formative interviews (32) were conducted with selected ELCA internal and external leaders to test ideas, reflect on climate, determine any issues, and define opportunities in relation to churchwide resource development initiative (July–early September 2008).
3. A readiness assessment of ELCA fundraising capacity was undertaken in order to develop recommendations on the investment of human and financial resources in capacity building for a potential churchwide initiative (July–October 2008).
4. Development of an initial case for giving ("Imagine") with prioritized funding areas was undertaken in partnership with key ELCA mission departments as well as the Communications Services section (September 2008).
5. Development of initial major donor prospect lists was undertaken in partnership with Development Services and ELCA Foundation staff (September–October 2008).

6. Seventy-four feasibility (summative) interviews (two-tier process) and report with recommendations on churchwide initiative potential and strategies were developed (November 2008–February 2009).
7. Processing of readiness assessment and feasibility study process and report with ELCA leadership groups was undertaken (September 2008–March 2009).

Findings and Recommendations:

There is no question about support for a churchwide initiative. This finding holds across all interviews in terms of regions, categories, and levels of the interviews. The ELCA as an organization is valued by most of those interviewed and its value goes well beyond its financial role. Once it was understood that a churchwide initiative would begin in 2010 and be completed by the end of 2014, there was strong support for connecting ELCA members and the three expressions.

While there was variation of interest in the initiative priorities presented under the theme of "Imagine," two priorities did emerge as primary in the minds of donors:

1. The first and most attractive initiative for many donors interviewed in the feasibility study process was in the areas of church renewal and leadership development. Many of those interviewed believe that the current church is broken and in decline, and that without new leaders and congregational renewal, there will be little likelihood of future mission and ministry fulfillment.
2. The second important initiative priority is global mission through support for hunger, malaria, and HIV and AIDS. Coordination and support for these efforts are perceived as an appropriate role for the ELCA to play and have both current and historical gifting appeal, especially at the member and congregational level.

The remaining priorities, outreach and witness (branding), were perceived as vitally important, but should be undertaken through ELCA organization budgeting and sponsorships from major donors and other leaders. At the same time, these communication and awareness-building strategies were perceived as important to the success of any churchwide initiative, for renewal, and for inviting broad participation in the ELCA's current and future missions.

Annual giving support was less attractive in terms of major gifts among a majority of those interviewed in the feasibility study. However, annual giving was seen as important, and many of those interviewed suggested it be tied to endowment building and planned giving to ensure a strong churchwide expression into the future.

Several consistent themes emerged in relation to future churchwide initiative strategies and campaign execution that should be noted:

- A churchwide initiative must be as much about listening, engaging, and thanking as it is about asking in relation to donors and volunteers.
- The initiatives presented as part of a churchwide fundraising initiative must be integrated, not only with the three expressions, but also with programs of church-related organizations that have common concerns and interests in relation to the future of the church (e.g., ELCA colleges and universities, seminaries, social service organizations, and other recognized ministries).
- The laity and clergy (donors) both must lead and own any churchwide initiative and believe that their hard-earned resources will have impact and results if gifted to the ELCA. Therefore, a structure and a process for a churchwide initiative must be built and connected to the church leadership (lay and clergy), who will oversee and manage its multiple components, including a campaign.

The recommendations presented take into consideration the interest in a 25th anniversary celebration and a churchwide initiative, the perceived and identified lack of capacity to undertake it, and strategies and tactics critical to succeeding.

The feasibility study process occurred during a period of worsening, chaotic, and volatile economic conditions. To date, the timing, outcome, and conditions of the next five years in relationship to giving and the environment of need that would be important for a church body to address are unknown.

In addition, major donors interviewed in the feasibility study who are capable of gifts of $1 million or more gifts were unwilling to commit to a specific level of giving, even while they committed to giving to a churchwide initiative. Therefore, the scale of giving models and tools were not appropriate to the current study, although they would normally be utilized in traditional feasibility interviews.

Recommendations from Readiness Assessment and Feasibility Study Findings:

1. Based on the level of support expressed in feasibility interviews, planning, positioning, and resourcing for a churchwide fundraising initiative are recommended tied to the ELCA 25th anniversary celebration in 2012. The potential start for the initiative is 2010 with completion in 2014.
2. Given the level of concern shown in feasibility interviews in relation to the $268 million comprehensive goal presented, it is recommended that a minimum goal of $110 million in current gifts for an ELCA churchwide initiative be confirmed and approved by the Church Council. The $110 million goal in current gifts reflects the support shown in feasibility interviews for the "new money" targets associated with the individual initiatives ($100 million) plus $10 million to capitalize the fundraising initiative.
3. Based on the projected budget numbers for Development Services' capacity building from the readiness assessment findings, it is recommended that an additional expenditure of $10 million be made over the next five years to build ELCA resource development capacity (e.g., infrastructure, staffing, and systems) for raising $110 million of new money for mission funding. [Note: The capacity investment would need to be initially capitalized for a minimum of two years from ELCA reserves with the remainder to be raised as part of a churchwide initiative. This up front money would be considered a loan to be repaid to ELCA reserves from initiative giving.]
4. In terms of the need for strategies to involve and connect synods to a churchwide initiative expressed in both formative and feasibility interviews, it is recommended that some synod goals (based on an assessment of their respective gift capacity potential) be considered in relation to the $110 million goal of new money.
5. Based on the above discussion of strategies to connect synods and congregations to a churchwide initiative, it is recommended that a challenge to synods and congregations be considered to develop and offer plans, resources, and projects that are synergistic with the churchwide initiative priorities. The money raised from these plans would be considered current gifts over and above the $110 million goal.
6. Given the comments made in feasibility interviews in relation to developing direct gift benefits back to congregations and synods, it is recommended that synod bishops and councils be challenged to integrate their own synod fundraising plans with the churchwide initiative, and to endorse, lead, and participate in mega-gift requests while overseeing synod and congregational goal-setting and implementation. The challenge to connect synod plans to ELCA churchwide initiative plans potentially could result in a wider palette of funding opportunities for major donors at all levels.
7. Based on the concern expressed in feasibility study interviews regarding the ability for donors to make current gifts, it is recommended that a planned giving component be developed related to a churchwide initiative to leverage the 25th anniversary celebration with every adult ELCA member asked to make a planned gift that includes a churchwide designated gift. Money from a planned giving challenge (with a goal to be determined) would be considered gifts above and beyond the $110 million goal. The planned giving component would provide all congregation members with the opportunity to participate in the churchwide initiative, even if they could not make a cash gift.
8. In terms of framing a churchwide initiative, it is recommended that the ELCA Foundation develop appropriate policies and guidelines with regard to churchwide gifts (e.g., cash and deferred gifts). The investment in Development Services capacity to secure current gifts will need to be complemented by consideration of how to handle a variety of potential current giving strategies and instruments on the part of major donors.
9. In the context of developing the opportunity to engage new donors through a 25th anniversary celebration initiative, it is recommended that a continuum of giving channels for the churchwide initiative—from Web site to mega-gifts—be developed as a critical strategy to attract younger donors and new members to the ELCA.
10. Based upon feasibility interview findings with regard to support for a churchwide initiative, "Imagine" as the theme of the churchwide initiative is recommended and is driven by the vision of church growth and renewal, leadership development, and global programs. ("Imagine the difference we can make for the sake of the Gospel by building new and revitalized congregations, preparing faithful, wise and courageous leaders for this church, and investing in new opportunities to care for the suffering in our world" - Bishop Hanson's letter in Imagine case book).
11. Given the low levels of information and understanding of the ELCA as an organization expressed among major donors in feasibility interviews, it is recommended that a communication strategy for clarifying and communicating the role and importance of the churchwide expression within the ELCA be developed as part of churchwide initiative planning. The opportunity exists to develop focused messaging about the role of the churchwide organization in

relation to global initiatives, leadership development, and congregational renewal, thus strengthening to enhance the case for churchwide giving.

12. In terms of developing engagement strategies at the congregation level, it is recommended that two churchwide and congregational special offerings be considered (i.e., one late 2009-early 2010 and one late 2011) for current gifts for global and local hunger, HIV and AIDS, and malaria.
13. Based upon the concerns expressed in feasibility interviews related to the leadership capacity of the ELCA to undertake and manage a churchwide initiative, it is recommended that an executive team of 8–10 high level ELCA leadership and volunteers (as well as new professional fundraising staff) be recruited and led by Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson to oversee, manage, and execute all parts of the churchwide initiative.
14. In the context of leadership development strategies contained in the readiness assessment recommendations, it is recommend that a national commission comprised of high-level ELCA leaders (i.e., up to 100 lay, clergy, bishops, ELCA institution and organization heads, and major donors) be identified and recruited to position and initiate the churchwide initiative.
15. Based upon input from synods as well as an emphasis on geographic regions in terms of structure and focus, an initial core group of 20-25 ELCA leaders could be recruited in the near term to begin to plan an overall commission process and charge in relation to a churchwide initiative prior to 2009 ELCA Assembly.
16. In the context of the leadership commitment mentioned above, it is recommended that the presiding bishop co-chair the national commission with 2-3 co-chairs and preside at its national meetings from 2009-2014.
17. Based upon the desire expressed in feasibility interviews to connect churchwide initiative benefits to all parts of the church, it is recommended that the commission, in partnership with synod bishops and councils, focus in its planning and positioning on integrating the churchwide initiative and its priorities with synod and ELCA related institutions' plans and programs (e.g., colleges and universities, seminaries, social service organizations, and other related institutions and agencies).
18. In order to address the need for relationship building with potential major donors that was expressed in both feasibility interviews and readiness assessment recommendations, it is recommended that a small-group awareness initiative—complemented by a branding-communication initiative—be developed for the purposes of outreach, witness, and education related to ELCA churchwide purposes. This relationship-building also would build capacity for future fundraising with major donors as well as service on related commissions. Planning for the small group awareness building communication strategy could begin immediately, with implementation following the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
19. In relation to questions raised in feasibility interviews regarding long-term resource development strategies for the ELCA beyond the churchwide initiative, it is recommended that consideration be given to recruiting selected commission leaders for the ELCA Foundation board during the implementation of the churchwide initiative in order to transform the Foundation into a fundraising as well as an asset management entity.

Summary:

Subsequent to the completion of the readiness assessment and feasibility study, it was recommended by the steering committee, Development Services staff, and the Administrative Team that this church grow in its readiness for a churchwide resource development initiative to be considered by the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Factors considered in the recommendation include: the perceived and identified lack of fundraising capacity and the current chaotic and volatile economic conditions.

Church Council Action:

At the request of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, executive director of the Development Services unit and president of the Foundation of the ELCA, reviewed the background of the readiness assessment and feasibility study for a capital fund appeal. Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. Jonathan W. Linman asked if the delay in the capital campaign would put the Lutheran Malaria Initiative and the HIV and AIDS strategy in jeopardy. Ms. Halverson responded that the plan was to go forward with a proposal on funding the HIV and AIDS strategy and an amended Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) proposal to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke asked if there would be any brick-and-mortar components to the campaign. Ms. Halverson expressed openness to some possible support for congregregation building but stated that such a plan had not yet been developed.

Vice President Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling to present the action and asked for further discussion.

Mr. Mark S. Helmke asked where the responsibility rested for a report and recommendations to the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council. Ms. Halverson replied that the responsibility would lie with the Development Services unit, but the feasibility oversight committee might merge into another group for the next stage of the project. There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.05 **To receive the summary of "The Report of the Readiness Assessment and Feasibility Study Project: Finding and Recommendations in Relation to a Churchwide Resource Development Initiative";**

To thank the members of the Feasibility Study Steering Committee for their oversight of the study process: Ms. Kristi S. Bangert, Pr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, Bp. Allan C. Bjornberg, Mr. John R. Emery, Ms. Carol Erickson, Ms. Christine Grumm, Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, Mr. David P. Novak, Ms. Ann Sponberg Peterson, Bp. Peter Rogness, Pr. John R. Sabatelli, Pr. A. Craig Settlage, Mr. Robert Shafis, Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, and Pr. Larry G. Westfield;

To express appreciation to the 106 churchwide staff, bishops, rostered leaders, donors, and friends for their willingness to receive the draft case statement and share their response and counsel;

To encourage Development Services and the ELCA Foundation to move toward implementation of capacity-building recommendations in the next biennium (2009–2011); and

To request that a report and recommendations for a possible churchwide campaign be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council for possible consideration by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly with the request that the report address an affirmation of readiness, an assessment of capacity, including staffing implications, and a proposed budget.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger announced that his daughter has received her first call and will be ordained June 6, 2009, at the Virginia Synod Assembly.

Secretary David D. Swartling reported that Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer of the ELCA Board of Pensions, had experienced back problems and was being taken to the hospital. He called for prayer for Mr. Kapanke.

The Rev. Jonathan W. Linman thanked council members for their cards and e-mails at the birth of his son, Nathan, and thanked his wife, Jennifer, for the "in-kind" benevolence of allowing him to attend the council meeting.

Mr. Mark E. Johnson expressed joy over his meeting with the Alaska Synod Council and thanked the Church Council members for their support at the time of his brother's death.

Ms. Karin L. Graddy reported that her full-time job had been eliminated due to budgets cuts, and her husband is also unemployed. However, her joy remains that God is good.

Vice President Peña reported that Ms. Lynette M. Reitz had to leave due to a family emergency. He called on Ms. Judith Anne Bunker to lead the council in prayer for the joys and concerns that had just been expressed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary David D. Swartling reminded council members of an upcoming election to replace the Rev. David W. Peters on the Church Council.

RECESS

The first plenary session of the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 10:45 A.M.

Saturday, March 28, 2009
Plenary Session II

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reconvened the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council at 10:55 A.M.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER
(Agenda II.A.4; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 4; Exhibit F, Parts 1-8)

Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, reviewed the summary report of fiscal 2008. Although the economy took a sharp downward turn in 2008, she reported that, overall, the 2008 results were close to budget and plan. Total revenue was down slightly, but still favorable to plan by $1.4 million. Expenses were below the authorized unit spending plans by $1.8 million. Nevertheless, the decrease in operating income was the first since 2002, and the decrease in expenditures was the first since 2003.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton reported on steps taken to protect the capacity to effectively manage and support programs. Objectives were to protect against operating at a deficit, to replenish operating reserves to the degree possible, and to meet the 2008 funding commitments to partners. These objectives were accomplished by closely monitoring income and increasing communication with synods. Year-end allocations were limited to strategic and critical items.

In reviewing the 2008 operating results, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton particularly noted the significant decrease in mission support income. The full decrease occurred in January 2009, the last month of the fiscal year. She added that February results likely be less than planned, and early indications from the majority of synods are for continued downward trend in March. Mission-support income comprises about 80 percent of the current operating budget and needs to be monitored carefully. While mission-support income has varied over time, it tends to level out before reversing direction. The final results of mission-support income for 2008 were equal to that of 1989. Adjusting for inflation, the value of mission support is 42 percent less.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton indicated that 2008 income received from bequests and trusts was just under the best year ever. However, such income is highly variable; thus, one or two years of higher income in that category cannot be the basis for budget adjustments. She noted that World Hunger gifts through synods were down, and direct giving to World Hunger declined significantly from the previous year in December and January. Disaster appeal income, which is heavily impacted by large disasters, was lower than average in 2008.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton stated that the proposed budget changes for 2009 were driven by the changes in mission support and World Hunger income. She noted that 35 synods have revised mission-support plans for a collective downward adjustment of 3.5 percent. A reduction of $7.5 million is proposed in the combined spending authorization for the 2009 current fund and World Hunger.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton reported some good news behind these numbers. The churchwide organization is stable, with a solid proposal for 2009. Work will continue on contingency planning should income deteriorate. The ELCA has sufficient liquidity to meet its obligations. Ministry partners will continue to be funded on an ongoing basis. A $10 million secured line of credit has been put in place.

Finally, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton noted information related to the distribution percentage of the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust, a proposed amendment to the cash management policy, and a change in reporting liability for the post-retirement medical obligation.

She concluded her report by thanking those who serve on the Budget and Finance and Audit committees, especially the Rev. John C. Richter and Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, whose terms on council were concluding.

REPORT OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
(Agenda II.E.2)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, chair, to present the report of the Budget and Finance Committee.

2009 CURRENT FUND AND WORLD HUNGER SPENDING AUTHORIZATION

(Agenda III.C.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Parts 1a–1d)

Background:

Over the past month, the churchwide organization has been in the process of closing the books for the 2008 fiscal year, receiving adjusted mission-support plans from synods for 2009, and adjusting the 2009 income budget to reflect both the 2008 financial results and the adjusted plans from synods. At the time of preparing the adjusted income estimates, 35 synods had adjusted their mission support plans for a total decrease of over $2.3 million from their prior plans. As a result, the churchwide organization must adjust its spending plans. The Office of the Presiding Bishop has worked closely with unit and section executives to prepare a revised 2009 spending plan.

Church Council Action:

Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, provided background information for the 2009 current fund and World Hunger spending authorization. Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary, introduced the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.06 **To approve a revised current fund spending authorization of $76,808,900 for fiscal year 2009; and**

To approve a revised World Hunger spending authorization of $18,700,000 for fiscal year 2009.

2010–2011 BIENNIUM BUDGET: CURRENT FUND AND WORLD HUNGER

(Agenda III.C.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Parts 3a–3b)

Church Council Action:

Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, chair, provided background information for the proposed budget for 2010–2011. Secretary David D. Swartling introduced the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.07 ***To recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the following*:**

<u>2010 Budget Proposal</u>

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; and

<u>2011 Budget Proposal</u>

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.

REVISIONS TO 2009 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

(Agenda III.C.3; Exhibit F, Parts 5a–5b)

Background:

The Church Council has responsibility for reviewing and approving or withholding approval for synods regarding mission-support plans. Since the November 2008 Church Council meeting, revisions for 2009 mission-support plans have been received from 35 synods.

Church Council Action:

Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, provided background information regarding revisions to the 2009 synod mission-support plans. Secretary David D. Swartling introduced the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. An error in the listing of synods was pointed out, and the council agreed by consensus to make the appropriate correction in the action. There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.08 **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 synod: Western North Dakota Synod;**

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: Alaska, Eastern Washington-Idaho, Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, South Dakota, Northwestern Minnesota, Northeastern Minnesota, Saint Paul Area, Southeastern Minnesota, Central States, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Northern Illinois, Southeastern Iowa, Western Iowa, Northern Great Lakes, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee, La Crosse Area, Northwestern Ohio, New Jersey, New England, Southeastern Pennsylvania, West Virginia-Western Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and Florida-Bahamas synods; 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: Oregon, Southwest California, Pacifica, Eastern North Dakota, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, Upstate New York, and Northeastern Pennsylvania synods.

2010 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

(Agenda III.C.4; Exhibit F, Parts 5a–5b)

Background:

Mission support plans for 2010 from 54 synods have been received.

Church Council Action:

At the request of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, Secretary David D. Swartling presented the proposed action.

Vice President Peña then opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.09 **To affirm with sincere appreciation the increases in the percentage for the sharing of 2010 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Alaska, Southwestern Washington, Eastern Washington-Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Sierra Pacific, Western North Dakota, South Dakota, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Western Iowa, Metropolitan New York, Northwestern Pennsylvania, West Virginia-Western Maryland, South Carolina, and Caribbean synods;**

To affirm the 2010 mission-support dollar estimates for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Northwest Washington, Southwest California, Pacifica, Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, Northwestern Minnesota, Northeastern Minnesota, Southwestern Minnesota, Minneapolis Area, Saint Paul Area, Southeastern Minnesota, Nebraska, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Southwestern Texas, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Central/Southern Illinois, Southeastern Iowa, Northeastern Iowa, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, La Crosse Area, North/West Lower Michigan, Northwestern Ohio, Southern Ohio, New Jersey, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Slovak Zion, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Virginia, Southeastern, and Florida-Bahamas synods; 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: Northern Great Lakes, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Northeastern Ohio, and North Carolina synods.

Ms. Wallace noted the Budget and Finance Committee had approved items coming before the council *en bloc* and received a number of reports relating to its work. On behalf of the committee, she commended the work of Treasurer Jackson-Skelton and the Office of the Treasurer staff.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE FOR ADMINISTRATION

(Agenda II.C; Exhibit E, Part 1)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, for her report.

Pr. Bullock summarized the process used to arrive at the decisions made during the revision of the 2009 budget. The churchwide organization senior leadership team had identified two priorities from the Plan for Mission strategic directions and commitments: 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. Unit executive directors identified critical mission positions through the use of a prioritization tool based on the Plan for Mission and the two strategic priorities as well as identifying 20 to 30 percent of the unit work to be reduced if necessary. The intention was to make strategic decisions rather than across-the-board reductions. Based on this work, unit executive directors were asked to submit reductions of up to 7 percent for 2009. Information was shared with the Conference of Bishops and advice and counsel concerning reductions continues to be shared through the liaison bishops.

Pr. Bullock reviewed the criteria used to make these decisions. She noted that the churchwide organization's examination of its work over two decades has led to an organization where everything is valuable, and operations are at minimal levels. The churchwide organization is close to the edge of diminished effectiveness, she stated. Moving forward, attention needs to be given to sustainability, viability, and proportionality.

Pr. Bullock indicated that budget reductions impacted nearly everything in the churchwide organization: programs, grants, and churchwide staff. There is a lot of stress on the system, she noted. Contingency planning continues with an effort to align resources with the mission to which this church is called.

Pr. Bullock closed with thanks to her colleagues on the churchwide staff. She pointed out that in the book *Head, Heart and Guts*, the authors suggest that leaders in the twenty-first century need to be mature leaders who bring together the balance of intellect, compassion, and courage and to be leaders who are willing to be transformed for the sake of mission. She stated her belief that the ELCA has such leaders and commended their reports to the Church Council.

NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda III.A.1; Exhibit C, Parts 1–2)

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.

ELECTION TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL

(Agenda III.A.2; Exhibit C, Parts 1–2)

Background:

The Executive Committee, serving as the Nominating Committee, received from the Montana Synod a slate of two nominees for Church Council to replace the Rev. David W. Peters, who resigned to accept a call as the director for evangelical mission in the Montana Synod:

Clergy [Term 2013] - *to replace Pr. David W. Peters, Billings, Mont. (1F)*

Pr. Tim A. Tostengard, Billings, Mont. 1F
Pr. Philip R. Wold, Sheridan, Wyo. 1F

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Secretary David D. Swartling to present the action. The motion was seconded, and Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion. Secretary Swartling called attention to the biographical information on the two nominees.

VOTED:

CC09.03.10 To recommend that the Church Council receive the written report of the Executive Committee on nominees to fill a vacancy on the Church Council; and
To request that the Office of the Secretary prepare a ballot for that election.

Following the distribution of ballots, Vice President Peña called on the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly to lead the council in prayer.

CHURCHWIDE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.A.1; Exhibit C, Parts 1–2)

Background:

The Executive Committee transmits to the Churchwide Assembly a slate of nominees for the churchwide Nominating Committee. Nominations into specific tickets also are accepted from the floor of the assembly.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Secretary David D. Swartling to present the action.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion. Secretary Swartling highlighted the requested restrictions in keeping with the requirements of ELCA bylaw 19.21.01.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.11 **To receive the written report of the Executive Committee on nominees for the churchwide Nominating Committee;**

To note that bylaw 19.21.01. states in regard to the Nominating Committee: "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 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";

To request, therefore, that the Church Council restrict the tickets to the following: Clergy, male, Region 2; Clergy, female; Lay Female; Lay Female (PC/L); Lay Male; and Lay Male (under 30);

To request, therefore, that the Church Council allow no floor nominations from Regions 3, 4, 6, or 7; and

To request that the Church Council transmit the following slate of nominees to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:

<u>CHURCHWIDE NOMINATING COMMITTEE</u>

Clergy (restricted to Region 2) [Term 2015]
Pr. Richard D. Ajer, Santa Ana, Calif. (2C)
Pr. Herbert E. Anderson, Berkeley, Calif. (2A)

Clergy (female) [Term 2015]
Pr. Kathie Bender Schwich, Park Ridge, Ill. (5A)
Pr. Joy Mortensen-Wiebe, Oshkosh, Wisc. (5I)

Lay Female [Term 2015]
Ms. Linda J. Gjere, Omaha, Neb. (4A)
Ms. Kathy J. Magnus, Edina, Minn. (3G)

Lay Female (PC/L) [Term 2015]
Ms. Emma G. Porter, Jamaica, N.Y. (7C)
Ms. Judith A. Tutt-Starr, Los Angeles, Calif. (2B)

Lay Male [Term 2015]
Mr. Ken F. Aicher, Tampa, Fla. (9E)
Mr. David R. Poppe, Fremont, Neb. (4A)

Lay Male (under 30) [Term 2015]
Mr. Brandon W. Huston, Hamilton, Ohio (6F)
Mr. Jeremy Marburger, Broomfield, Colo. (2E)

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Ms. Judith Anne Bunker reflected on Dwelling in the Word.

ELECTION REPORT

(Agenda III.A.1; Exhibit C, Parts 1–2)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Secretary David D. Swartling for a report on the results of the ballot for Church Council.

Secretary Swartling reported the following results:

Clergy [Term 2013] - *to replace resignation of Pr. David W. Peters, Billings, Mont. (1F)*

Pr. Tim A. Tostengard, Billings, Mont. (1F) – 16

Pr. Philip R. Wold, Sheridan, Wyo. (1F) – 17

VOTED:

CC09.03.12 To declare elected the following to a term ending 2013 on the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Pr. Philip R. Wold.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary David D. Swartling made a number of routine announcements, including a reminder of the deadlines for removing items from the *en bloc* resolution and for placing items of new business on the agenda. Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Norma J. Hirsch for prayer.

RECESS

The second plenary session of the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recessed at 12:08 P.M.

Saturday, March 28, 2009
Plenary Session III

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reconvened the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council at 1:33 P.M.

BIBLE STUDY

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson led the Church Council in a study of Acts 3:1–16.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

(Agenda II.A.3.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for his report. Secretary Swartling reported that since the November 2008 Church Council meeting he had traveled from the Sea of Galilee to San Francisco and many places in between. He had met with leaders in regions, congregations, the Board of Pensions, and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, and had the opportunity to speak about whole life stewardship with rostered leaders from the New England Synod. On a personal level, he had experienced the sublime and the distressing, from giving thanks daily for the opportunity to participate in the ministry of the churchwide organization to having this week to tell a loyal, 20-year employee that her position would be eliminated.

Secretary Swartling reported that 1,044 voting members out of a possible 1,045 for the Churchwide Assembly have checked in with the Office of the Secretary. He stated that the online registration process would begin April 16, and assistance will be provided for those unable to register online. The video introducing the Churchwide Assembly would be available on the Web site the following week. Secretary Swartling indicated that efforts to green the assembly are progressing. The *Pre-Assembly Report* would be provided online, and there would be only one mailing of reports. Report binders will be biodegradable and reusable.

Secretary Swartling described one of the responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary as facilitating wise decision-making. He stated that at the end of the current meeting, the Office of the Secretary would provide a bullet-point list of the council's decisions, to be distributed to synods and leaders of this church. In addition, the Office of the Secretary would provide a document containing the results of the council discussion with respect to the social statement on human sexuality, the ministry policy recommendations, and the assembly's rules of organization and procedure.

Secretary Swartling concluded by describing his conversation with Marian, a Muslim student he met in the Holy Land. She asked the group to urge Americans to care deeply about what was happening in Gaza, something she did not believe Americans understood. She was angry at America, but when asked what she wanted to do, she said she wanted to be a doctor in Palestine and study in the United States. When asked how she could have hope, she replied, "That's the name of my school. I go to the Lutheran School of Hope in Ramallah."

Vice President Peña opened the floor for questions. In response to a question about materials for the Churchwide Assembly, Secretary Swartling reported the *Pre-Assembly Report* would include an explanation of the actions of the Church Council concerning the social statement on human sexuality, but he thought it important to provide some key information immediately.

The Rev. Callon W. Holloway, bishop of the Southern Ohio Synod, asked about the possibility of exceptions to electronic distribution of assembly materials. Secretary Swartling responded that one mailing of hard copies of all reports will be sent to all voting members.

REPORT OF THE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.E.4)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr., chair, for the report of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee.

RESPONSE TO SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS

(Agenda III.E.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit B, Part 1b)

Background:

At its November meeting, the Church Council voted to strike the following draft provision in Part Ten of the proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:

> *Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force*
>
> 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.

The Church Council also voted against another proposed amendment in Part Ten to require a two-thirds vote on proposals that would change ELCA policies.

As a result of the November 2008 action of the Church Council, under the proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure, the social statement will require a two-thirds vote to pass pursuant to ELCA bylaw 12.12.01, but any other implementing resolutions or ministry policy recommendations will require a majority vote for passage under *Robert's Rules of Order.*

Prior to the February 2009 meeting of the Executive Committee, the Office of the Secretary had received five synodical resolutions addressing the vote required in the proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Churchwide Assembly relating to the social statement, its implementing resolutions, or the ministry policy recommendation. Additional resolutions had been received since that time. Although the resolutions varied somewhat, all seek a two-thirds vote on some or all of the issues addressed in the social statement or ministry policies recommendation.

At its February 2008 meeting, the Executive Committee voted [EC09.02.07]:

> To receive the resolutions of the Central/Southern Illinois, Allegheny, Northeastern Iowa, Southwestern Texas, and Lower Susquehanna synods related to the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;
>
> To refer the resolutions to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council and to request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council;
>
> To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

Church Council Action:

Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr., chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, reviewed the committee's extensive discussion of ways to respond to the synodical resolutions that the Executive Committee had referred to it. He stated that the council, having spent a substantial amount of time in November 2008 on this issue, might not want to renew the discussion. He reported that some committee members thought that the situation had not changed sufficiently to revisit the council's decision. He noted that a committee recommendation for a two-thirds vote on matters related to the social statement on human sexuality might be perceived by other council members as the committee's effort to persuade the council to change its mind. He pointed out that in November neither the final draft of the social statement nor the recommendation on ministry policies was available, so the council members were able, at least in theory, to make their decision about the rules in a neutral way. Now that the recommendations are known, whatever the committee or council might do could be perceived as trying to influence the ultimate result.

Having reviewed the background, Mr. Lloyd presented on behalf of the committee the following language to the Church Council without recommendation:

Moved;

Seconded: 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.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. David E. Jensen emphasized this church's commitment to work cooperatively with its ecumenical dialogue partners toward full communion. He noted that conversation about potential actions of this church needed to take place with ecumenical partners. He called attention to responses from current full communion partners on the impending social statement on human sexuality, the implementing resolutions, and the potential changes in rostering, as reported by the Rev. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations. Pr. Jensen also noted that two dialogue partners, the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, had not been invited to respond. He asked, as a point of privilege, if Pr. McCoid could share his perspective on the current and future state of Lutheran-Roman Catholic and Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue as the ELCA moves forward on the potentially divisive practice of changes in ministry rostering.

When asked how that request related to the present motion, Pr. Jensen responded that a movement from a majority to a two-thirds vote on a change in rostering would put a different light on this church's commitment to make decisions in cooperation with its ecumenical partners.

Pr. McCoid replied that one of the understandings within the Lutheran World Federation–Orthodox dialogue is that the dialogue addresses doctrine, theology, faith, and order and that issues related to ministry policy changes have not been brought to the table. The Lutheran–Orthodox dialogue includes not only the ELCA, but the churches of Sweden, Norway, and Germany as well as African churches. He reported that the Russian Orthodox Church had suspended relationship with the Church of Sweden, not over rostering, but over other matters where they perceived there would be differences in practice. The Roman Catholic Church and the U.S. Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops did make some response to the initial social statement, he stated, but have not made any official response to the current proposals. They have been clear that there would be some disagreement even over the draft social statement.

Pr. McCoid stated that in the broadest sense of ecumenical dialogue, there are questions not only about doctrine but also about moral differences, which go beyond sexuality. While not speaking for the Roman Catholic Church or the Orthodox Church, he noted the tension that exists in moral differences of practices is very real and may be the subject of the next round of dialogue and discussion.

Pr. McCoid said that if the question is whether these church bodies would stay at table in dialogue, they have been somewhat careful in how to respond. There will be a representative of the Roman Catholic Church present at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, but it will not be a bishop or cardinal. There is sensitivity among the American Roman Catholic hierarchy about being asked to respond to decisions of the ELCA. He has been assured that, no matter what the decision, the celebration of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* will take place on October 1, 2009.

Pr. McCoid concluded that the long-term ecumenical consequences of the Churchwide Assembly's decisions are unknown, with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions or even with some of this church's full-October 1, 2009, communion partners, some of whom are supportive because they have already made decisions and some of whom have been very cautious.

Presiding Bishop Hanson emphasized that the strong practice of this church is not to speak for other churches, but only to speak what other churches have said in their own voice. He emphasized this church's commitment to ecumenical relationships whatever the outcome of the Churchwide Assembly in August.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy spoke against the proposal and commented that memorials in support of the council action in November had not been received. Secretary Swartling and Mr. Lloyd responded that three supportive memorials had been received. Pr. Loy also expressed concern about a change in council direction being misconstrued in a variety of ways. He referred to the section of the minutes of the November 2008 Church Council meeting that contained the discussion of the rules. He characterized the documents that would be amended in the wake of approval of the ministry

policies recommendation as "personnel policies," previously adopted by the Church Council be a majority vote. They were neither a part of this church's constitution nor, technically speaking, related to the social statement.

The Rev. John C. Richter asked for clarification that the proposed action would be the advice of the Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly but that ultimately the assembly would make its decision. Mr. Lloyd concurred.

Ms. Norma J. Hirsch pointed out that council members took action at the November meeting so that any decision would be made prior to knowing what the social statement and implementing resolutions as well as rostering recommendations and any required policy changes would say. She added that a substantial number of synods clearly did not think a majority vote on the ministry policies recommendation was a significant issue because they had not passed on resolutions to the council. She expressed her concern that, since the only thing that has changed is that the content of the task force recommendations is now known, the council would be perceived as changing its recommendation based on content or comment on that content. Changing the council's recommendation would mean for some that the council was being coercive or trying to determine the outcome. It would mean adding to the list of things that require a two-thirds vote items that have not typically required a two-thirds.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger commented that since the task force recommendations are close to those brought to the Orlando assembly, which did require a two-thirds vote, to recommend a majority vote now seems like breaking faith and changing the rules. He added that some of the synodical resolutions asking for a two-thirds vote did come prior to knowing the content of the recommendations.

The Rev. David P. Anderson asked whether, if the social statement was defeated, a vote on the ministry policies recommendation would take place. Mr. Lloyd responded that if the social statement does not pass, its implementing resolutions would be moot. However, the ministry policies recommendation is a separate action, which, without the proposed rule, would require a majority vote. Pr. Anderson stated that the real issue in this church is the ministry policies recommendation, so to keep the unity of this church, it would be wise to require a two-thirds vote.

In response to a question about the number of synods that had submitted resolutions, Secretary Swarting reported that 18 synods had sent resolutions; three affirmed the previous action, and 15 asked for a two-thirds vote on some or all of the actions related to the social statement task force resolutions.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson asked about the order of the rostering recommendations. Secretary Swartling responded that the agenda is the responsibility of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and is a work in progress. The tentative plan is to deal first with the social statement with a Quasi Committee of the Whole discussion, followed by action on the subsequent day. Then the ministry policies recommendation would be addressed in a Quasi Committee of the Whole discussion and subsequent plenary action.

Pr. Sorenson also asked if it would be possible to recommend a rule stating that if the social statement does not pass, the rostering recommendations would be off the table. Secretary Swartling answered in the affirmative, but he cautioned that special purpose rules require a two-thirds vote to adopt and can lead to unintended consequences.

Pr. Sorenson said he understood the intent of the resolution from the 2007 Churchwide Assembly to be to connect the social statement and the recommendations on rostering. Presiding Bishop Hanson responded that he would not rule on that interpretation until called upon to do so. However, his reading is that those were separate actions of different assemblies. It would be very difficult for a subsequent assembly to attribute intent that was not specified in the actions adopted by those previous assemblies.

Ms. Judith Anne Bunker spoke against the proposal because she said that the Church Council is an advisory body between churchwide assemblies. A rule such as this would in effect tell the Churchwide Assembly this content is so controversial that it needs to be looked at differently than every other social statement, resolution, or vote taken about "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline," "Vision and Expectations," or rostering policies. Such a change would indicate the council has changed its mind, has no faith in the assembly, and wants the assembly to respond in a certain way.

The Rev. Norene A. Smith pointed out that one of the salient arguments for a two-thirds vote is that such a big decision ought to require big majority. In 1970, when two predecessor church bodies voted on the ordination of women, one required a two-thirds vote, the other a majority.

Mr. Mark S. Helmke expressed concern about bringingthis issue back to the council after having had the opportunity to fully debate and deliberate and having had the significant advantage of making recommendations on the rules without having seen the recommendations. He asked for comment from the liaison bishops.

The Rev. Marie C. Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, reminded the council that the Conference of Bishops is not a legislative body. She reported that at its spring meeting, the bishops had considered a number of issues related to the sexuality statement and the recommendation on ministry policies. On this particular issue there was a strong majority in favor of a two-thirds vote; however, the group was definitely not unanimous on the issue.

Mr. John R. Emery asked what would happen if no version of the proposed rules achieves a two-thirds vote. Secretary Swartling responded that non-controversial rules would be addressed *en bloc* first. With respect to Part Ten, if the proposed two-thirds rule is not adopted or if there is no other provision, the default is *Robert's Rules of Order*, which is a majority vote for adoption.

Mr. Gary L. Wipperman expressed his struggle with the transparency issue. Since considerable time was spent talking about this matter at the November meeting, he stated that a change now would look like the council is bowing to pressure from those synods that asked for a reconsideration.

Mr. Mark W. Myers urged that the council uphold its previous decision. He wondered if those synods asking for reconsideration truly understood the earlier decision as simply reaffirming what the constitution and bylaws say. Mr. Lloyd agreed that the resolutions show some misunderstanding in some aspects, but they clearly express a desire for a two-thirds vote on the rostering recommendations, the implementing resolutions, or both. Mr. Myers wondered if it would be useful to restate the previous decision as an affirmation of existing rules. Mr. Lloyd replied there is no process for affirming a previous vote but, in responding to the synods, the secretary will report the action taken.

Mr. Mark E. Johnson spoke in favor of the proposal as a matter of process, stating the synods were owed a response.

Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus acknowledged the great anxiety about what would happen with a 49 to 51 percent vote, but she claimed that a worse scenario would be 63 percent voting for a change in rostering but change being denied because the percentage fell short of two-thirds.

Mr. David Truland, having researched Pr. Smith's earlier point, reported that in 1970 the American Lutheran Church voted to ordain women by 57 percent, a vote of 560-414.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Pr. Hunsinger to pray and then called for the vote.

Moved;
Seconded;
Defeated: 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.

The motion was defeated by a vote of 10-21 with two abstentions, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and Secretary David D. Swartling.

Pr. Richter asked Secretary Swartling, in his response to the synods, to make clear that the Churchwide Assembly will decide its rules. Secretary Swartling agreed that he would indicate the consequences of the vote and would indicate that the discussion that synods and individuals had requested to occur had taken place.

PROPOSED RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE FOR THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

(Agenda III.E.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 2)

Background:

At its November meeting, the Church Council adopted an action [CC08.11.36] to recommend adoption of proposed "Rules of Organization and Procedure" to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The action included the following provision:

> 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 recommend any changes to the Church Council at its March 2009 meeting.

The secretary has made minor editorial and scheduling changes to the proposed rules, which are detailed in the exhibit. The revised proposed rules would be posted on the Churchwide Assembly Web site.

Church Council Action:

Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr. presented the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.13 **To amend the proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly by making the changes identified in Exhibit G, Part 2; and**

To authorize the presiding bishop and secretary of this church to prepare further editing and scheduling 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 August 2009 meeting.

Mr. John S. Munday requested prayer in response to the vote. Vice President Peña called on the Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson for prayer.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

The Rev. David E. Jensen reflected on Dwelling in the Word.

BREAK AND RECESS

The Rev. Murray D. Finck, bishop of the Pacifica Synod, led a "Stretch and Pray" health and wellness break.

The third plenary session of the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 3:30 P.M.

Saturday, March 28, 2009
Plenary Session IV

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reconvened the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council at 3:42 P.M.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE
(Agenda II.E.6)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair, for the report of the Program and Services Committee.

UPDATE ON THE ELCA STUDIES ON SEXUALITY
(Agenda III.G.1a; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Parts 1a–1f and 2a–d)

The Rev. Steven P. Loy described his understanding of the work of the Church Council in reference to the constitutional description of the council as an interim legislative authority between Churchwide Assemblies. He suggested that the council trust the work that the task force has done and allow the assembly to grapple with that work. If, however, the work of the task force does not represent the work the Churchwide Assembly asked them to do or that work is not credible in the estimation of the council, then it is the responsibility of the Church Council to intervene.

Pr. Loy also referred to the role of the Church Council in the development and approval of social statements as described in "Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns" as being to ". . . approve the text of proposed social statements and recommend the text to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.12.01.)." He reported that the Program and Services Committee had not made many changes to the proposed social statement on human sexuality.

Pr. Loy then called upon the following for an update on the work of the task force: the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit; Ms. Norma J. Hirsch, council liaison to the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality; the Rev. Roger A. Thompson, chair of the Church in Society program committee; the Rev. Peter Strommen, chair of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and the Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for studies.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson provided a context for the council's conversation regarding the proposed social statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust." She indicated that this church has nine social statements; the one on human sexuality will be the tenth. In 2011, there will be consideration of a statement on genetics; in 2013, criminal justice; and in 2015, the Churchwide Assembly may call for further social statements.

Pr. Larson pointed out that this is a statement about human sexuality. The task force is very hopeful that the many dimensions of human sexuality will receive close attention. The council's consideration of the social statement comes within the scope of ELCA policies and procedures for addressing social concerns. Should the Church Council approve and forward this document to the churchwide assembly for action, it would become the "recommended proposed social statement." Synod assemblies can speak to the Churchwide Assembly through memorials. These will be referred to the Memorials Committee, which is appointed by the Church Council and has the responsibility to transmit them with recommendations for action to the assembly. The Churchwide Assembly has the authority to revise the recommended proposed social statement, and when the text is finalized, it has the responsibility to act upon it. According to this church's bylaws, adoption of a social statement takes a two-thirds vote. Should the social statement be adopted, the implementing resolutions would be acted upon.

Ms. Norma J. Hirsch remarked on what a gift the task force has been and what a gift it has given to this church. Task force members have been thoughtful and respectful in dialogue and discernment. They have represented a broad diversity of opinions and modeled strong disagreement without being disagreeable. Clearly, the task force struggled with the additional task given by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly. Ms. Hirsch shared what a bishop told her: "The consensus that is currently being sought is not forthcoming. Moreover, many do believe we must have a consensus. Rather, what we must have is a way to go forward when we don't have consensus."

Ms. Hirsch thanked council members for their participation in the process but added that it would difficult for a council that meets twice a year to substantively change what a task force, which has worked years, has brought forward.

She noted that some people who have read the statement and supporting documents have called the work "brilliant." Regardless of the perceptions of individual members about the work of the task force, members of the Church Council have several responsibilities: to honor the work of the task force, to help people understand the process, to help people understand the difference between being heard and being agreed with, and to hold this process intentionally in thought and prayer.

The Rev. Roger A. Thompson expressed his appreciation for the task force, describing its members as reflecting a divided church and taking on the herculean task of bringing a statement on behalf of this church. Task force members represented the wide spectrum of opinion in this church, treated each other in a Christ-like way, and kept Christ's Church at the top of the list of priorities. Members of the task force have given above and beyond what was asked of them. He expressed his desire, above all else, to see the family of this church stay together.

The Rev. Peter Strommen recalled that when the task force gathered following the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, there was honest debate about proceeding with a social statement on human sexuality. In reflection, task force members noted the changed landscape since the work of the predecessor church bodies in the 1970s. The growing number of unchurched people with little or no knowledge of basic Christianity and the number of people in the ELCA with misunderstandings or mistaken views have been widely attested. Although much energy has been expended on controversial topics such as sexual abuse and issues over homosexuality, he said, very little has been published in the last 25 years, by Lutherans or most mainline denominations, about human sexuality and ethics. The task force thought it could be helpful to articulate this understanding.

Pr. Strommen indicated that, in addition to controversial issues, widespread practices in society challenge traditional Christian thinking in many areas. Among them are the commodification of sex, assumptions about sex and marriage, portrayal of sexual experience in the media as most often outside of marriage and without consequence, a tendency of the culture to silo human sexuality under individual rights, and a sexually saturated culture that often uses and depicts sex in exploitive ways for financial profit. In contrast, some trends in this church included the positive response to a re-articulation of Lutheran principles in "Journey Together Faithfully, Part Two," and the embrace of a missional focus that recovers the twin Reformation pillars of an evangelical emphasis and the vocation of serving the neighbor. There appeared to be a pressing need in church and society to recover a more robust sense of the interconnection between the private and the public, the personal and the social, which is sometimes called the common good.

In response to these concerns, Pr. Strommen explained, the characteristics in the document include the following:

- the use of responsibility ethics as a framework, something that Dietrich Bonhoeffer helped pioneer;
- the focus on healthy relationships and their interconnection with healthy society;
- the use of trust as a middle axiom of love because of its capacity to connect the personal and the corporate as well as articulate what's at stake in its betrayal;
- the care given to articulate fairly positions about which people, including members of the task force, disagree;
- the desire to bear the burdens of those with whom one disagrees;
- the advocacy of the importance of marriage in creating trust and protecting trustworthy relationships;
- the naming of practices, individual and social, that are destructive to the well-being of people;
- the careful explanation of Lutheran theology; and
- the perspective that we live east of Eden, where a perfected world can only be anticipated in God's future, and where love of neighbor must deal with people's needs and situations as they presently exist.

Pr. Strommen stated that feedback was invaluable in the process of developing a social statement and has resulted in extensive rewriting and restructuring in an effort to achieve greater clarity. It is now up to this church whether the proposed social statement is credible and salutary. He described the social statement as, in some ways, like a bridge. The statement tries to articulate a structure of belief that can speak to social realities, commend the Christian faith and God's work among this church, and give guidance in dealing with the many questions that emerge as faith and future interconnect. The realities and issues of human sexuality amount to heavy traffic across this bridge. The adequacy of the bridge design is now the council's to answer, as this whole church deliberates.

Pr. Strommen concluded by thanking the members of the churchwide staff for their extraordinary work, especially those who were heavily involved in the writing process: the Rev. Roger A. Willer, the Rev. Kaari M. Reierson, the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, and many others. He noted their extraordinary work and scrupulous attention to reflecting faithfully the work of the task force.

The Rev. Roger A. Willer highlighted changes to the proposed social statement from the original draft. He pointed out that it had been restructured and is shorter, more readable, more accessible, and less technical. The task force worked on establishing the placement of sexual ethics within a biblical understanding of God's work in creation, seeing the centrality of relationship and trust as fundamental characteristics of right relationship. He noted that attention had been given to clarifying the role of the law and explaining that sexuality belongs to the left-hand governance of God, while continuing to insist that disagreements about sexuality are not disagreements about matters central to salvation. He added that the task force strove to describe sexuality in a complex, textured, and comprehensive way as something more than simple libido, overt behavior, or even as the drive to procreate. The task force wanted to clarify marriage and family in its normative role and attempted to explicate a range of diverse understandings on same-gender relationships that had been mentioned but not articulated in the draft. The task force also clarified and developed more guidance on a number of areas, such as cohabitation, divorce, and commodification. Language was honed as much as possible in order to clarify without trying to shortchange the many crucial matters that need to be addressed.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Following the update, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling to introduce the Committee of the Whole discussion on the social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust." These discussions were closed and off the record. No minutes of the small-group discussion were taken.

VOTED:

CC09.03.14 **To go into the Committee of the Whole, to consist of small-group sessions involving only Church Council members, advisory members, youth members, and liaison bishops, for 30 minutes.**

RECESS

The fourth plenary session of the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council recessed following the Committee of the Whole small-group discussions.

Saturday, March 28, 2009
Plenary Session V

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reconvened the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council at 4:45 P.M.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)
(Agenda II.E.6)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair, to resume the report of the Program and Services Committee.

CONSIDERATION OF "HUMAN SEXUALITY: GIFT AND TRUST"
(Agenda III.G.1a; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Parts 1a–1f and 2a–d)

Background:

"Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" is the text of the proposed social statement on human sexuality for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Work on this statement was authorized at the 2001 Churchwide Assembly. If approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, it will be the tenth social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The development and adoption of social statements by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are guided by the document "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. At the time of the inception of this social statement, the board of the Division for Church in Society had the responsibility to name an appropriate group to study the topic, encourage broad participation by congregations and members of this church, and provide for a study document or preliminary draft, designed for study and response. Both the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops are places for deliberation on preliminary documents.

Work on this social statement began in 2002 with the appointment by the board of the Division for Church in Society of a task force to oversee development of study materials, a first draft, and a final draft on the topic of human sexuality. Current members of the task force include Peter Strommen (chair), Erin Clark, Julio A. Fonseca, Carol S. Hendrix, Corinne Johnson, Gary J. Liedtke, Peter O'Malia, Kevin R. Maly, Susan Salomone, Scott Suskovic, Connie D. Thomas, David Tiede, Marit Trelstad, Timothy J. Wengert, and Diane Yeager. Current advisory members include Murray D. Finck, Sarah Korbel, Norma Hirsch, Myrna Sheie, Stan Olson, Rebecca Larson, Leslie Weber, Roger Willer, Kaari Reierson, Roger Thompson, James Childs, and Richard Crossman. Previous members of the task force included Terence Fretheim, Lou Hesse, Lucy Kolin, Margaret G. Payne, and John Prabhakar. Previous advisory members included Judy Biffle, A. Craig Settlage, Patricia W. Savage, and James Brandt.

As part of the development process, the task force scheduled listening posts in a variety of locations in this church. It prepared and distributed three study documents; responses to the study documents helped to inform development of the first draft of the social statement.

The first draft of the social statement was distributed in the early in 2008. In response, the task force received approximately 800 pieces of correspondence or statements and 2,100 response forms. In addition, synods hosted 111 hearings.

The proposed social statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," was reviewed by the program committee for the Church in Society unit in March 2009 and referred to the Church Council for consideration by the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director for the Church in Society unit.

The Church Council ". . . shall review and act upon the recommendations of the executive director of the Church in Society unit" (ELCA 14.21.01., 14.21.03.). The Church Council shall approve the text of proposed social statements and recommend the text to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.12.01.). Prior to a published deadline before a meeting of the Church Council, any voting member of the council who wishes to suggest an amendment to the proposed social statement shall submit it to the chair of the Program and Services Committee. The Program and Services Committee will

make a recommendation concerning the proposed amendments to the Church Council, which will act upon that recommendation" ("Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns," page 15). The deadline for suggested amendments from members of the Church Council was March 3, 2009, at 8:00 A.M.

Church Council Action:

Pr. Steven P. Loy, chair of the Program and Services Committee, introduced the action on recommended amendments to the social statement on human sexuality.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.15 To approve the amendments to the social statement on human sexuality as printed in Exhibit K, Part 1f.

Pr. Loy reported the consideration being given to recommending a Committee of the Whole discussion at the Churchwide Assembly, allowing each voting member of the assembly to be in conversation with other voting members before taking action on the proposed social statement.

Pr.Loy then introduced the action on the proposed social statement, as amended.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.16 ***To recommend the following to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly*:**

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).

The Church Council offered its thanks to the staff and to the members of the task force with applause.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy introduced the action on the implementing resolutions. Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion.

Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, executive for governance and institutional relations, pointed out that the action previously taken on the recommended amendments included the amendment of implementing resolution seven.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger asked about the implications of implementing resolution seven, inquiring whether the resolution would apply to non-rostered employees of this church even if the ministry policy recommendations were defeated.

Pr. Loy reported that the Program and Services Committee had been in telephone conversation with Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer of the ELCA Board of Pensions, who shared that concern. Pr. Loy explained the committee had left the language sufficiently vague (a) to allow for whatever policies this church determines and (b) to allow both churchwide staff and the Board of Pensions to come into compliance, although that would take some time.

Pr. Hunsinger asked if, by passing this resolution, this church would put itself intentionally into a civil rights problem. Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel, responded that the resolution could give rise to discrimination claims, but whether those claims would withstand legal challenge is an undecided question. A church can legitimately make distinctions between the standards applied to ordained ministers of the church and those for other employees. The constitutional law principle of ministerial exception allows a church the right to set and apply its own standards for ministers. The obvious example is that some churches do not ordain women.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson pointed out that the language is to "call on" rather than "direct." The Churchwide Assembly cannot direct the Board of Pensions to do something. The Board of Pensions, within its fiduciary responsibility and within the legal constraints of the law, has to decide what is possible in relationship to the policies of

this church. If this resolution were passed by the Churchwide Assembly, it would then come back to Board of Pensions and the Church Council to perform their due diligence with regard to this implementing resolution.

Pr. Hunsinger asked if a precedent would have been when an earlier assembly of a predecessor church body called upon the Board of Pensions to divest, and the Board of Pensions did not do so instantaneously. Mr. Harris replied that example would be an analogous precedent.

Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr. wondered if the amended resolution seven does anything other than create confusion. Pr. Loy replied that the committee had considered removing resolution seven, but had been concerned that those who were advocating for this change would see that removal as a discounting of the need to change. He acknowledged, however, that retaining resolution seven opens the door to discussion about rostering. The committee was trying to leave that conversation until consideration of the recommendation on ministry policies.

Mr. Lloyd suggested that the concern about what would happen to non-rostered employees of this church really is moot because of the language that had been removed. Pr. Larson responded that there is language in the social statement that affirms various actions within this church to support work concerning discrimination against gay and lesbian people, including their access to social services. If the social statement is approved, such language would provide a policy base for the Board of Pensions to look at benefits for gay and lesbian people and their dependents.

In the absence of Mr. Kapanke, Secretary Swartling offered his articulation of Mr. Kapanke's position. He stated that the original language in resolution seven had been discussed at length by the Board of Pensions, the Church in Society staff, and other staff of the churchwide organization. Mr. Kapanke and others at the Board of Pensions advocated for moving the resolution to the recommendation on ministry policies on the basis that it involves a rostering issue. Secretary Swartling noted there is a difference of opinion on that matter, with some people believing that the resolution addresses a broader issue with respect to non-discrimination. Secretary Swartling added that while there may be some advantage to the ambiguity, Mr. Kapanke would argue that it is not appropriate to change the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program unless there is a change in this church's ministry policies.

Secretary Swartling added that if both the social statement and the recommendation on ministry policies pass, the issue becomes academic. However, if the social statement passes and the recommendation on ministry policies fails, debate about the meaning of implementing resolution seven will ensue. Secretary Swartling agreed that Pr. Larson is correct in saying there is a policy embedded in the social statement about non-discrimination, and an argument will be made that the Pension and Other Benefits Program should be changed. He anticipated that, even with the amended language, Mr. Kapanke would continue to argue that the resolution is not appropriate. In that case, the Church Council would consider the matter at its November 2009 meeting.

Mr. Loy acknowledged that the amended resolution seven was a compromise position on the part of the committee.

Mr. Lloyd raised the question of strategy, asking whether votes would be gained or lost by retaining the original language. He wondered whether the amended resolution seven created ambiguity that would not attract attention or ambiguity that would provoke discussion on both sides, losing votes from people who want there to be non-discrimination and from people who are content to have the *status quo*.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.17 ***To recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly adoption of the following implementing resolutions*:**

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 identify and publicize available 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 students, 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 accordance 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 or gender identity;**
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"[1] 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][2] 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**

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[1] See the ELCA message on "Commercial Sexual Exploitation" (Chicago: ELCA, 2001).
[2] The ELCA Church Council will consider the adoption of this strategy at its March 2009 meeting.

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.

PROCESS OBSERVATION

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon to discuss the process observation. Ms. Arielle Mastellar and Pr. Obregon shared their responses to the process observation questions. A compilation of responses is available at the council's Net Community site.

HYMN AND PRAYER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger to close with prayer.

RECESS

The fifth plenary session of the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 5:28 P.M.

Sunday, March 29, 2009
Plenary Session VI

Prior to the beginning of the sixth plenary session of the March 2009 meeting, the Church Council gathered in the Lutheran Center chapel for a service of Holy Communion. Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson preached, the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly presided, and Ms. Judith Anne Bunker served as assisting minister.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reconvened the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council at 9:32 A.M. He thanked those who participated worship.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE
(Agenda II.E.5)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon the Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson, chair, for the report of the Planning and Evaluation Committee.

REPORT ON MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES
(Agenda III.F.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit H, Part 2)

Background:

In accordance with "Faithful Yet Changing: Design for Mission through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," the executive director for multicultural ministries will ". . . present a comprehensive plan and ongoing evaluation of the churchwide organization's work in the area of multicultural ministries. The plan will be developed collaboratively by churchwide staff from all units and partner organizations and presented, along with an evaluation, to the Church Council (annually) and to the Churchwide Assembly (biennially)."

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson, chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, reported on the review of the Multicultural Ministries program unit. He called attention to the report found in the Planning and Evaluation section on the Net Community Web site and indicated that the committee had voted to receive the report with gratitude and requested further review to address three areas of improvement listed in the evaluation report: (1) better monitoring of its own work by the unit; (2) continued evaluation of how to most effectively administer the multicultural work of the churchwide organization; and (3) more clarification of the role of the ethnic-specific ministry associations. The committee asked for a report on these matters to be presented at the November 2009 meeting of the Planning and Evaluation Committee. Pr. Sorenson pointed out that while multicultural membership is the only part of this church that is growing, it remains at three percent, far short of this church's goal of ten percent.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke asked if most African American and Black members are in multicultural congregations or in ethnic-specific congregations. The Rev. Sherman G. Hicks, executive director of the Multicultural Ministries unit, responded that most are in ethnic-specific congregations. Asian/Pacific Islander members are the only ethnic group of which the majority is in multicultural congregations.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.18 **To receive with gratitude the biennial report on Multicultural Ministries and to commend the Multicultural Ministries program unit and the inter-unit staff team on ethnic-ministry strategies for their efforts on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and**

In response to actions of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, to transmit the biennial report on Multicultural Ministries to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, commending the content of the report for study, reflection, and response throughout this church.

REPORT ON JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

(Agenda III.F.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit H, Part 3)

In accordance with "Faithful Yet Changing: Design for Mission through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," the director for justice for women will ". . . present a comprehensive plan and ongoing evaluation of the churchwide organization's work in this area. The plan will be developed collaboratively by churchwide staff from all units and partner organizations and be presented, along with an annual evaluation, to the Church Council (annually), as well as to the Churchwide Assembly (biennially)."

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson, chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, introduced the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.19 **To receive with gratitude the biennial report on Justice for Women and to commend the Church in Society program unit and the consulting committee on Justice for Women for their efforts on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and**

In response to actions of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, to transmit the biennial report on Justice for Women to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, commending the content of the report for study, reflection, and response throughout this church.

REPORT ON ELCA PLAN FOR MISSION

(Agenda III.F.3; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit H, Part 4)

Background:

The Plan for Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 2003. Related changes to structure, governance, and budget were adopted in 2005. Subsequently, the units of the churchwide organization have developed unit plans based on the Plan for Mission and prioritized specific unit responsibilities enumerated in the ELCA's governing documents.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson, chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, introduced the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.20 **To receive the report on the Plan for Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to request that the report be provided as information to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.**

Pr. Sorenson commented that the committee also heard reports regarding young adult ministry and people in poverty, prepared for the November 2009 evaluation of staff alliances, and received an initial review of the goals of the 2005 restructuring of the churchwide organization. Those goals were that the churchwide organization would be easier to understand, that accompaniment would be the working style of the churchwide staff, that there would be a renewed

commitment to the health and well being of synods and congregations, and that there would be a renewed commitment to evangelism, multicultural ministry, and the full participation of women in this church. The committee asked that future research include a focus on ministry with young adults and people in poverty.

Pr. Sorenson reported that the committee had elected the Rev. Susan Langhauser as its chair for the next biennium.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

(Agenda II.B; Agenda/Minutes Exhibit A, Part 5; Exhibit B, Part 2b; Exhibit K, Part 1d)

The Rev. Marie C. Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod and vice chair of the Conference of Bishops, presented the report of the Conference of Bishops. Bp. Jerge called attention to the written report and added comments on three items.

Bp. Jerge, who had participated in the January trip to the Holy Land, remarked that the challenge now is how to communicate, teach, and share what was learned as the bishops live into the advocacy to which they have been called. Bp. Jerge was part of the decision-making group as to whether or not to make the journey following the outbreak in Gaza and reported how impressed she was by the way the bishops together made prayerful decisions about whether to travel. A trip is being planned for those who did not make the journey in January. Bp. Jerge commented that it was the first time she was invited to make a decision where she might be putting her own physical life at risk for the sake of the Gospel; that changed the nature of the trip for her. She has challenged members of the Upstate New York Synod to consider what risks they might be willing to take for the sake of the Gospel, and she offered that same challenge to members of the Church Council. She shared 18 photographs that, for her, illustrated living at the intersection of fear and hope.

Bp. Jerge called attention to the pastoral word from the Council of Bishops. She reported deep conversations among the bishops about the social statement on human sexuality, the recommendation on ministry policies, and their own leadership during upcoming synod assemblies and the Churchwide Assembly.

Bp. Jerge indicated that the response of the bishops to the request from the 2007 Churchwide Assembly for discussion, consideration, and a statement of the accountability of bishops [CAA07.06.34] was included in the exhibits. She emphasized that the conference has conversations regularly on this matter, and members have been especially attentive to it with the number of new bishops. The response makes reference to other documents, including the relational agreement adopted by the conference. The conference recognized that its ongoing work on these matters often is not visible to others in this church, so this response is an opportunity to share the relational agreement more broadly.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for comment or questions.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke stressed the importance of letters to legislators, noting that houses are continuing to be demolished in Jerusalem. Bp. Jerge responded that the list of houses to be demolished is very long, but is followed randomly. It is almost impossible for a Palestinian to get a building permit, she said. Additions are added as the family grows; but without a permit, the addition is illegal, and the house is automatically added to the demolition list.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson reported on his meeting with King Abdullah of Jordan, who stressed three areas of shared commitment: the need for a vibrant Arab Christian community; the need to ensure that Jerusalem be a shared city; and the need to deepen the relationship between Christians and Muslims so that extremists do not win the day.

Mr. John S. Munday commented he was pleased to have read that Presiding Bishop Hanson had told the two chief rabbis of Israel that he, in good conscience, could not support the invasions and attacks in Gaza.

RESPONSE TO 2007 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY ACTION CA07.06.34

(Agenda IV.A.2; Agenda/Minutes Exhibit B, Part 2b)

Background:

In the final plenary session of the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, the following action was taken by a vote of 318-109 [CA07.06.34]: "RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, meeting in assembly at Chicago, Ill., on August 11, 2007, request the Conference of Bishops to enter into discussion and consideration of the matter of the accountability of bishops to the adopted policies, practices, and procedures of the ELCA and to formulate a clear statement of such accountability for consideration and adoption by the 2009 assembly of this church."

This action was transmitted to the Conference of Bishops, which referred it for consideration to the Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee, chaired by the Rev. Margaret G. Payne, bishop of the New England Synod. That

committee discussed the matter and brought the issue before the March 2008, October 2008, and February 2009 meetings of the Conference of Bishops for discussion and consideration by the entire conference. The committee also drafted a proposed response to the action, which the conference debated and adopted.

The statement by the Conference of Bishops concludes that the governing documents of this church, together with the relational agreement adopted by the conference, fully address the issues of the responsibilities of bishops to this church, to their synods, and to one another. These documents provide for both accountability of bishops and discretion to address issues in the context of their synods. As a result, the Conference of Bishops' statement does not propose any additional resolution to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council action:

Secretary David D. Swartling moved the action which had been removed from the *en bloc* action. Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a second and then opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger explained that he had requested the removal from the *en bloc* resolution. Because he considered the action by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly extraordinary, Pr. Hunsinger thought it deserved thoughtful consideration by the Church Council. He thanked Bp. Jerge for her report, saying it satisfied his concerns.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.21 **To receive the report of the Conference of Bishops in response to the action of the 2007 Churchwide Assembly [CA07.06.34] related to "the accountability of bishops to the adopted policies, practices, and procedures of the ELCA";**

To acknowledge that the Conference of Bishops Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee has addressed the responsibilities of bishops to this church;

To further acknowledge that the following documents address the accountability of bishops to one another:

- ***The Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;***
- **"The Office and Ministry of the Bishop in the ELCA: A Shared Vision of Episcopacy and a Relational Agreement";**
- **"A Policy Statement Explaining the Processes Contemplated by S17.02. As It Relates to Synodical Bishops, Executive Committees of Synod Councils, and Synod Councils"; and**

To transmit to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the report of the Conference of Bishops as the response to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly's action.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)

(Agenda II.E.3)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña continued the report of the Executive Committee.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE CHARTERS

(Agenda III.D.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit D, Part 2)

Background:

At its July 2008 meeting, the Executive Committee established a process for approval of the charters of Church Council committees [EC08.07.14]: "To establish that the process for approval of the charters of the committees of the Church Council include review by the Executive Committee, committee response (if necessary), editing for consistency of style and format by the Office of the Secretary, a second review by the Executive Committee of the amended and edited charter, and transmittal to the Church Council with recommendations for action."

Prior to the November 2008 meeting, Secretary David D. Swartling reviewed the charters and provided committees with a memorandum regarding suggestions for additions and edits. At the November 2008 meeting, the Church Council approved the charter of the Executive Committee [CC08.11.61]. Thereafter, Secretary Swartling edited the charters for format and consistency, provided them to the committee chairs, and conferred with them telephonically. The Executive Committee received an update at its February and March 2009 meetings. Committees finalized their charters in their March 2009 committee meetings.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Secretary David D. Swartling to introduce the proposed action.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.22 To approve the charters for the following committees of the Church Council: Audit Committee, Board Development Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, Planning and Evaluation Committee, and Program and Services Committee.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)

(Agenda II.E.6)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair, to continue the report of the Program and Services Committee.

HIV AND AIDS STRATEGY

(Agenda III.G.3; Exhibit K, Part 4)

Background:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, including its predecessor church bodies, has a long history of work related to HIV and AIDS. Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and several representatives from this church have participated in the International AIDS Conference and the ecumenical pre-conference event in both 2006 and 2008. Following the conference in 2006, Presiding Bishop Hanson encouraged consideration by the Church Council and the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of a request to develop a comprehensive churchwide strategy on HIV and AIDS.

A planning group was organized, which included representatives from the Church in Society unit, the Global Mission unit, the Communication Services unit, and the Office of the Presiding Bishop. In September 2007, a consultation was convened involving members of an existing inter-unit staff working group on HIV and AIDS, missionaries, advocacy staff, and others. Prior to the meeting, staff conducted an inventory of existing work, policies, and funds that support AIDS ministries in this church. The meeting consisted of an asset-mapping process designed to lead to the development of a comprehensive strategy on AIDS ministries in this church.

The 2007 Churchwide Assembly called for a churchwide strategy for responding to HIV and AIDS to build on and deepen current engagement with the pandemic in the U.S. and around the world. The assembly voted [CA07.03.12]:

1. To commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to a deeper engagement in addressing the AIDS pandemic through the development of a churchwide strategy for action in the coming decade, which will:
   a. build on the experience and commitments of the past and the strength of ELCA congregations, synods, churchwide structures, institutions, and agencies;
   b. utilize the best thinking of ELCA experts, practitioners, congregational leaders, related institutions and agencies, and people living with HIV and AIDS, as well as ecumenical and global companions, in the development of this strategy;
   c. express the ELCA's commitment to work in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation and in tandem with ecumenical partners both in this country and throughout the world;

d. express the ELCA's commitment to engage proactively with others of good will in civil society and in government as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and
e. continue to move from crisis management to a more integrated, effective, and sustainable long-term response to the AIDS pandemic;

2. To express the solidarity of the ELCA with all people who are living with HIV and AIDS and with their families, both in this country and throughout the world:
   a. recognizing and giving thanks for the gifts, skills, and experience that people living with HIV and AIDS bring to addressing the pandemic and committing this church to work closely with them in its response;
   b. rejecting categorically the stigma and discrimination that are at times associated with HIV and AIDS;
   c. working to ensure universal access both to compassionate care and to effective treatment and prevention;
   d. engaging in education to prevent the further spread of HIV and AIDS; and
   e. providing a welcome in all aspects of church and congregational life to people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS;
3. To encourage ELCA members, congregations, agencies and institutions, synods, and the churchwide organization, at the same time this strategy is being developed, to:
   a. continue and extend their ministries among and with people living with HIV and AIDS;
   b. pray for people directly affected by HIV and AIDS and for churches, communities, and governments that they may have both the will and the wisdom to act boldly and effectively to address this crisis;
   c. intensify their support for the second-mile "Stand with Africa" campaign as well as the broader World Hunger Appeal, which enable this church to assist companions throughout the world as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and
   d. advocate with the U.S. government, urging it to:
      (1) demonstrate global leadership to achieve agreed upon international goals, including universal access to treatment, care, and prevention by 2010;
      (2) contribute its proportionate share to fund fully the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; and
      (3) abolish the extraordinary requirements that make it difficult and painful for people living with HIV to receive a visa to enter the United States for any purpose, and prohibit discrimination against people living with HIVand AIDS;
4. To convey the deep appreciation of this church:
   a. to all those who provide care and support for those living with HIV and AIDS and those who seek a cure for this disease, in particular those members of this church who live out their Christian vocation as nurses, doctors, health researchers, and care providers;
   b. to ELCA pastors and congregations actively engaged in ministry with people living with HIV and AIDS as they support, counsel, and advocate with them for just and compassionate action in this church and in the wider society;
   c. to all those who have provided financial support to HIV and AIDS research and care, both in this country and throughout the world;
   d. to all those ELCA members whose financial gifts have enabled the ELCA to walk with companion churches in their response to the AIDS crisis, in particular through their "second-mile" giving to the World Hunger Appeal's "Stand with Africa" campaign and companion synod action;
   e. to Lutheran social ministry organizations, hospitals, health facilities, and voluntary organizations, including the Lutheran AIDS Network (LANET), that provide assistance to people living with HIV and AIDS as well as leadership in church and society on this issue;

f. to the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, ecumenical agencies (both domestic and global), and others with which the ELCA partners to provide care, address the impact of HIV and AIDS in communities, prevent the further spread of the disease, and advocate with governments to step up their action in addressing this pandemic; and

g. to companion churches in other countries, with which the ELCA is privileged to walk in ministry, as they respond to often overwhelming human need resulting from the spread of HIV; and

5. To request that the Church in Society and Global Mission program units take the lead in developing this strategy, which will be brought to the Church Council for adoption in 2008 and reported to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

The 2007 Churchwide Assembly took an additional action [CA07.06.35], ". . . to instruct the Church Council to take steps to develop a plan to provide up to an additional $1 million in funding to implement the HIV and AIDS strategy." The action was referred to the Church Council, the Office of the Treasurer, and the Office of the Presiding Bishop not only to encourage continued support of the development and funding of this church's strategy on HIV and AIDS, but also to defer action related to funding requirements for the implementation of the HIV and AIDS strategy until a strategy with funding requirements is adopted by the Church Council. The "additional $1 million" referred to in the CWA action is understood to be included in the $10 million goal for funding the strategy.

Since the 1980s, the ELCA has worked with partners in Africa to address HIV and AIDS. In 2001, at the urging of companion churches, the ELCA launched the World Hunger Appeal's "Stand with Africa" campaign, which supports education, advocacy, and fund-raising that enable ELCA members to walk faithfully with companions in Africa as they address the devastating interrelated dynamics of HIV and AIDS, civil strife, poverty, and food security issues. "Stand with Africa" addresses HIV and AIDS not just in medical terms, but as a disease of poverty.

Beginning in 2007 and 2008, the ELCA considered the wisdom of engaging in a possible malaria initiative at the same time it lives out its commitment to intensify its HIV and AIDS response and develops a comprehensive churchwide HIV and AIDS strategy, as mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly. From the beginning of the conversations, ELCA staff emphasized with partners in the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI)—Lutheran World Relief, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and the United Nations Foundation—that engagement in malaria work would not come at the expense of its HIV and AIDS commitment. Rather, the two would need to be held together strategically in the ELCA, both in interpretation and in work with companions. Developing synergy with existing health-related and HIV and AIDS efforts would need to be a high priority in the ELCA's engagement with malaria work.

By the fall of 2008, the ELCA's HIV and AIDS efforts and the multi-partnered LMI were separated as far as the other LMI partners and the financial campaign component were concerned. The ELCA views its work with HIV and AIDS as a priority for this church, evidenced by the call for this strategy. In addition to this important focus, the ELCA at its 2009 Churchwide Assembly also will consider the proposed Lutheran Malaria Initiative. Combating these two diseases of poverty with parallel and complementary efforts is the thrust of the proposed action considered by the Church Council in March 2009 for referral to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly for action. At its November 2008 meeting, the Church Council and its advisors had the opportunity to review and respond to the draft strategy document.

In addition to regular review by Church Council, staff and other previously participating review groups, the HIV and AIDS strategy has been shared with many groups in an effort to gain perspectives on the strategy from varying viewpoints. Groups and individuals include the ELCA Conference of Bishops, ELCA clergy of color, Lutherans Concerned/North America, Lutheran AIDS Network (LANET), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and people living with HIV or AIDS. Additionally, there was continuing review by the domestic and international staff of the ELCA as well as rostered and lay leaders, some of whom work with ministries and organizations related to HIV and AIDS. Ecumenical feedback also was received, including responses from the United Church of Christ and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator of the ELCA's HIV and AIDS strategy and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, introduced members of the writing team, Mr. Warren Chain, and Mr. Christopher Carpenter, associate director for the World Hunger program, along with the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit.

Mr. Chain reviewed the process by which the HIV and AIDS strategy was created and gave an overview of the strategy itself.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy introduced the proposed action. He commented on the relationship of the HIV and AIDS strategy to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) and pointed out that the fundraising campaign for HIV and AIDS is being brought to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, while a fundraising proposal for LMI is being considered for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked about the thinking behind the words "begin and build" in the final paragraph of the proposed action. The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson responded that the interlinking of hunger, AIDS, and malaria is critical for this church. The thinking is that, under the umbrella of world hunger, there will be special emphases on HIV and AIDS and malaria, beginning strongly with AIDS, building over the first three years. In the meantime, the LMI will build more slowly.

Presiding Bishop Hanson emphasized the importance of this initiative's location within the World Hunger Appeal so that it does not undermine giving to the appeal.

The Rev. Norene A. Smith commented these are issues in which younger people are really interested.

Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr. asked whether some share of the World Hunger program money would be earmarked for HIV and AIDS if giving to the World Hunger Appeal continued to decrease. Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl replied that the initiative would be similar World Hunger's "Stand with Africa" campaign. Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton explained that money for the initiative would be designated giving within the World Hunger Appeal; it would be accounted for and expended separately. Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, executive director of the Development Services unit, added that the World Hunger Appeal is still a very strong program. Although direct giving has gone down, she believes it is realistic to build that back up as well as plan for gifts over and above regular giving to the World Hunger Appeal.

The Rev. Callon W. Holloway, bishop of the Southern Ohio Synod, asked about the refugee and migrant issues that were a significant part of the "Stand with Africa" campaign. The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson responded that the "Stand with Africa" campaign was specific to Africa, dealing with refugees and internal migrants. The HIV and AIDS strategy tries to look both domestically and internationally, particularly at what is being done with vulnerable communities, including refugees and migrants. Treasurer Jackson-Skelton added there is still money available for "Stand with Africa" purposes.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called on Ms. Karin L. Graddy to lead the council in prayer. He then called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.23 **To adopt the ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS;**

To add the voice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to that of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches in recognizing one of the most important lessons the church has learned in the past 25 years: "the body of Christ has AIDS";

To call on the ELCA—its members, congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and related agencies and institutions—to implement this strategy, thereby embracing the goal of becoming an HIV and AIDS-competent church and contributing to the efforts of the wider global community:

1. **To halt the spread of HIV through effective prevention, treatment, and care;**
2. **To eliminate the stigma and discrimination experienced by those who are HIV-positive; and**

3. To reduce the conditions of poverty and marginalization that contribute to the spread of HIV;

To express thanks for the many individuals, groups, and global companions who have contributed to the development of this strategy and have encouraged and assisted this church as it prepares to embrace HIV and AIDS work on a larger scale, both domestically and internationally;

To commend the ELCA Conference of Bishops for its engagement of the spirit of the HIV and AIDS strategy by being tested at its March 2009 meeting;

To acknowledge the new threshold of domestic ministry among people living with HIV and AIDS in the United States that is represented by this strategy;

To commend the Lutheran World Federation for its leadership within the Lutheran communion—in particular its "Breaking the Silence" initiative and its call for all member churches to develop an HIV and AIDS strategy that reflects their particular context and that grows out of shared Lutheran theology and experience;

To pledge to join the Lutheran World Federation in an intensified global campaign that will focus attention and resources on those regions most affect by HIV and AIDS, in particular, sub-Saharan Africa;

To express appreciation for the partnership of companion churches, ecumenical and interfaith partners, and international and domestic organizations in the ELCA's past global engagement and as the ELCA seeks to live out this new strategy internationally and domestically;

To encourage synods and congregations to embrace this strategy, both on their own territory and through their global companion synod relationships, coordinating their efforts with each other and with the Global Mission program unit;

To celebrate the significant HIV and AIDS work that was carried out through the World Hunger Appeal's second-mile initiative, "Stand With Africa: A Campaign of Hope" and to commit to continue that work through this new HIV and AIDS strategy;

To thank World Hunger donors for their faithful giving to the "Stand with Africa" campaign and to invite them and others into continuing this work through the generous funding of this strategy;

To anticipate synergies in addressing global health issues—in particular, diseases that are intensified by poverty—as a possible Lutheran Malaria Initiative is developed in the 2009–2011 biennium;

To forward the HIV and AIDS strategy to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly for information and affirmation; and

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.

Pr. Loy thanked the staff. The members of the council added their applause.
Pr. Loy then presented the action to adopt amendments to the HIV and AIDS Strategy.
Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.24 **To approve the following amendments to the HIV and AIDS Strategy as printed in Exhibit K, Part 4:**

1. Line 664 **Amend to read "...which stands for Safer ~~sexual~~ practices...."**

2. Lines 843–844 **Amend to read "c. are integrated with ongoing health and wellness activities~~, including the Board of Pensions' wellness program~~ of this church."**

3. Lines 1193–1196 **Delete lines 1193–1196 and footnote 119; renumber the remaining items: ~~"Call upon the ELCA Board of Pensions to include, as part of its regular review of all health care and pension plans, their response to this church's commitment to non-discrimination based on HIV status, and to include this information in their regular reports at least annually to the ELCA Church Council."~~**

~~119 Specific attention in this review should be given to provisions made for HIV testing and anti-retroviral. People living with or affected by HIV and AIDS should be involved and/or consulted in this review.~~

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP: OCCASIONAL SERVICES FOR THE ASSEMBLY

(Agenda III.G.6; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Part 1a–1c)

Background:

Of the worship materials that constitute the family of resources unfolding around the primary worship resource *Evangelical Lutheran Worship,* at least two publications merit a level of liturgical review that requires action by the Church Council. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Pastoral Care,* the first of two titles related to occasional services, was commended for use at the March 2008 Church Council meeting.

The second title related to occasional services is *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services for the Assembly (ELW-OSA),* due to be published in the fall of 2009. The contents of this volume have received the following levels of review:

1. The services related to rostered ministry in the ELCA received review from designated reviewers—including synodical bishops, pastors, lay rostered leaders, and teaching theologians—in the summer of 2008. This review informed the strategies for revision of these materials, and these strategies were reported to the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council in the fall of 2008.
2. The rest of the proposed content for *ELW-OSA* received review from designated reviewers—including synodical bishops, pastors, lay rostered leaders, and teaching theologians—in December 2008 and January 2009. At the same time all the proposed contents of *ELW-OSA,* including the ministry rites, were available on the ELCA Web site for general comment by individuals and groups who chose to respond. These reviews informed the strategies for final decision-making.

As reported to the November 2008 Church Council meeting, the services related to rostered ministries are considered "authorized materials" under the "Statement of Policy and Procedures for Review of Liturgical Materials Prepared by ELCA Churchwide Units," which states: "[Authorized materials are] resources that have been deemed to be in accordance with the governing documents of this church and that have been designated as the appropriate form, to be used in this church as presented. . . . Materials are authorized upon recommendation by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, review by the Conference of Bishops, and approval by the Church Council."

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the Program and Services Committee, called on the Rev. Robert G. Shaefer, executive for worship and liturgical resources; the Rev. Jennifer Phelps Ollikainen, associate for worship resources; and

the Rev. Martin A. Seltz, publisher for worship and music, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers. Pr. Shaefer reviewed the proposed action. He highlighted several areas of significant conversation in the preparation of this volume: preparation of adults for baptism, inter-unit consultation and review, the diversity of liturgical practices in the life of this church, and issues around ministry rites. Pr. Shaefer expressed his gratitude to Pr. Ollikainen and Pr. Seltz for their faithful and careful shepherding of this final work.

Pr. Loy invited questions and asked what percentage of *ELW-OSA* is new or revised material. Pr. Seltz responded that about ten percent is really new. An example is "Blessing and Sending for Mission." There have been some significant revisions of other rites, but most of what was in the previous volume, *LBW-OS,* was carried forward.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon asked about resources in Spanish or other languages. Pr. Seltz responded that authorized ministry rites will need to be translated into Spanish fairly quickly. Currently, the occasional services have been available in English and Spanish. The question of providing for those needs in other languages still needs to be considered.

Pr. Loy moved the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger asked if this will conclude the occasional services or if a third volume planned. The response indicated that there will be two volumes.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.25 **To commend *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly* to synods and congregations for use as an enriching addition to the worship patterns of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;**

To express gratitude for the conscientious efforts of the reviewers and the insights and observations by the many people who helped to shape and refine the content of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly;* and

To authorize the following services within *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly* as the appropriate forms to be used in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, effective June 1, 2009: Ordination; Consecration of Deaconesses and Diaconal Ministers; Commissioning of Associates in Ministry; Installation of a Pastor; Installation of a Deaconess or Diaconal Minister; Installation of an Associate in Ministry; Invitation to Extended Service; and Installation of a Bishop.

REVISION TO PERSONNEL POLICIES

(Agenda III.G.7)

Background:

In accordance with ELCA continuing resolution 15.11.D05., the Human Resources section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop has recommended changes to two of the personnel policies of the churchwide organization:

a. Policy 5.12, "Consideration of Board, Program Committee and Advisory Committee Members as Candidates," clarifies the policy. The change reflects past and current practice rather than a change in practice; and
b. Policy 10.7, "Accident Insurance," eliminates the first paragraph of the policy for the following reasons:
    1. A policy is not needed if this church decides to continue some form of this benefit;
    2. The benefit as described is not accurate;
    3. The benefit as described is very unusual for an organization of the churchwide organization's size and type;
    4. The ELCA risk manager has ascertained that this benefit is costly and has not been used for at least five years; and
    5. Employees are covered by other benefits, including worker's compensation and Board of Pensions and ELCA death benefits.

The revisions have been reviewed by ELCA legal counsel. In addition, the executive for human resources has consulted with the Cabinet of Executives and the Administrative Team regarding the elimination of the business accident paragraph of policy 10.7.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the Program and Services Committee, introduced the proposed action.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.26 **To approve the revisions to the following ELCA Churchwide Personnel Policies:**

1. **5.12 *"Consideration of Church Council, Board, Program Committee, and Advisory Committee Members as Candidates"***
   Any Church Council member or any board of trustees member, program committee member, or advisory committee member who is to be interviewed for a position within that unit or section of the churchwide organization must relinquish his or her council, board, or committee membership in order to be considered as a candidate.
2. **10.7 *"Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance"***
   ~~Business travel accident insurance is provided for all employees at this church's expense, and covers accidents involving death or dismemberment while traveling in the interest of this church. The principal sum of this coverage is five times the current annual salary of the respective employee (minimum of $100,000, maximum of $400,000).~~

   An optional Accidental Death and Dismemberment plan is available for employees and their eligible family members, which covers accidents which happen during working and non-working hours and days. Detailed information on this voluntary plan is available in Human Resources.

REPORT OF THE BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(Agenda II.E.1)

BOARD ORIENTATION: PRIMER ON ECUMENICAL RELATIONS
(Agenda VI.D)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, to orient the Church Council on the work of his section.

PREVIEW OF THE 2009–2011 BIENNIUM
(Agenda VI.D)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. Gary L. Wipperman, chair of the Board Development Committee, to report.

Mr. Wipperman reported that the committee is working on a primer schedule and a Bible study schedule for the 2009–2011 biennium. The committee is beginning retreat planning and planning for the orientation of new members.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke presented a baby gift from the council to the Rev. Jonathan W. Linman.

The Rev. John C. Richter shared a resource created for employee orientation, "Who are the Lutherans and Why Did We Start So Many Social Ministry Organizations?" He reported that a DVD is in process.

The Rev. Leonard H. Bolick announced that the Rev. Rachel L. Connolly has been recognized for excellence in parish ministry by Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary David D. Swartling made a number of routine announcements. He also announced that Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer of the ELCA Board of Pensions, was out of the hospital but unable to attend the rest of the Church Council meeting.

RECESS

Following prayer, the Church Council recessed at 11:53 A.M.

Sunday, March 29, 2009
Plenary Session VII

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reconvened the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council at 1:04 P.M.

UPDATE ON THE BOOK OF FAITH INITIATIVE
(Agenda VI.F)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Diane Jacobson, professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary and director of the Book of Faith initiative, to provide an update. Ms. Jacobson reported both good signs and challenges with the initiative. Book of Faith Initiative resolutions have been passed by 48 synods. There is increased participation in the Book of Faith social networking site. The primary strategy for the initiative is to act locally. Key to that strategy is having Book of Faith advocates in each synod. She shared a number of stories about local Book of Faith activities.

Ms. Jacobson reported a number of challenges. Congregations and synods are doing things but not signing up on the Book of Faith Web site, so it is a challenge to know what is going on. Adoption of the Book of Faith initiative is very uneven across this church. The level of excitement depends on the synodical bishop, the Book of Faith advocate, and congregation councils. She asked council members to find out what is going on in their synods and encourage participation.

Ms. Jacobson commented that some people know a lot and care deeply about Scripture; others are very resistant and reluctant or have been shamed about Scripture. It is exceedingly difficult to engage new people in Scripture study in congregations, something that is crucial for the life and mission of this church. Part of the challenge is not just how to study the Bible well, but how to invite people in and to make the study of Scripture accessible and inviting.

She added that this initiative is not just about engaging the Bible but also about the networking strategy being used. The Book of Faith initiative is not a program. Getting past the idea of a program to a shared vision is challenging. Tremendous partnerships have been developed with lifelong learning, worship, mission development, colleges, and seminaries. Many people who have been lifelong learners of Scripture have studied for personal fulfillment. Now they are being challenged to give this back to their congregations and are finding new ways to be leaders in the church.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)
(Agenda II.E.6)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair, to continue the report of the Program and Services Committee..

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE CONSIDERATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION ON MINISTRY POLICIES
(Agenda III.G.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Parts 1--2)

Background:

The Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies was requested by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, which asked that the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality "address and make recommendations on changes to any policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church" [CA07.06.27]. The document was released by the task force in February 2009 along with the proposed social statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," which was requested by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly.

The report was received by the Church Council and will be received by the Churchwide Assembly as information. The recommendation was subject to amendment by the Church Council before being transmitted to the Churchwide Assembly for consideration. Members of the Church Council had been invited to submit proposed amendments to the recommendation to the chair of the Program and Services Committee by March 3, 2009 at 8:00 A.M.

Church Council Discussion:

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director, Church in Society, reported that the task force is recommending a process through which this church can decide if it wants to make a change in policy. If it does desire change, the task force proposes one way in which it could be accomplished.

The Rev. Peter Strommen, chair of the task force, commented on the difficulty of receiving the assignment from the Churchwide Assembly in 2007. He commented that members of the task force do not view themselves as, in any way, experts on this topic. They are, however, aware of the differences in this church and the strength with which varying viewpoints are held. Amidst a breakdown of consensus, the task force thought it helpful to pose a series of questions to this church, and if all three were to be answered in the affirmative, to provide one possible way to move forward, respecting and living with a lack of consensus.

The Rev. Kaari M. Reierson, associate director for studies, Church in Society, presented an overview of the first three resolutions:

"When asked if they would decide in favor of what their personal convictions dictated, members of the task force answered definitively: 'No, we will do what we believe is best for this church.' Doing this required recognizing *in others* a conscience bound in a particular way to scriptural interpretation and confessional tradition and being willing to bear the burden of those others. The recommendation a strong majority of the task force ultimately made tries to take into account the whole ELCA.

"This recommendation is made in a spirit of humility, with an appreciation of the depth and breadth of the disagreement, the profundity of the passions, and an awareness of the highly charged environment in this church, in the Lutheran World Federation, and in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.

"Why recommend a process of four resolutions? The recommendation proposes that the Churchwide Assembly, on behalf of the ELCA, engage in a process of considering *principle* before moving on to the *practice: whether* this will happen before *how*. Executing this process seeks to gain as much clarity as possible: does the church intend to roster people in same-gender relationships and to do what is necessary, or is the church not prepared to take this step? Recommending a process does not presume that the church is willing to do this; it calls the assembly to discernment.

"The resolution from the 2007 Churchwide Assembly did not indicate a particular direction for the task force and, clearly, different parts of the church think the task force should respond differently to this question. By declaring first on the principle, the assembly can send a clearer message than by merely voting on a proposal. Should the assembly vote only on a proposal and the proposal failed, we would be left to wonder if it failed because the entire question was rejected or did it fail because it was the wrong proposal.

"The order in which the resolutions appear reflects the logic of the task force discussion. 1) What is the necessary condition, as the task force sees it, for rostering people in same-gender relationships? 2) Is the church going to agree to do this? 3) What is necessary for the ELCA to agree to about *how* to do this?"

The first resolution: Should the ELCA commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations and synods that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships?

"For the sake of trust of the office of public ministry, for the health and safety of all in the ELCA, all rostered leaders need to be held accountable for their sexual behavior. The recommendation maintains that such accountability requires recognition and support of the lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships of rostered leaders. This resolution is first because the task force concluded that if the ELCA were not willing to allow some means for people to be held accountable to a standard of sexual behavior that involved monogamy, lifelong commitment, and public awareness, it could not roster people in same-gender relationships. The task force does not see sufficient consensus to recommend a rite or order for use by the whole church, and believes the means of doing this should be left up to local congregations and synods, hence the use of the term 'ways'."

The second resolution: Should this church commit itself to finding a way for people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church?

"Of particular note is that, by using the singular 'way,' the task force is suggesting that the ELCA have a common standard and process with regard to rostering of people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. The task force was not in favor of changing the process by which people are rostered or of creating a different class or status of rostering."

The third resolution: Is there need for a decision to be taken in the spirit of bearing one another's burdens, serving the neighbor, and respecting the bound conscience of those with whom we disagree?

"The task force considered whether to put this resolution third or first. Ultimately it appears after the first two [questions about principle] because the task force recommended that if one resolution were to be turned down, the next would not be brought forth. The manner in which this church would roster people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships becomes a moot point if this church agrees that it is not going to do so."

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, reviewed the content and intent of the fourth resolution as a specific way to accomplish what would have been endorsed in principle through resolutions one, two, and three. He invited the council's reflection and raised a question of clarity:

"The whereas clauses cite the present ELCA policies and procedures for candidacy and for call, because the resolution intends to fit its recommendation into those policies. The whereas clauses note the recognition of gifts for rostered ministry among gay and lesbian people in partnered relationships and note two broad responses to those gifts in this church. They highlight the necessity of public accountability for rostered leaders.

"In the first resolved clause, the principle of commitment to respect the bound consciences of those with whom we disagree in this matter would be fleshed out.

"The second and third resolved clauses assert this church's intent, because of bound consciences, to incorporate *structured flexibility* into its policies and procedures to allow the *possibility* of rostered service by persons in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships. What is *structured flexibility*? It is a shorthand phrase intended to describe the way the ELCA already does candidacy and call: with structure (churchwide policies and systems) and flexibility (application of those policies by the people and bodies that are charged with discernment).

"In this case, structured flexibility would mean to eliminate the uniform prohibition against rostering people in same-gender relationships. Public accountability in such relationships would then be one of the factors that would be taken into consideration by those who presently have decision-making responsibility in candidacy and call.

"Note again that the point of this resolved clause is to incorporate structured flexibility into this church's present policies and procedures, eliminating the uniform prohibition but not changing the system's assignment of authority and responsibility.

"The last resolved clause, if adopted, would declare this church's intent to continue to trust the policies and people who are presently entrusted with responsibility and authority for discernment about candidacy and call. Congregations determine who shall be called as their rostered leaders. Synod and Churchwide Assemblies and Synod and Churchwide Councils have authority to extend calls in specific constitutionally defined instances. Synodical candidacy committees determine who shall be entranced, endorsed, and approved for call. Bishops have oversight responsibilities including attesting of calls; presiding at ordinations, consecrations, and commissionings; considering requests for reinstatement; and guiding the discipline process. The resolution does not intend any change in those responsibilities.

"Since the release of this report and recommendation, some people have read the resolution as leading to results the task force did not intend. For example, some have read it as giving veto power to individuals or groups, or as allowing a synod to establish for itself policies different from those established for this whole church, or as creating, *de facto*, two rosters. Rather, the intent of the task force is that there be structured flexibility, a uniform churchwide policy that leaves application of the policy to those authorized for specific decisions. There would need to be elements added to the system to protect the bound conscience so that individuals would not be forced to act contrary to their faith convictions within their arenas of responsibility.

"Some are saying that this resolution would establish a policy of 'local option.' That would be true only if one thinks that the ELCA already has a 'local option' candidacy and call policy. I think we do not and would not under this resolution, because we operate and would operate under consistent churchwide policies.

"Given the intent of the task force, is the language clear enough that the assembly and this church will understand the resolution's intent and impact? The question about clarity seems to focus on the second and seventh resolved clauses.

"The fourth resolved clause calls for the development of *means* by which synods and congregations *who choose to do so* could hold rostered people or people seeking to be rostered *publicly accountable* in their same-gender relationships. Resolution four does not prescribe specifics, but some means of public accountability is required by the resolution.

"At present, our candidacy and mobility forms ask all candidates to indicate whether they are single or married. If this resolution were adopted, it might be decided that the forms should have an additional question: 'If you are or intend to be in a same-gender relationship, indicate how you are, or would be, publicly accountable for that relationship.' An acceptable answer might be, 'My partner and I have been granted domestic partnership status in the state where we live.' Or, 'My partner and I, on March 6, 2004, declared our lifelong commitment to each other before the people of our congregation and were surrounded by their prayers. We have been faithful to each other.' Or, a gay or lesbian candidate might say, 'I am now single, but I am dating. We both hope that this relationship will become a lifelong commitment. If so, we have agreed that we will seek the highest form of legal recognition available to us.'

"The fifth resolved clause directs the development of language for amendments to Church Council policy documents, 'Vision and Expectations,' 'Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,' and the 'Candidacy Manual,' to accomplish the intent of the resolution.

"The sixth resolved clause calls for development of any needed additional policies for guidance."

Pr. Loy then outlined the process for Church Council discussion: a one-half hour Committee of the Whole in small groups, closed and off the record, followed by one-half hour Committee of the Whole together in open session. In response to questions, Secretary David D. Swartling indicated that the council would take action following the Committee of the Whole in plenary. He stated that the resolutions are amendable, but the report, which is the response to the request of the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, is not. Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson added that there would be no action to receive the report.

Pr. Loy commented that the task force has recommended that each resolution be acted upon separately in a specific order. While the Churchwide Assembly is not bound by that request, the Church Council will follow the task force's request for separate consideration.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling to move the Committee of the Whole action. Vice President Peña called for a second and then opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he asked the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly to lead the council in prayer. He then called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.27 RESOLVED, that the Church Council go into the committee of the whole for one hour, the first half hour of which will be small-group discussions in closed and off-the-record session, consisting of council members, advisory members, youth members, and liaison bishops, and the second half hour of which will be in open session.

Following the small group discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for questions, comments, and concerns raised in the small groups.

At the request of the Rev. Norene A. Smith, Ms. Arielle Mastellar commented that in her synod several individuals chose not to run for positions in the synodical Lutheran Youth Organization because they are gay or lesbian and are scared about what is happening in this church. They are afraid to respond to their call to be leaders of this church and scared about being looked down upon because of their sexuality.

The Rev. John C. Richter expressed concern that candidacy committees could be politicized.

Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr. asked if it would be possible to have a primer on the candidacy and call processes.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson noted that the document does not name that the bishop attests to a letter of call. It is the congregation that extends a call.

Ms. Norma J. Hirsch expressed concern that there is not enough clarity regarding local option.

The Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod, questioned not only why bishops were named but particularly why synods were named. A synod, *per se*, is not one of the parties that plays a role in candidacy and rostering. Synod Councils are simply the source of call for a number of people who do not serve in parish settings, as is the churchwide Church Council.

The Rev. Rachel L. Connelly offered similar concerns about clarity and wondered how the process would work with the large number of voting members at the Churchwide Assembly.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger expressed his struggle with understanding the phrase "bound conscience." As used in this document, he said, it is not well-defined or particularly helpful and appears only to affect the person who loses the argument as being conscience-bound to support the person who won.

The Rev. David E. Jensen commented that bound conscience seems to be the vehicle or the bridge across which this church can escape making difficult decisions about the nature of human sexuality. When it comes to the question of rostering, he expressed a need for a fundamental statement about the nature of human sexuality.

Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus found the "bound conscience" language to be one of the most important things about the statement. She understood it to be about how this church lives together rather than who wins or loses. While acknowledging it will take some education of assembly voting members, she found it a very helpful concept.

Ms. Judith Anne Bunker hoped for a document or some other way to start to help voting members understand this language now rather than needing instruction during the debate on the Churchwide Assembly floor.

The Rev. Jonathan W. Linman asked if "bound conscience" referred to an individual's conscience or a communal conscience related to this church's interdependent ecclesiology.

Ms. Phyllis L. Wallace agreed on the need for education in advance of the assembly, especially for lay voting members, done in the simplest way possible.

The Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, president of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, asked if the kind of structured flexibility being proposed in these recommendations differs from the kind of considerable flexibility in rostering matters already present.

RECESS

The Church Council recessed at 2:45 P.M.

Sunday, March 29, 2009
Plenary Session VIII

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reconvened the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council at 3:19 P.M.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)
(Agenda II.E.6)

RECOMMENDATION ON MINISTRY POLICIES
(Agenda III.G.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Parts 1--2 and Exhibit I, Part 1)

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the Program and Services Committee, introduced the proposed action on the first resolution on the recommendation on ministry policies.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr. moved to amend the first resolution by striking the words "and synods". Vice President Peña called for a second, then opened the floor for discussion.

Moved;
Seconded: *To amend the first resolved clause as follows:*

RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations ~~and synods~~ that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long monogamous same-gender relationships.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson suggested that if the resolution intended to refer to calling bodies that would hold people accountable, it might be more helpful to add "churchwide."

The Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod, pointed out that the first resolved clause does not speak of rostering but of allowing congregations to find ways to recognize publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships. This resolution is consistent with the 2005 action on blessing, he said. It simply referred to the 1993 counsel of the Conference of Bishops, which did not seek to establish an official rite in the life of this church but left the matter of blessing to congregations and pastors.

Those representing the work of the task force found the amendment appropriate.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried: ***To amend the first resolved clause so that it reads as follows:***

RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations ~~and synods~~ that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long monogamous same-gender relationships.

Vice President Peña called for discussion on the action as amended.

The Rev. Norene A. Smith asked if the main way to accomplish the task force's intent, that each resolution be considered only if the previous resolution were passed, would be if the assembly were to pass a special rule requiring that procedure.

Secretary David D. Swartling responded that, absent a special rule, neither the task force nor the Church Council can dictate to the Churchwide Assembly the manner in which the recommendations would be considered. If there were

a special rule that established an order that followed the task force intention, any change would require a two-thirds vote. If the first resolved clause were to be defeated, someone could move a subsequent resolved clause unless there a special rule to the contrary had been voted.

Pr. Smith asked if the information just shared could be included in the summary of Church Council actions so that members of this church understand that the council is acting to transmit the recommendations but not any specific rule that would accomplish the task force's intent.

Secretary Swartling responded that such information could be taken into account in the way the council action is transmitted and in orientation at the Churchwide Assembly. He expressed concern about appearing neutral on the process question, but agreed on the importance of letting people know the Churchwide Assembly is not required to follow the task force request that the recommendations be taken up in a certain order.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called on Pr. Hunsinger to lead the council in prayer. Vice President Peña then called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.28 ***To transmit the following action to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly*:**

1. **RESOLVED, 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.**

Pr. Loy introduced the proposed action on the second resolution.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called on Pr. Sorenson to lead the council in prayer. Vice President Peña then called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.29 ***To transmit the following action to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly*:**

2. **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.**

Pr. Loy introduced the proposed action on the third resolution.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for studies in the Church in Society unit, acknowledged the need for more clarification on the language of "bound conscience" and offered the following: "Martin Luther wrote that 'conscience is not the power to do works but to judge them.' The proper work of conscience, as Paul says in Romans 2, is to accuse or excuse, to make guilty or guiltless, uncertain or certain. Its purpose is not to do, but to pass judgment on what has been done and what should be done and this judgment makes us stand accused or saved in God's sight. Luther suggests that conscience is the human capacity to pass judgment on moral actions. This implies that conscience is integral to personal identity. Although the most famous place where Luther speaks about conscience is at the trial for heresy where he said: 'My conscience is captive [bound] to the words of God,' he did not use the term only about matters of salvation. He also used the term in regard to works or moral judgments.

"Individuals look to sources outside themselves—Luther goes to scripture and reason—as that which gives guidance for the exercise of conscience. The task force understands the issue of these resolutions to be moral and suggests that it is in matters of the magnitude of conscientious objection where the idea of bound conscience comes into play. It is not simply a matter of someone's opinion, but a matter of conscience-bound position, well-thought-out sets of interpretations, bound to Scripture and reason, that have been refined and developed over the course of time.

"While conscience is an individual capacity, it is also something that depends on and is exercised in a community, as illustrated by Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8. The presence of bound consciences in this community of faith allows for and honors a defined diversity of practice as a way of loving the neighbor. The idea of bound conscience is very much connected to the love of neighbor and the respect for one another's understanding."

The Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod, described two levels at work in the discussion of bound conscience: one deeply academic and theological, the other more elemental. He described the second as an understanding of conscience as a kind of trump card that says no one can make me do anything I feel strongly I should not do. Bp Rogness understands this resolution to address respect for the conscience of the other, particularly that with whom one disagrees.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson remarked that Paul, in 1 Corinthians 10, is quite clear about observing the conscience, specifically not of oneself , but of the neighbor.

The Rev. Callon W. Holloway Jr., bishop of the Southern Ohio Synod, commented that one can be conscience-bound and still be wrong. One does not have to accept a decision made as the result of being wrong.

The Rev. Khader N. El-Yateem, chair of the Multicultural Ministries program unit, commented that it is not clear to someone who comes from a different culture and environment how to judge a conscience-bound decision unless that person is convinced by Scripture.

The Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, president of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, interpreted this resolution to say that this church is not talking about matters of *status confessionis,* matters where those who come to a different conclusion have placed themselves outside the Christian faith. Rather, this is a deeply troublesome, divisive ethical and moral issue about which Christians can come to different conclusions while remaining within the circle of those who are faithful Christians.

The Rev. Kaari M. Reierson, associate director for studies in the Church in Society unit, replied that the social statement section on same-gender relationships describes four positions that the task forces thinks it is possible and reasonable for a person to hold, convinced by Scripture and plain reason. There are other positions people have advocated that are not included in this range. Were the social statement to pass, this church would be binding itself to accept some diversity of practice.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit, added that members of the task force are absolutely convinced that, if change is the decision of this church, it must be done with a commitment to respect the bound conscience of all and to bear one another's burdens. Bearing the burdens of others does not come easily or naturally. It is not the intention of the task force that some be viewed as right and others not.

The Rev. Jonathan W. Linman asked if one of the implications of bearing one another's burdens is agreement not to split this church over the matter.

The Rev. Peter Strommen replied that the task force saw no theological reason to split this church. However, what people choose to do is another issue. The question, as he saw it, was whether the members of this church can live together with differences on something that is not at the theological center of this church. He added that, in 2001, there seemed to be a fundamental disrespect for the idea that anyone could, with integrity, come to a position different from the speaker's. The current level of civility has been one of the remarkable changes that have occurred during the discussion of these matters. There has been an integrity to the process, an earnest desire to do God's will, and a lack of clarity that any one position is necessarily the right one.

The Rev. Norene A. Smith commented that she sees the Gospel at stake in the exclusion of the neighbor, but is willing, for the sake of diversity of practice in this church, to hold that view in tension with differing opinions.

Mr. John S. Munday spoke in favor of resolution three on the basis of its importance to the task force and the council's responsibility to transmit the work of the task force to the Churchwide Assembly.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called on Ms. Karin L. Graddy to lead the council in prayer. He then called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.30 ***To transmit the following action to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly*:**

3. **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.**

Pr. Loy introduced the proposed action on resolution four. Secretary David D. Swartling proposed considering the action according to *Robert's Rules of Order*; which meant beginning with the resolved clauses, followed by the whereas clauses.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion.

The Rev. Martin D. Wells, bishop of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, reflected on the discussion of the third resolution and expressed his fear that people may be asked to vote on something they do not understand. He urged Church Council members, as an act of leadership, to work on their tightest three-minute speech addressing the questions before the assembly.

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, commented on the Committee of the Whole discussion. He reminded the council that at every point in dealing with candidacy and call, whether general policy or specific decisions about people and places, the primary question is what will serve the Gospel of Christ. Although it is clear that uniform policies across this church are important, he acknowledged that there would likely be different practices. While it is impossible to know exactly how the process would be worked out, there certainly would be unanticipated problems, he said.

In response to a question about the difference between current practice and practice under structured flexibility, Pr. Olson gave two hypothetical situations. If a congregation votes to extend a call to a partnered gay or lesbian person who already is rostered, and the bishop does not support the call, would there need to be a provision by which another bishop attests that letter of call? Would the policy of transferring candidacy from one candidacy committee to another need to be modified to deal with candidates and committees of different minds on this issue? Such matters would need to be thought through carefully.

Mr. Mark S. Helmke asked about the wording in the first paragraph, "members of the ELCA commit themselves," noting different language in the first three resolutions. Pr. Olson responded that the language of the fourth resolution should parallel the first two.

Secretary Swartling moved to amend the first clause in resolution four. Vice President Peña called for a second and opened the floor for discussion on the amendment.

Moved;
Seconded: *To amend the first resolved clause in resolution four to read as follows:*

RESOLVED, that ~~the members of~~ 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. . . ."

There being no discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried: ***To amend the first resolved clause in resolution four to read as follows:***

RESOLVED, that ~~the members of~~ 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. . . ."

The staff and the chair of the task force proposed some changes in the language of the second resolved clause, removing the list of those involved in candidacy and rostering process and changing "incorporate structured flexibility" to "allow structured flexibility."

Secretary Swartling moved to amend by substitution the second resolved clause in resolution four.

Moved;
Seconded: *To substitute the following for the second resolved clause:*

RESOLVED, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declares its intent to ~~incorporate~~ allow 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 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;

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion on the amendment to substitute.

The Rev. David P. Anderson expressed concern about structured flexibility in the candidacy process, especially with multi-synodical candidacy committees. He would prefer structured flexibility only regarding extending or not extending a call, thus not allowing candidacy committees the option of excluding candidates who are or contemplate living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship.

The Rev. Rachel L. Connelly felt candidacy needed to be in the clause because candidacy committees, rather than congregations, talk to candidates about "Vision and Expectations."

Pr. Olson responded that the task force clearly wanted to look at both candidacy and the call process. If the current prohibition is eliminated, it would apply in both instances. Public accountability would be a question for candidacy committees. He acknowledged that one of the complexities in regard to respecting the bound conscience would occur if the majority of a particular candidacy committee might not be comfortable with this change. If the committee cannot make its decision on the basis of policy, it will make it on the basis of what will serve the Gospel.

Mr. Mark W. Myers felt the term "structured flexibility" might not be clear, especially to the lay members of the assembly and asked that it be defined in any FAQ document. Pr. Olson concurred, saying it is not a technical term but is meant to be descriptive.

The Rev. Jonathan W. Linman asked if using "rostered service" rather than "rostered leaders" or "rostered leadership" was intentional, saying that in his experience "rostered leadership" is the more common usage. Pr. Olson responded that these are not technical terms and that "rostered service" was not used to say something different from what would be meant by the other terms. He acknowledged that although some people will read these words with suspicion, there is no intention to deceive. He added that eliminating all potential for confusion would result in a very long document.

The Rev. John C. Richter favored the amendment, saying that the removal of the names will encourage people to think through what structured flexibility means.

Vice President Peña asked if the council would agree, by consensus, to lay the second resolved clause on the table and discuss other paragraphs. The council agreed.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger stated that his study over the past eight years has led him to the conclusion that the changes inherent in these resolutions have no support in Scripture or the Confessions. He respects that others have come to different conclusions and are acting in what they believe to be in the best interest of Christ and his Church. He does not question anyone else's motives, but has, with great sadness, come to believe firmly that these resolutions are not in the best interest of Christ and his Church. Therefore, he has voted and will continue to vote against them.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson wondered whether the fourth clause should include the churchwide organization along with congregations and synods. Presiding Bishop Hanson responded that there is a difference between the churchwide organization and the churchwide expression. The Church Council extends calls to service in the churchwide organization but also to other locations. All of those people are rostered in a synod.

The Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod, noted it is in the rostering process that public accountability needs to be examined and that the churchwide organization also issues calls. He suggested eliminating congregations and synods in the language of the fourth clause; saying simply "a process by which calling bodies that choose to do so . . . ."

Presiding Bishop Hanson pointed out a difference between the calling body and the body that is given responsibility to hold that person accountable. The Church Council is the calling body, but the person who is called is held accountable to standards by the synod in which the person is rostered. He asked the general counsel for comment.

Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel, stated that the only entities that can issue calls are the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Synod Assemblies, Synod Councils, and congregations.

Mr. William R. Lloyd Jr., moved to amend the fourth clause.

Moved;
Seconded: *To amend the fourth resolved clause, so that it reads as follows:*

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) are directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council is directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, ~~and~~ synods, and the churchwide organization ~~that choose to do so~~ 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

Vice President Peña called opened the floor for discussion on the amendment.

The Rev. Susan Langhauser expressed concern that this amendment would remove the option of choosing to hold someone accountable through a directed process, substantially changing the tenor of the clause. If the point of this resolved clause is to have the appropriate people create a process by which people under call can be held accountable, it is not important where the call comes from.

Pr. Olson responded that "choose to do so" could be read as saying calling bodies have a choice about holding people publicly accountable. The thrust of the resolved clause is to create a process that could be used by those people who ought to be using it. The "choose to do so" is actually redundant and could be misleading. If the Churchwide Assembly were to adopt this action, there would be changes in "Vision and Expectations," and various parties would be responsible for holding people accountable. They could not choose to do otherwise.

Secretary Swartling added that the word "could" is not "shall". "Could" is a permission-granting word. That concern is addressed by the language as amended.

There being no further discussion on the amendment, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried: *To amend the fourth resolved clause, so that it reads as follows:*

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) are directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council is directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, ~~and~~ synods, and the churchwide organization ~~that choose to do so~~ 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 . . . .

Vice President Peña called the council back to the discussion of the motion to amend the second resolved clause of resolution four.

Pr. Linman reported that the expression "rostered service" is present in the governing documents of this church, so he was satisfied with using the phrase.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried: *To substitute the following for the second resolved clause:*

RESOLVED, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declares its intent to ~~incorporate~~ allow 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 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 . . . .

Vice President Peña called for any further discussion on resolution four.

Secretary Swartling asked for consensus to make editorial changes. The council agreed.

There being no further discussion on the resolved clauses of resolution four, Vice President Peña called for any discussion on the whereas clauses.

Pr. Langhauser asked about the capital "C" in "Church of Christ" in the sixth whereas clause. Secretary Swartling responded that the documents of this church make a clear distinction between the "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church" which is always capitalized and the "this church" which is only one small portion of the one, holy, and apostolic Church.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña asked Ms. Judith Anne Bunker to lead the council in prayer. He then called for the vote on resolution four, as amended.

VOTED:

CC09.03.31 ***To transmit the following actions to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly*:**

4. 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 its *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions*; 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 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 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.

Mr. Mark W. Myers moved to express thanks and commendation to the members of the task force.

Moved;
Seconded: To express to the members of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality the gratitude of the Church Council for their dedicated and conscientious service to this church and to commend them for modeling what it means to journey together faithfully as they engaged in a remarkable and challenging journey of claiming one Lord, one faith, and one Baptism while differing, sometimes passionately, with one another.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:
CC09.03.32 **To express to the members of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality the gratitude of the Church Council for their dedicated and conscientious service to this church and to commend them for modeling what it means to journey together faithfully as they engaged in a remarkable and challenging journey of claiming one Lord, one faith, and one Baptism while differing, sometimes passionately, with one another.**

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Ms. Norma J. Hirsch reflected on Dwelling in the Word.

PROCESS OBSERVATION

(Agenda V.B)

Mr. Baron Blanchard and Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus shared their responses to the process observation questions. A compilation of council member responses is available on the NetCommunity Church Council Web site.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary David D. Swartling reported that the morning offering for Vision for Mission was $3,246 and made other routine announcements.

HYMN AND PRAYER

The Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, president, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, led the council in a closing hymn and prayer.

RECESS

The eighth plenary session of the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 5:17 P.M.

Monday, March 30, 2009
Plenary Session IX

The March 2009 meeting of the Church Council reconvened at 8:38 A.M. on Monday, March 30, 2009. Vice President Carlos E. Peña made a number of announcements. He thanked Secretary David D. and Barbara Swartling for hosting a dinner for the Church Council class of 2009.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)
(Agenda II.E.6)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair, to continue the report of the Program and Services Committee.

LUTHERAN MALARIA INITIATIVE
(Agenda III.G.4)

Background:

A unique opportunity for engagement by Lutheran partners to address "diseases of poverty," including malaria, came to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) in 2007, when LWR staff members were approached by the United Nations Foundation (UNF). UNF encouraged LWR to explore the possibility of embarking on a unique partnership to mobilize the "Lutheran constituency" in this country against malaria. The specific opportunity involved a possible multimillion-dollar grant from the United Nations Foundation, which had received funds to combat malaria from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. These funds could assist LWR to develop its capacity to mobilize Lutherans to combat malaria. The campaign would include both significant educational and major fundraising components.

When approached by UNF, Lutheran World Relief staff understood that the goal of mobilizing U.S. Lutherans and engaging in international program work on malaria would require the full engagement of both the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS). Since July 2007, LWR and ELCA churchwide staff from a number of units, including the Office of the Presiding Bishop, Church in Society, Global Mission, Communication Services, and Development Services, have engaged in intensive conversation about what such a proposal might look like and whether to participate. At various stages, but with increasing intentionality, these conversations included The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. LCMS leadership has affirmed that LCMS is a full partner in Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI), with LWR and the ELCA, and is committed to the joint partnership goals of education, advocacy, and raising funds to contain malaria. The LCMS meets in convention in 2010.

In the summer of 2007, an initial feasibility study was conducted by Community Counseling Services (CCS) on behalf of LWR. CCS recommended that a campaign goal of $75 million over five years is realistic. An initial suggested breakdown of this goal was: LWR, $30 million; ELCA, $25 million; and LCMS, $20 million. Money raised in this campaign would be channeled through:

- Church or church-related entities, specifically: (1) LWR, as it builds its capacity to provide malaria-related services in Africa (particularly in West and East Africa); (2) the ELCA, as it engages companion churches in all regions of Africa and within the wider context of the Lutheran World Federation; and (3) LCMS, as it develops projects in eight African countries; and
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector, and affected communities.

For the ELCA, the core LMI case for support is to articulate LMI as a priority among priorities of the ELCA. From the beginning, the case must integrate the opportunity in a way that allows this church's LMI efforts to flow out of the World Hunger Appeal and "Stand with Africa" campaign and integrate with other strategic priorities, including the HIV and AIDS strategy, which was mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.

The ELCA will engage companion churches in other countries, seeking their leadership and guidance as anti-malaria activities are developed in those countries and as the malaria initiative is interpreted in the United States. This will be

done within the context of the ELCA's relationships within the Lutheran World Federation and its bilateral relationships with companion churches. Developing synergy with existing health-related and HIV and AIDS efforts will be a high priority. At this time, the ELCA has given a minimum commitment to raise $20 million for malaria and $10 million to support the ELCA's HIV and AIDS strategy.

All three potential LMI partners agreed that, given their history and mission commitments, any common inter-Lutheran campaign on malaria would need to reflect the understanding that malaria is a disease of and is intensified by poverty. They agreed that Lutheran engagement in malaria projects would be deficient if it were based on simplistic approaches to malaria eradication (e.g., handing out nets). LMI partners also agreed that a malaria response, to be effective in the field, would need to be carried out within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development. Education about malaria in this country similarly would need to avoid simplistic or purely medical approaches; it would need to show clearly and convincingly the connections between poverty and malaria.

The ELCA, therefore, considered the wisdom of engaging in a possible malaria initiative at the same time it lives out its commitment to intensify its HIV and AIDS response and develops a comprehensive churchwide HIV and AIDS strategy, as mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly. ELCA staff emphasized from the beginning of the conversations with LWR, the LCMS, and the United Nations Foundation that engagement in malaria work would not come at the expense of its HIV and AIDS commitment. Rather, the two would need to be held together strategically, both in interpretation and in work with companions.

The ELCA Church Council has taken two actions related to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. In November 2007 the Church Council voted [CC07.11.80]:

> To authorize staff of Development Services, Global Mission, and Church in Society, under the coordination of the Office of the Presiding Bishop to develop, in partnership with Lutheran World Relief, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and the United Nations Foundation, a proposal for a possible Lutheran Malaria Initiative, which would support the work of companion churches in the Lutheran World Federation and other international partners in ministry as well as the Global Fund to Combat AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; and
>
> To develop plans for integrating and coordinating such an effort with the ELCA's longstanding commitment to walk with those affected by HIV and AIDS and companion churches that are responding to this crisis, within the context of the integrated churchwide HIV and AIDS strategy that was called for by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly;
>
> To request Development Services, Global Mission, and Church in Society to bring through the Office of the Presiding Bishop a report and possible recommendations on this initiative to the April 2008 meeting of the Church Council;
>
> To authorize the Executive Committee, between meetings of the Church Council, to monitor and take appropriate action relating to the development of a possible malaria appeal and program, including the possible receipt of funding from the UN Foundation;
>
> To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop seek input from the Cabinet of Executives and that any information relating to the development of a possible malaria appeal and program be posted to the Church Council's online listserve for input to the Executive Committee prior to any decision; and
>
> To authorize staff of Development Services and Global Mission to include in the World Hunger program's "Stand with Africa" campaign pilot efforts in anti-malaria fundraising, education, and international programming in 2008-2009 as proposals for action by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on a possible churchwide appeal are developed during that period.

At its April 2008 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC08.04.12]:

> To affirm the work of the Church in Society, Communication Services, Development Services, and Global Mission units and the Office of the Presiding Bishop in developing a proposed Lutheran Malaria Initiative;
>
> To acknowledge that the proposed initiative also will include an HIV and AIDS emphasis and will be integrated with the churchwide strategy on HIV and AIDS and any churchwide appeal;
>
> To authorize receipt of funds and their utilization for the purposes of preparation for a potential Lutheran Malaria Initiative educational and fundraising campaign in accordance with the United Nations Foundation grant proposal;

To authorize continued Lutheran Malaria Initiative work until the 2009 Churchwide Assembly under the auspices of the World Hunger Appeal and Program;

To stipulate that, as specifically designated monies, United Nations Foundation grant funds for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative are not subject to the allocation between World Hunger domestic and international projects; and

To request that an update on the initiative be brought to the November 2008 meeting of the Church Council and that a report and recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly be brought to the April 2009 meeting of the Church Council.

The ELCA Church Council considered both the HIV and AIDS strategy and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative at its March 2009 meeting. Related to these actions was be approval of a fundraising campaign under the World Hunger Appeal to under gird the HIV and AIDS strategy with a minimum goal of $10 million over three years (2009–2012) and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative with a minimum goal of $20 million over five years (2009–2014).

Engagement in the Lutheran Malaria Initiative includes, but is not limited to, the following categories:

Framework:

- Strengthened relationships with the U.S. partners in LMI: Lutheran World Relief (LWR), The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), and the United Nations Foundation (UNF);
- Strengthened relationships with global partners, particularly this church's companion churches in Africa;
- Commitment to participate in LMI for up to five years, beginning in 2009;
- Clear communication among LMI partners;
- Clear reporting and supervision of LMI work within the ELCA by the Church Council on a regular basis, with a progress report to the 2011 and 2013 Churchwide Assemblies;
- Collaboration across appropriate units of the churchwide organization so that the work related to LMI provides synergy and energy for the broader mission as a church, both internationally and domestically; and
- Particular attention will be given to the proposed HIV and AIDS strategy, and its education and fundraising goals, so that these two important efforts are done as cooperatively as possible within this church.

Education and awareness:

Education emphasizing malaria as a disease of poverty would:

- Be carried out globally within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development, in close cooperation and partnership with ELCA companion churches in Africa;
- Understand this disease within the larger cycle of poverty and acknowledge the capacity of global companion churches to address this pandemic;
- Reflect a broad spectrum of approaches to combating malaria (i.e., medical, faith community, government and community organizations and structure);
- Show clearly and convincingly the connections between poverty and malaria and the relationship of this effort to the broader World Hunger Appeal and Program;
- Be coordinated within the LMI partnership whenever possible, with a goal of every aspect of this church's ministry, as well as every age group, having opportunity to engage this LMI.

Fundraising:

- Approach congregations, synods, all related ministries of the ELCA, and individuals for education and awareness-raising (following the 2009 Churchwide Assembly) and fundraising (in synods and congregations following the 2011 Churchwide Assembly);
- Work closely with the fundraising consultant for LMI, Community Counseling Service (CCS), to provide a comprehensive and clear approach to donors, congregations, synods, and others;
- Receive donations through the World Hunger Appeal, designated for LMI, while encouraging continued strong support for the World Hunger Appeal and new support for the HIV and AIDS strategy;
- Receive grant monies from UNF to enable start-up of fundraising efforts;

- Share in the LMI partners' fundraising goal of $75 million over five years (2009–2014).

Timeline:
- 2009: Approval of continued development of and involvement in LMI by ELCA Church Council and Churchwide Assembly.
- 2009–2011: Development of resources for education; planning for implementation of LMI in synods and congregations; quiet fundraising stage.
- 2010: The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod meets in convention.
- 2010–2011: Roll out of materials and educational resources through programs and organizations of the LMI partnership.
- 2011: Approval of official LMI engagement by ELCA Church Council and Churchwide Assembly.
- 2011–2014: Fundraising campaign across all LMI partners.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, the Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, Ms. Cynthia Halverson, represent the inter-unit efforts on the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI). Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl reviewed the background of LMI.

Pr. Loy moved the action. Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Mark E. Johnson expressed concern about a news story featuring a woman from Africa who opposed international aid in combating malaria, saying that outside aid served to undercut African efforts and did not help. In response, Pr. Malpica-Padilla described the cooperative efforts with the eleven churches that form the Lutheran communion in southern Africa, explaining that LMI is building on the existing assets and delivery system of the companion churches of the ELCA, LWF, and LWR.

The Rev. John C. Richter expressed his concern for clarity in communicating the dollar amounts for various campaigns. Ms. Halverson responded that work is ongoing on how to communicate the goals for the World Hunger Appeal and the HIV and AIDS Strategy, and, with our partners, what the message regarding malaria is going to be. Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl added that the LMI figures are not definite, pointing out that the proposed action would send to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the opportunity to continue development of this initiative while not embarking on the broader churchwide fundraising campaign.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC09.03.33 ***To recommend adoption of the following resolution by the voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:***

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 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;

To develop the Lutheran Malaria Initiative in ways that reinforce efforts by the World Hunger Appeal to both achieve its $25 million annual goal and 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 ELCA 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 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

REPORT OF THE BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(Agenda II.E.1)

BOARD ORIENTATION: ROLE OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL AT THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY
(Agenda VI.D)

Background:

The board development task force requested that a primer on the role of Church Council members at the Churchwide Assembly be presented by Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, executive assistant to the presiding bishop and chair of the Churchwide Assembly Planning Committee.

Church Council Information:

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is comprised of 37 members, including the four officers of this church. The 33 elected members of the Church Council serve as advisory members of the assembly, with voice but not vote, unless they are elected by their respective synods to serve as a voting member of the assembly. The four ELCA officers are voting members by virtue of the offices held.

In accord with the ELCA constitution and bylaws, the Church Council serves as the "interim legislative authority" between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. In this role, the Church Council reviews recommendations from churchwide units for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly, arranges for appropriate elections, and submits a budget proposal for Churchwide Assembly action.

At the Churchwide Assembly, members of the Church Council are present to advise voting members on Church Council actions related to these responsibilities. In addition to its advisory function, the Church Council appoints members of the Memorials Committee and the Reference and Counsel Committee. Members of the Church Council chair these committees and make up a portion of the members. Church Council members also provide leadership by facilitating the hearings, participating as members of "ad hoc" committees, serving as hosts for nominees for vice president, and leading prayer during plenary sessions. Members will be notified by the vice president of specific assignments early in the summer.

Ms. Sheie noted that the council already has delivered on most of the assembly agenda items. She encouraged council members to follow up on the suggestion that members think carefully about questions to which each might

respond and prepare their best three-minute speech in which they advise the assembly. Secretary Swartling also urged council members to reflect on the work the council has done and the ways that work will be considered by the assembly.

A provisional schedule for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly was distributed to council members for information, but not further distribution. Ms. Sheie reviewed the provisional schedule, highlighting a number of specifics, including the pre-assembly meeting of the Church Council, the unpredictable time frame of Plenary Session One, hearings, Bible studies, and a special Friday evening event. She noted the plan to intersperse actions on sexuality matters throughout the assembly. She also announced that Mr. Bill Gates Sr. had accepted the invitation to be present for the introduction of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative.

Secretary Swartling responded to questions about registration, arrival time, housing, and parking. He made note of a request for a photograph of the Church Council.

Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus raised a concern about the age of voting members and other assembly participants and suggested looking at possible provisions for child care.

Ms. Kristin Kvam asked about the role of advisory members to the Church Council in the Churchwide Assembly. Secretary Swartling responded that advisory members have voice but not vote. It is not the role of advisory members to chart the course of the discussion, but it is important to be able to speak to actions taken by the Church Council. He reported that the rule on obtaining the floor has been changed to give prior right to voting members *unless* the chair determines it is in the best interests of the assembly to call upon an advisory member, a resource member, or another individual with voice. Advisory members of the Church Council are not necessarily advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly.

Pr. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson asked who would be thinking about which Church Council members should be prepared to address specific issues. Secretary Swartling expressed concern that such responses not appear scripted; he said the matter would be addressed further at the August meeting of the council.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

The Rev. Norene A. Smith reflected on Dwelling in the Word.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus asked that Ms. Lynette M. Reitz and her family, Ms. Karin L. Graddy, and others experiencing the effects of the economy be remembered in prayer.

The Rev. Susan Langhauser announced that Ms. Suzanne G. Wise, advisory member to the council, had been taken ill and would be returning home.

Vice President Peña called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger to lead the council in prayer.

PROCESS OBSERVATION

(Agenda V.B.1)

Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus offered brief comments about the day. The visual presentation about the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) was a reminder that there are different ways of learning. She also noted that LMI impacts people in poverty and people of color and is based on focused accompaniment and learning from global partners. She felt the board orientation was helpful for full participation in the Churchwide Assembly. She commented that the full council does not always get all the materials given to committees and noted that the review of the Multicultural Ministries unit would be made available to council members as well as being posted on the Multicultural Ministries and Research and Evaluation Web pages. Mr. Baron Blanchard described being a process observer as difficult but interesting. It was difficult to pay attention to business while watching the process in light of the questions on the form. It was interesting to see how and when members of under-represented groups were invited to speak.

Ms. Arielle Mastellar spoke of seeing the connections between the questions on paper and her observation. She described her fears about sharing her process obervations.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon reported that the members of the team, even with their fears and challenges, have grown in many ways. He added that the Board Development Commmittee would discuss the future of process observation at its November meeting. He thanked Ms. Shenandoah M. Gale and Ms. Paula Cole Jones for their guidance and coaching.

Ms. Gale described the purpose of process observation as asking questions that might not otherwise be asked, illuminating practices and procedures that might inadvertently prevent the body from getting to its goal. She made note of the fact that in her work as coordinator for anti-racism education and training, she has not consulted with or been guided and directed by communities of color in a systematic, accountable way and declared her intention to change that situation.

Ms. Paula Cole Jones thanked the council for its invitation to be present. She acknowledged that process observation is very difficult, especially observing and critiquing one's own work and organization. She encouraged council members to get beyond a sense of judgement. While it is possible to do an excellent job in the dominant culture framework, she asked how the council's work would be different if it actually embodied a multicultural community. She asked a number of questions: What does it mean to lead at a time of transformation? What is the vision for the future? How do you challenge the comfort of today in a way that would allow a different framework? How do you hear the voices and conversations that are ongoing but not present in the council meeting? How do those voices guide you?

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

Secretary David D. Swartling reported that no items of new business had been submitted and reminded council members of the earlier action regarding placing matters on the council agenda.

EN BLOC APPROVAL OF CERTAIN ITEMS

(Agenda IV)

Background:

The following *en bloc* resolution includes agenda items that were considered on the last day of the Church Council meeting. Inclusion of items in the *en bloc* action reflects a judgment that they are relatively non-controversial in nature and may not require plenary discussion and a separate vote. On the first day of the council meeting, the chair provides an opportunity for members to indicate whether they wish to discuss separately any of the items listed in the *en bloc* resolution; any such item will be removed from the *en bloc* resolution and discussed at the appropriate point in the agenda. The chair does not call for a discussion or separate vote on those items that are not removed from the *en bloc* resolution by the end of the first day of plenary sessions. The items remaining in the *en bloc* resolution normally will be considered as the last item of council business.

Church Council Action:

At the request of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, Secretary David D. Swartling introduced the *en bloc* resolution. Vice President Peña called for a second and then opened the floor for discussion. There being none he called for the vote.

VOTED:
CC09.03.34 **To take action *en bloc* on the items listed below, the full texts of which are found in the body of the agenda or in the exhibit as noted:**

VOTED:
CC09.03.35 Responses to Synodical Resolutions Directed to the Church Council, p. 76;

VOTED:
CC09.03.36 Revisions to Cash Management Policy, p. 92;

VOTED:
CC09.03.37 Audit Committee Appointments, p. 94;

VOTED:
CC09.03.38 ELCA Risk Management (ELCARM) Bylaw Revisions, p. 95;
VOTED:
CC09.03.39 Authorization of Signatories, p. 96;
VOTED:
CC09.03.40 Amendments to Governing Documents, p. 97;
VOTED:
CC09.03.41 Social Ministry Organization Affiliation, p. 98;
VOTED:
CC09.03.42 Amendments to Global Mission Personnel Policies, p. 99;
VOTED:
CC09.03.43 Global Mission Cooperation with the ELCIC, p. 100; and
VOTED:
CC09.03.44 Other Nominations, Appointments, and Elections, p. 101.

1. RESPONSES TO SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS DIRECTED TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL
(Agenda IV.A.1; Agenda/MINUTES, Exhibit B, Part 1a)

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***
CC09.03.35 **To adopt *en bloc* the following responses to synodical resolutions to the Church Council:**

A. EXHORTATION FOR CHANGE IN POLICIES
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, this church asks candidacy committees to steward the gifts of leadership that God bestows on those called to prepare for rostered ministry; and

WHEREAS, this church asks candidacy committees to uphold the standards for rostered leadership in this church, such as those set forth in "Vision and Expectations"; and

WHEREAS, this church's present policies occasionally make it impossible for candidacy committees faithfully to fulfill both objectives, such that highly qualified candidates may not be approved and called, as in the situation of a wondrously gifted young woman to whom the Minneapolis Area Synod's candidacy committee wrote in its approval decision:

> We would enthusiastically recommend for Approval this outstanding candidate were it not for the conflict between her desire to be open to a committed same-gender relationship and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's "Vision and Expectations" for rostered leaders. That is the sole reason we are not at this time acting to approve this gifted candidate. Instead, and with regret, we recommend postponement of Approval for Diaconal Ministry until such time as this church (the ELCA) modifies its policies in such a way that her ministry may be received without reservation;

therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Minneapolis Area Synod exhort the Church Council of the ELCA to support the development and implementation of policies to allow the entrance, endorsement, and approval for call of all qualified candidates for rostered ministry, including those drawn to be in a committed relationship with a person of the same gender, for the sake of the mission entrusted to us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***
CC09.03.35a **To receive the resolution of the Minneapolis Area Synod requesting a change in ministry policies related to candidates for rostered ministry who are in committed, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;**

To acknowledge the action of the Church Council related to the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies as the response of this council to the synod's resolution; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

B. RESOLUTION AFFIRMING MARRIAGE

South Dakota Synod (3C)

WHEREAS, the 2008 South Dakota Synod Assembly asked the South Dakota Synod Council "to submit responses regarding sexuality to the ELCA Church Council regarding the Task Force's final draft of a proposed ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality and regarding its recommendations on whether to change ELCA policy to permit persons in same-sex sexual relationships to serve as pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA prior to the ELCA Church Council's March 2009 meeting and to make the responses available to members of the congregations of the South Dakota Synod (for example, by posting the responses to the synod Web site and by including them in the 'Synod Scene')"; and

WHEREAS, the South Dakota Synod Assembly has adopted several resolutions in recent years expressing the will of this synod on matters of sexuality including:

- 2008 - Participation in Process Toward ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality (Resolution 5);
- 2007 - Honoring the ELCA Study Process for a Social Statement on Human Sexuality (Resolution 6);
- 2005 - Amending & Opposing Church Council Recommendations (Resolution 13);
- 2005 - Resolution of Thanksgiving and Encouragement for the ELCA's Study on Human Sexuality (Resolution 4);
- 2004 - ALC Social Statement on Human Sexuality (Resolution 8);
- 2004 - Congregational Ratification of Any Measures Passed at ELCA Churchwide Assemblies Allowing the Blessing of "Same-Sex" Unions and/or Rostering Non-celibate Gay and Lesbian Persons (Resolution 7);
- 2004 - Response to ELCA Sexuality Studies (Resolution 9);
- 2003 - On Affirming Traditional Marriage Conventions and Family Structures (Resolution 10);
- 2002 - Final Ratification of Changes Regarding the Blessing of Same-Sex Unions and/or Regarding Ordination of Non-celibate Gay and Lesbian Persons to be considered by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly (Resolution 14A);
- 2001 - Resolution on Human Sexuality (Resolution 13); 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, Jesus taught that "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 separate;" (Mark 10:6–9: Jesus is quoting Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions, in Martin Luther's Large Catechism, teach regarding marriage and the Sixth Commandment: "You should carefully note, first, how highly God honors and praises this walk of life, endorsing and protecting it by his commandment. He endorsed it above in the Fourth Commandment, 'You shall honor father and mother.' But here, as I said, he has secured and protected it. For the following reasons he also wishes us to honor, maintain, and cherish it as a divine and blessed walk of life. He has established it before all others as the first of all institutions, and he created man and woman differently (as is evident) not for indecency but to be true to each other, to be fruitful, to beget children, and to nurture and bring them up to the glory of God. God has therefore blessed this walk of life most richly, above all others, and, in addition, has supplied and endowed it with everything in the world in order that this walk of life might be richly provided for. Married life is no matter for jest or idle curiosity, but it is a glorious institution and an object of God's serious concern" *(Book of Concord*, The Large Catechism, Sixth Commandment); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America currently teaches that "Marriage is a lifelong covenant of faithfulness between a man and a woman" ("Sexuality: Some Common Convictions: A Message of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," 1996); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Church in America, one of the predecessor churches of the ELCA, taught that "Christian faith affirms marriage as a covenant of fidelity—a dynamic, lifelong commitment of one man and one woman in a personal and sexual union" and that "Marriage is ordained by God as a structure of the created order" ("Sex, Marriage, and Family: A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America," 1970); and

WHEREAS, The American Lutheran Church, one of the predecessor churches of the ELCA, taught that "Scripture sets the standard of a lifelong monogamous marriage of one man and one woman" ("Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church," 1980) and 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" ("Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church," 1982); and

WHEREAS, the 2008 draft social statement on human sexuality taught that "Marriage is a structure of mutual promises between a man and woman blessed by God (Mark 10:7-9) and authorized in a legal arrangement required by the state"; and

WHEREAS, some members of the ELCA are asking the ELCA to change the definition of marriage or merely to acknowledge that "marriage has historically been understood as" between a man and a woman;[3]

WHEREAS, the 2009 proposed ELCA Social Statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," removed language from the first draft that defined marriage as between a man and woman and now merely acknowledges that "the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have recognized marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman" and notes that some "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" ("Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," pages 15-16); and

WHEREAS, ELCA pastors promise "to preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church" when they are ordained and installed (Rite for Installation of a Pastor, *LBW Occasional Services*, page 225); and

WHEREAS, the Church Council will meet March 27–30 and has the opportunity to amend the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality before recommending the text that will be considered by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Council affirm this synod's commitment to marriage as a lifelong covenant of faithfulness between a man and a woman in faithfulness to Scripture and in keeping with the ELCA Message "Sexuality: Some Common Convictions" and predecessor church social statements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Council ask the Church Council to affirm marriage as a lifelong covenant of faithfulness between a man and a woman and to recommend no statements in the proposed ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality or in ELCA standards for pastors and other rostered leaders that could be interpreted as rejecting Christian teaching on marriage; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Council specifically ask the Church Council to make the following changes to the proposed social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," before recommending it to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:

1. Add the words "between one man and one woman" to lines 502–503, page 14, so that the first sentence reads: "This church understands marriage as a covenant of mutual promises, commitment, and hope <u>between one man and one woman</u> authorized legally by the state and blessed by God."
2. Move lines 588-594, page 16, to line 671, page 18, in the section on "Lifelong monogamous same gender-relationships."

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.35b **To receive the resolution of the South Dakota Synod affirming marriage;**

To acknowledge the action of the Church Council related to the proposed social statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," as the response of this council to the synod's resolution; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

C. AMENDMENT TO THE MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS

Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D)

WHEREAS, provision †S8.12.g.2. in the *Constitution for Synods* gives to the synodical bishop the responsibility to "coordinate the use of 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"; and

WHEREAS, provision *C6.06. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations* requires a congregation to consult with the synodical bishop and receive the approval of the Synod Council before relocating; and

WHEREAS, this provision affirms the interdependence of the congregations with each other and with the synod; and

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[3] Lutherans Concerned/North America, "Response to the ELCA Draft Social Statement on Human Sexuality," http://www.lcna.org/lcna_downloads/lcna_draft_social_statement_response.pdf. This document states that changes in teaching on marriage are "the most important changes to be made in the Draft Social Statement."

WHEREAS, a satellite or branch ministry can have the same effects upon neighboring congregations as a relocated or new congregation, and consideration of the establishment of such a satellite or branch could provide an opportunity for shared outreach visions among neighboring congregations; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that *C6.06. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations* be amended to read *[additions underlined]:* "If this congregation considers relocation <u>or establishment of additional sites for worship</u>, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected"; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a parallel provision be added to the *Constitution for Synods* and to 9.53.06. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2008 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly direct the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2008 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly direct the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council to refer the concerns of this resolution also to the Synod Mission Strategy Task Force for further consideration as it completes its task in preparation for the 2009 Synod Assembly.

Executive Committee Action

The Executive Committee of the Church Council voted [EC08.06.11d]:

To receive the resolution of the Southeastern Iowa Synod related to the possible amendment of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*;

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Secretary in consultation with the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2008 meeting of the Church Council;

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Church Council Action and Response from the Office of the Secretary

The origin of the resolution from the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council to the Church Council was a resolution to the Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly calling for a congregation to consult with synod offices before starting a satellite or second campus. The basis for the request was required provision *C6.06. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, which requires consultation with the bishop of the synod in which a congregation is territorially located if it desires to relocate. The author of the resolution argued that starting a second campus or a satellite had the same effect as relocating a congregation.

The Office of the Secretary consulted with the Southeastern Iowa Synod and the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission program unit of the churchwide organization and drafted proposed constitutional amendments to respond to the Synod Council resolution.

At its November 2008 meeting, the Church Council voted to approve the following amendments to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* and the *Model Constitution for Synods*:

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 <u>and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization</u> 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. <u>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.</u>

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.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.35c **To acknowledge the November 2008 action of the Church Council to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly proposed amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Model Constitution for Congregations*, and the *Constitution for Synods* as the response of the Church Council to the resolution of the Southeastern Iowa Synod related to the relocation of congregations or the development of additional sites by congregations; and**

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action by providing a record of the proposed amendments.

D. ETHANOL POLICY AND THE WORLD FOOD CRISIS

Upstate New York Synod (7D)

WHEREAS, according to the Web site of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) World Hunger program, 874 million people are hungry, 1 billion people live on less than $1 per day, and 6.9% of US households (24.4 million people, including 12.2 million children) are at risk of hunger;[4] and

WHEREAS, the ELCA World Hunger program improves the lives of people in the United States and around the world by providing immediate relief for people affected by chronic hunger and poverty; assisting whole communities through long-term, sustainable development to help alleviate chronic hunger and poverty; advocating for justice by changing laws and systems and educating members of the ELCA in awareness of issues relating to hunger, poverty, and justice;[1] and

Whereas, rapidly rising food and commodity prices are threatening these efforts along with the lives of millions of people and the livelihood of Upstate NY dairy, poultry, and livestock farmers, and are severely impacting the food budgets of all; and

WHEREAS, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 requires that 4 billion gallons of renewable fuel be used in 2006, and this requirement will grow to a yearly production of 7.5 billion gallons by 2012[5], a requirement that is met primarily by diverting corn for livestock feed and human consumption into energy production; and

WHEREAS, the energy returned on energy invested for ethanol made from corn in the U.S. has been found lower than the energy returned on energy invested for ethanol made from sugar cane, and other creative sources of ethanol show promise for renewable energy without grain from the food supply; and

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[4] http://archive.elca.org/hunger/facts/facts.html.

[5] PUBLIC LAW 109-58-AUG. 8, 2005: 119 STAT. 1069 The Energy Policy Act of 2005.

WHEREAS, in 2007 the United Nations' independent expert on the right to food called for a five-year moratorium on biofuel production from food crops to allow time for development of non-food sources, calling recent increases in food costs because of fuel production, such as the quadrupling of the world corn price in one year, a growing "catastrophe" for the poor;[6] therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod of the ELCA express its concern over the unintended consequences of current ethanol policy on the hungry, the impoverished, Upstate New York farmers, and others who are struggling with rapidly rising food prices; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be conveyed to the President of the United States, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Energy, the New York United States Senators, and members of the House of Representatives representing the people of the Upstate New York Synod by the secretary of the synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be conveyed to the ELCA World Hunger program and the Washington office by the secretary of the synod so that appropriate information and advocacy may be forthcoming.

Executive Committee Action

The Executive Committee of the Church Council voted [EC08.07.16c]:

To receive the resolution of the Upstate New York Synod related to "ethanol and the world food crisis";

To refer the resolution to the Church in Society unit with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April [March] 2009 meeting of the Church Council; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Response from the Church in Society unit

The Upstate New York Synod has expressed concern about the current ethanol policy, which relies largely on corn, and the consequences both for people who are hungry, impoverished, and struggling with food prices and farmers—groups that ELCA World Hunger and ELCA advocacy ministries seek to help live lives marked by sufficiency and sustainability.

Two ELCA social statements have a bearing on this concern. The social statement "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice" (1993) calls for justice for all of God's creation through sufficiency (page 7):

> In a world of finite resources, for all to have enough means that those with more than enough will have to change their patterns of acquisition and consumption. Sufficiency charges us to work with each other and the environment to meet needs without causing undue burdens elsewhere.

"Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" (1999), the ELCA's social statement on economic life, recognizes that a sustainable global economy rests on wise management of the earth and its resources. It calls for sustainability when it states on page 14:

> 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.

This social statement also emphasizes sufficiency, noting that our calling to the stewardship of creation "includes holding economic, political, and social processes and institutions responsible for producing and distributing what is needed for sufficiency for all" (page 11). Finally, the economic life social statement calls for this church to support the calling of farmers through advocacy that leads to adequate prices for crops and sustainable agricultural practices.

The use and development of corn-based ethanol has been encouraged and even mandated by government programs and policies since the 1970s, but its use has increased dramatically in the past five years for a number of reasons. These range from the substitution of ethanol for the gasoline additive MTBE, required by Clean Air Act regulations, to the rising cost of oil, which has made ethanol a more cost-effective alternative.

Ethanol has been an economic boon for many struggling small towns, which benefit from jobs created by new ethanol plants, and for corn farmers, who for many years received far less than the cost of production for their crop. It

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[6] http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=24434&Cr=food&Crl.

has, however, contributed to rising costs for feed corn, with negative impacts for livestock, poultry, and dairy farmers. In addition, the use of corn to create fuel has been linked to rising food costs in the global South, where food prices are much more sensitive to the rising cost of basic commodities like corn, wheat, and rice. These economic contrasts point to the difficulty faced when developing policies relating to corn-based ethanol.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2008 hosted a meeting to discuss the growing food crisis and concluded that the rising cost of corn and other commodities is due to a number of factors. In addition to the rising use of corn for ethanol in the U.S., FAO experts pointed to the rising cost of oil used to fertilize, harvest, and transport commodity crops and multi-year droughts in some key growing regions as factors that also are to blame for the rapid increase in commodity prices during 2007 and 2008.

A new report from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) offers the following sober description about rising food prices:

> The surge in food prices in the last years, following a century of decline, has been the most marked of the past century in its magnitude, duration and the number of commodity groups whose prices have increased. The ensuing crisis has resulted in a 50–200% increase in selected commodity prices, driven 110 million people into poverty and added 44 million more to the undernourished. Elevated food prices have had dramatic impacts on the lives and livelihoods, including increased infant and child mortality, of those already undernourished or living in poverty and spending 70–80 percent of their daily income on food. Key causes of the current food crisis are the combined effects of speculation in food stocks, extreme weather events, low cereal stocks, growth in biofuels competing for cropland and high oil prices. Although prices have fallen sharply since the peak in July 2008, they are still high above those in 2004 for many key commodities. The underlying supply and demand tensions are little changed from those that existed just a few months ago when these prices were close to all-time highs.[1]

The UNEP report predicts that the food crisis will grow worse in the future unless specific environmental factors are addressed, including climate change, water stress, invasive pests, and land degradation.

The connection between ethanol policy and the world food crisis, and the complexity of this relationship, is addressed in the education and advocacy work supported by ELCA World Hunger. These education materials, including the new "Taking Root" hunger curriculum for children and youth and Web-based materials, provide resources for congregations and others.

The ELCA Washington Office and the Lutheran Office for World Community at the United Nations have been monitoring this issue carefully for several years and have worked on legislation supporting alternatives to corn-based ethanol as this biofuel has grown in popularity, creating with it an increasing ecological and economic problem. The Washington Office has been advocating for research and investment in new technologies that do not use food crops or food-growing lands to meet our energy needs. This advocacy has supported the inclusion of funding for cellulose-based fuels in the 2008 farm bill and in energy legislation. The ELCA Washington Office also is working to address other issues impacting world food supplies and distribution through legislation that speaks to climate change and foreign aid, as well as through the ONE Lutheran Campaign.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.35d **To thank the Upstate New York Synod for its articulation of and effort related to the important issue of ethanol policy and global food prices and for connecting Christian faith and public life by communicating its concerns with elected officials;**

To request that the background information provided above be shared with the synod;

To affirm the ongoing attention to this issue by ELCA World Hunger and the advocacy ministries of this church; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

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[1] United Nations Environmental Program, *The Environmental Food Crisis*, p. 6. Christian Nellemann, Ed. c. 2009

E. RURAL REVITALIZATION IN AMERICA

Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B)

WHEREAS, population in rural areas of the United States has been declining since the 1930s and 1940s; and

WHEREAS, rural communities have experienced not only a decline in population and school enrollment, but also a loss of high school graduates, as young people who earn degrees find it difficult to remain in those communities due to a perceived lack of career opportunities and other social and economic factors; and

WHEREAS, the number of farmers and ranchers at one time was sufficient to keep the economy alive in small rural towns, especially those with populations of 5,000 and under; and

WHEREAS, the decline of family farmers and ranchers has had a great impact on small town businesses, schools, and churches; and

WHEREAS, rural America has an adequate infrastructure in place to support business growth and bring young families back to rural America; and

WHEREAS, the loss of rural businesses, schools, and churches will continue unless new ways are found to revitalize rural America; and

WHEREAS, more than 80 percent of congregations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) serve rural communities; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2008 Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly request the Rural Desk of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit to review the rural revitalization plan that is in place in rural Australia.[2] A similar project is taking place in New Mexico,[3] where the community and schools are working closely together in the area of economic development and community revitalization; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly request the Rural Desk of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit to work with other organizations in America, such as the National Community Education Association (NCEA)[4] and the Organization Concerned with Rural Education (OCRE),[5] that are making a concerted effort to revitalize rural America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the report on these matters of the Rural Desk of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit be presented at the 2009 Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly.

Executive Committee Action

The Executive Committee of the Church Council voted [EC08.06.11b]:

To receive the resolution of the Eastern North Dakota Synod related to rural revitalization in America;

To refer the resolution to the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council;

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

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[1] The mission of Rural Education Forum Australia (REFA) is to work with its member groups and departments of education in all states and territories and the Commonwealth to identify and promote issues that will improve opportunities for rural children and families. REFA has policies aimed at improving education and allied services for rural and remote communities. They cover a broad range of issues associated with the preparation and support of teachers, leaders, and community, integrating human services, resourcing, and sustainability. Full details are available by contacting the secretariat at www.refa.edu.au.

[2] The mission of New Mexico Rural Education Partners in Learning (PIL) is to create 21st-century economic engines for rural communities fueled by innovation and informed career, academic, and educational choices for all students and their families. The state will establish a model for engaging communities in strategic alliances that result in engagement of economic engines to create jobs in the community and shifts in the school culture, curriculum, and instruction that ready students for 21st- century jobs in their local communities and beyond. It can be reached at www.ped.state.nm.us.

[3] The mission of NCEA is to provide leadership to those who build learning communities in response to individual and community needs. The NCEA organization recently organized the National Center for Rural Revitalization and is preparing to host a National Rural Summit. It can be reached at www.ncea.com.

[4] The mission of OCRE, a coalition of more than two dozen national organizations, is dedicated to the improvement of public education and economic development in rural America. It can be reached at www.ruralschools.org .

Response from the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit

The mission of the ELCA's office for rural ministry resourcing and networking is to provide a vision of hope. In addition, this office is to be a resource to the three expressions of the church related to small town and rural issues. The office was created in 1999 after a memorial was passed by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly requesting that a "rural desk" be established.

Over the past 10 years, the office has addressed the important issue of rural and small town community development through a variety of venues. The director has:

1. Worked directly in 17 synods to provide examples, resources, and networks for the synod and congregations to utilize related to community development and other issues important to rural and small town life.
2. Met with four undersecretaries of rural development at the USDA as well as with then Secretary of Agriculture, Ann Venneman.
3. Toured several states looking at examples of small town revitalization and sharing them as requested.
4. Worked closely with the ELCA's Washington, D.C., office, specifically related to the new rural homestead act, which has been introduced into Congress twice. A significant portion of the act is devoted to rural and small town community development.
5. Worked with Jan and Cornelia Flora from Iowa State University; both are experts on rural and small town community development and have written several books and many articles on this topic. They have also researched several towns in the Great Plains using asset-based community mapping as the basis for their research in towns that have been revitalized.
6. Accessed, supported, and worked nationally with many organizations that focus some of their work on revitalization: Rural Advancement Fund International, the Center for Rural Affairs, the Land Stewardship Project, and the Asset-based Community Development group based at Northwestern University.
7. Received reports from and met with rural church specialists who have toured Australia and shared their discoveries related to the Australian rural church effort. The director also met with one of the Australian experts on the rural church movement.

During the past few months, EOCM has begun to work primarily with synods on the unit's work. This will be through directors for evangelical mission (DEM) in each synod. Therefore, staff of EOCM will work with the DEMs and synods to provide networking and resourcing. Some of the original ministry will continue, but will be directed in a more concrete way.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.35e **To express gratitude to the Eastern North Dakota Synod for its resolution related to rural revitalization and to acknowledge that, while the issues raised in the resolution are specific to North Dakota and parts of the Great Plains, they underscore the passion and deep knowledge necessary to address the vital issue of community development in those areas;**

To encourage the Eastern North Dakota Synod to form an affinity group or task force through the office for rural ministry resourcing and networking to address the issues of rural community development in the synod and, with partners, beyond it;

To request that the director for rural ministry resourcing and networking collaborate with the synod's bishop and director for evangelical mission as well as the ELCA Washington, D.C., office to identify possible resources available through current legislative related to rural communities;

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

F. MISSIONARY FOR MOROGORO DIOCESE

Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C)

WHEREAS, the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod is in a companion-synod relationship with the Morogoro Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania; and

WHEREAS, the synod and the diocese currently are involved in joint ministries in the areas of evangelism, mission building (church construction), community health (e.g., basic sanitation, HIV and AIDS, malaria), water well development and maintenance, economic sustainability, and global awareness and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, the Morogoro Diocese has issued a request to the Global Mission unit of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for a missionary to work in the area of evangelism; and

WHEREAS, the synodical Global Mission Committee has identified several ways both to strengthen and be supportive of these ministries with the Morogoro Diocese; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that each of the five conferences in the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod be encouraged to establish an on-going relationship with districts of the Morogoro Diocese for the purpose of mutual support through prayer and development of a deeper understanding of one another's ministries, cultural context, concerns, and gifts; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod as a whole continue its relationship with the Mission District of the Morogoro Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Global Mission Committee of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod explore with Asbury Methodist Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma, the possibility of bringing a youth choir from the Morogoro Diocese to visit the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod and Asbury Methodist Church in 2009, possibly at the time of the 2009 Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that every congregation in the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod be encouraged to become a Living Water Congregation through participation in the "Living Water: Small Change for a Big Change" campaign, which seeks to collect change (coins) for the water well and other water-ministry projects in the Morogoro Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod convey to the Global Mission unit of the churchwide organization its support in regards to the Morogoro request for a missionary for evangelism; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, in support of the work of said missionary, congregations and individuals in the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod be encouraged to raise up to $20,000 to provide a vehicle for this missionary's ministry in the Morogoro Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod and its Global Mission Committee continue to invite and welcome other persons and parties beyond the synod to be in partnership with it in the companion relationship with and support of the Morogoro Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

Executive Committee Action

The Executive Committee of the Church Council voted [EC08.06.11a]:

To receive the resolution of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod related to a missionary for the Morogoro Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania;

To refer the resolution to the Global Mission unit with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2008 meeting of the Church Council; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.35f **To authorize a delay in the response of the Global Mission unit to the resolution of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod related to a missionary for the Morogoro Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania;**

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2009 meeting of the ELCA Church Council;

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

G1. 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

Central/Southern Illinois Synod (5C)

WHEREAS, the Task Force on Human Sexuality will bring its report and recommendations 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council, meeting November 14-17, 2008, declined two proposals for a two-thirds vote to adopt recommendations on resolutions related to a 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 this Central/Southern Illinois Synod Council communicate to the ELCA Church Council its desire to have a two-thirds vote on all matters pertaining to human sexuality at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

G2. PROCEDURAL RULES FOR THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY
Allegheny Synod (8C)

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 Church Council, in its November 2008 meeting, recommended that the rules of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly would necessitate a two-thirds vote to approve a social statement on human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the 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 this 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; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Allegheny Synod of the ELCA memorialize the ELCA Church Council, at their March 2009 meeting, to reconsider the decision made at their November 2008 meeting and to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the adoption of the rule 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 Secretary David Swartling for presentation to the ELCA Church Council at its March 2009 meeting.

G3. PROCEDURAL RULES FOR THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY
Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)

WHEREAS, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly created the Task Force for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (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 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 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 this 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; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA memorialize the Church Council, at its March 2009 meeting, to reconsider the decision made at the November 2008 meeting and to recommend to the 2009

Churchwide Assembly the adoption of the rule 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 Secretary David Swartling for presentation to the Church Council at its March 2009 meeting.

G4. VOTE MARGIN FOR 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE
Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)

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 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 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 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 Church Council will meet March 27–30 and could change its proposed rules for the Churchwide Assembly to recommend a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could change the required majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod Council ask the Church Council to add the following provision 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."

G5. 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE
Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D)

WHEREAS, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted "to direct the Task Force for the 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 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 voted by the assembly for adoption"; and

WHEREAS, the 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 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 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 Church Council will meet March 27–30 and could change its proposed rules for the Churchwide Assembly to recommend a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could change the required majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Council ask the Church Council to add the following provision 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."

G6. PROCEDURAL RULES FOR THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY
Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D)

WHEREAS, consensus within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on matters related to human sexuality, particularly with regard to rostering gay and lesbian leaders who are in long-term, monogamous, publicly accountable same-gender relationships remains elusive; and

WHEREAS, many individuals and groups within this church advocate a higher threshold for the number of votes required to change this church's corresponding policies; and

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council understands that advocacy for a specific higher vote threshold carries with it the responsibility to respect and honor decisions by this church in assembly that meet those thresholds; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council encourage the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Church Council at its March 2009 meeting to reconsider decisions related to the rules for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, 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 be it further

RESOLVED, that the members of the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council will hold the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Church Council in prayer, with thanksgiving for their faithful service and attention to the many challenges they face on behalf of this church.

G7. VOTE MARGIN FOR 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE
Western North Dakota Synod (3A)

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 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 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 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 Church Council will meet March 27–30 and could change its proposed rules for the Churchwide Assembly to recommend a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could change the required majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Western North Dakota Synod Council ask the Church Council to add the following provision 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."

G8. RESOLUTION ON 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES OF PROCEDURE
South Carolina Synod (9C)

WHEREAS, 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 (bylaw 12.12.01. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America);* and

WHEREAS, at the first plenary session of the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, the assembly considered the Rules of Organization and Procedure and adopted the following rule: "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" (*Report of Actions of the Church Council* (November 14-17, 2008, page 7); and

WHEREAS, up until 2007, social statements and their implementing resolutions were combined in a single action, which required a two-thirds vote for approval (*Report of Actions of the Church Council* (November 14-17, 2008, page 7); and

WHEREAS, for the good of this church, a two-thirds vote should be required for a precedent-breaking, significant issue; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reconsider its recommendation to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly concerning the proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure so that any recommendations from the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality, not just the proposed social statement, require a two-thirds vote of the assembly for approval.

G9. 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VOTE ON MINISTRY POLICY CHANGES
Northwestern Ohio Synod (6D)

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 individuals in same-sex, life-long, committed relationships from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the 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 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, life-long, committed 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; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex, life-long, committed 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 this church's teaching and practice; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority vote requirement for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Council recommend that the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly be added: "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."

G10. VOTE MARGIN ON CHANGES IN THIS CHURCH'S POLICY AND PRACTICE

South Dakota Synod (3C)

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has been the usual requirement for major decisions, including the adoption of ELCA social statements and amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council recommended that "any motion to come before this 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 by the assembly for adoption"; and

WHEREAS, the upcoming 2009 Churchwide Assembly vote on the recommendations of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality, as embodied in its reports "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" and "Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies," potentially would necessitate "changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses"; and

WHEREAS, the process by which this church arrives at its major decisions affect directly the legitimacy and acceptability of such decisions both within this church and across the wider body of believers; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly vote on the recommendations of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has the potential to foment division within this church in its various expressions; and

WHEREAS, the continued unity and well-being of this church, and the mutual trust and respect of all of its members and expressions, is the rightful concern of all who are associated with the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote clearly illustrates that a given outcome is most definitively the will of the assembly as the primary legislative body of this church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Council ask the Church Council to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: "Any motion to come before this 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 by the assembly for adoption."

G11. VOTE MARGIN FOR CHANGES IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

Nebraska Synod (4A)

RESOLVED, 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.

G12. PROCEDURAL RULES FOR THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

North Carolina Synod (9B)

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has recommended decisions regarding ministry policies to be made at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the proposed decisions potentially change current policy of the ELCA and that of its predecessor organizations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council's Constitution and Legal Committee recommended a two-thirds majority to decide any issues relating to rostering proposals; and

WHEREAS, the committee gave four reasons for recommending a two-thirds vote:

1. It sets a clear rule for all matters and heads off potential confusion and ambiguity.
2. Since the social statement needs a two-thirds vote, all matters relating to it should also require a two-thirds vote.
3. If the council wants the Churchwide Assembly to move toward communal discernment, then a two-thirds vote helps move the Churchwide Assembly in that direction.
4. The Church Council (and Churchwide Assembly) will have to deal with the rules anyway, so the committee's recommendation was a starting point for discussion; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Synod Council request the ELCA Church Council to recommend Rules of Procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly requiring that all matters relating to rostering proposals require a two-thirds majority vote for adoption.

G13. VOTE MARGIN ON CHANGES IN THIS CHURCH'S POLICY ON ROSTERING
Saint Paul Area Synod (3H)

RESOLVED, to affirm the simple majority adopted by the Church Council regarding the changes in policies around rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses.

G14. MARGIN OF VOTE FOR CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES
Western Iowa Synod (5E)

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 "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"; and

WHEREAS, the 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 a social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in "publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships" holds the potential to test the unity of the ELCA; 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 Church Council will meet March 27–30 and could change its proposed rules for the Churchwide Assembly to recommend a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could change the required majority for adoption of any changes to policies and practices for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Western Iowa Synod Council ask the ELCA Church Council to add the following provision 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."

G15. VOTE MARGIN FOR 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)

RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote be required for the adoption of the recommendations on the ministry policies from the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality.

G16. VOTE MARGIN FOR THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES
Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G)

WHEREAS, the documents known as "Vision and Expectations" and "Definition and Guidelines for Discipline" are policy documents adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), pursuant to ELCA bylaws 7.31.11., 7.31.13.f., 7.51.03.b., and 20.71.11.; and

WHEREAS, "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" were adopted by the vote of a simple majority (Church Council minutes Nov. 1989, pp. 54-66; Oct. 1990, pp.128-29; Dec. 1993, p. 159); and

WHEREAS, policy documents typically have been moved for adoption or amendment under simple majority rule (for example, the "Policy for Ordination under Unusual Circumstances," Church Council action CC01.04.34); and

WHEREAS, the Church Council, at its November 2008 meeting, defeated motions that would require a two-thirds majority for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to direct amendments to "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" ("Report of Actions of the Church Council (November 14-17, 2008)," pp. 8-9); now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Council that this Synod Council find and declare its affirmation and concurrence with the Church Council decision of November 14-17, 2008, to maintain the practice of

acting upon policy documents by simple majority votes, whether by the council or by the Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Council find and declare that requiring a two-thirds majority of the Churchwide Assembly to direct amendments to "Vision and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" would grossly violate the spirit and nature of this church's polity, while threatening to establish a super-majority standard, which has never been applied to policy documents in the Church Council or the Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Council request the Church Council not to reconsider the rules it proposed at its November 2008 meeting for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

G17. VOTE MARGIN FOR 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY RULES
Southwest California Synod (2B)

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Southwest California Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in keeping with the widely accepted governance of Robert's Rules of Order as specified by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, urge the Church Council to abide by its decision to employ a simple majority rule in actions related to ministry standards and human sexuality at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Executive Committee Action

The Executive Committee of the Church Council voted [EC09.02.07]:

To receive the resolutions of the Central/Southern Illinois, Allegheny, Northeastern Iowa, Southwestern Texas and Lower Susquehanna synods related to the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;

To refer these resolutions and any additional synodical resolutions on this topic to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the March 2009 meeting of the Church Council;

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.35g **To receive the resolutions from the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, Allegheny Synod, Northeastern Iowa Synod, Southwestern Texas Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, Southeastern Iowa Synod, Western North Dakota Synod, South Carolina Synod, Northwestern Ohio Synod, South Dakota Synod, Nebraska Synod, North Carolina Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, Western Iowa Synod, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, and Southwest California Synod;**

To acknowledge the action of the Church Council at its March 2009 meeting on the margin of vote contained in the proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as the response to these resolutions;

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

2. CASH MANAGEMENT
(Agenda IV.C.1; Agenda/MINUTES, Exhibit F, Part 8)

As reported at the November 2008 meeting, the line of credit with Harris Bank has been increased from $5 million to $20 million, with $10 million on a committed basis. The current cash management policy of the ELCA requires a minimum cash balance of two months' average disbursements less available lines of credit. The policy was adopted when the line of credit was $5 million and average monthly disbursements were about $12 million, resulting in a minimum cash balance requirement of about $19 million. The recent increase in the total line of credit to $20 million,

of which $10 million is committed, would result in an unrealistically low minimum cash balance under the policy of about $4 million.

The Office of the Treasurer has recommended adoption of an amendment to the cash management policy to recognize that only the committed portion of the total line of credit should be used to determine the minimum cash balance required under the policy.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC09.03.36 To approve the revised ELCA cash management policy as follows:

Cash Management Policy

Applicability

This policy is applicable to cash administered by the Office of the Treasurer, including that in excess of ongoing daily operating needs of the churchwide organization. Such cash generally fluctuates due to the seasonality of receipts as well as the level of restricted and designated funds that are received and distributed over an extended period of time. This policy does not apply to the investments of the ELCA Foundation.

Investing of cash managed under this policy is subject to the investment policies.

Objective

The objective of this policy is to provide the philosophy and general operating procedures necessary for the churchwide organization to meet its cash disbursement and liquidity needs.

Monitoring Cash Flow

The Office of the Treasurer is responsible for monitoring cash balances and needs on a daily, weekly, monthly, and as-needed basis. Liquidity requirements will be communicated to the investment managers in writing from time to time by the ELCA.

The monthly calendarization of the annual operating and capital budgets prepared for the churchwide organization, as well as quarterly forecasts of spending for disaster relief, World Hunger, and other programs with variable spending schedules, provide input to the cash monitoring process.

Liquidity

Cash and investments to approximate the balance of restricted and designated funds, plus an amount to support the average monthly (over previous 12 months) operating needs of the churchwide organization should be maintained. However, to avoid the costs of outside borrowing, the temporary operating cash needs for approved churchwide organization program and administrative activities may be met by allowing the level of cash and investments to decrease below the above target.

A balance of up to approximately $1.4 million will be maintained as readily available cash in a demand account. Excess cash on a daily basis will be transferred to an operating investment account, as defined in the Operating Investment Policy. The amount in this investment account will vary based upon expected cash needs and the overall interest rate environment, but should generally not exceed a peak level of expected monthly disbursements over an annual period. Additional excess cash will be transferred to a core investment account, as defined in the Core Investment Policy.

The sum of available committed lines of credit and cash subject to this policy will not decrease below two months' average (over previous 12 months) cash disbursements.

Cash Reserves

Segregated cash reserves will not be maintained for specific purposes. The need for such reserves may be satisfied by creating designated funds that will be subject to the liquidity policy above.

Lines of Credit

Lines of credit equal to at least $10 million will be maintained and may be used to meet temporary cash flow needs.

Investment Income

Under the unified budget concept practiced by the churchwide organization, income received in the investment portfolios is recorded as unrestricted revenue of the churchwide organization and is used to support the programs and structure of the churchwide organization. Costs and fees related to cash and investment management and gains and losses from the portfolios are likewise absorbed and recorded in the general treasury of the ELCA churchwide organization.

3. APPOINTMENT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

(Agenda IV.C.2)

The membership of the Audit Committee is defined by ELCA continuing resolution 14.41.E02. The Audit Committee is comprised of six members. A minimum of two members should be members of the Church Council's Budget and Finance Committee. Members are appointed by the Budget and Finance Committee and forwarded to the Church Council for approval. Budget and Finance Committee members are appointed for two-year terms with the possibility of reappointment throughout their Church Council term. Non-Church Council members are appointed for two-year terms, renewable for two additional terms. Terms are staggered to provide for continuity in committee membership from year to year.

Members of the current Audit Committee and term-end dates are: Pr. John C. Richter (April 2009), Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus (August 2009), Mr. John F. Timmer (August 2010), Mr. Timothy L. Stephan (August 2009), Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth (April 2009), and Mr. Philip Bertram (August 2009).

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC09.03.37 **To approve the appointment of the following ELCA Audit Committee members to an additional two-year term, beginning August 2009: Ms. Ann C. Niedringhaus, Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth, Mr. Timothy L. Stephan, and Mr. Philip Bertram; and**

To approve the extension of the term on the ELCA Audit Committee for Pr. John C. Richter through August 2009.

4. ELCA RISK MANAGEMENT (ELCARM) BYLAW REVISIONS

(Agenda IV.E.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 1)

The Vocation and Education unit is charged by the constitution of this church to "provide risk management services for the colleges, universities, and seminaries of this church" (16.12.C06.c.9). Since 1988, this requirement has been met successfully through ELCA Risk Management, Inc. (ELCARM), an Illinois not-for-profit corporation created specifically to provide these and related insurance services to educational institutions affiliated with the ELCA. Presently, 23 of the 27 colleges and universities and all eight seminaries related to this church use ELCARM for these services. For these purposes, ELCARM utilizes the staff of Education and Institutional Insurance Administrators, Inc. (EIIA), a similar consortium of United Methodist Church educational institutions. This EIIA staff has skilled insurance professionals and

support staff, all of whom are full-time employees working solely on the insurance affairs of ELCARM, EIIA, and two other consortia of denominational educational institutions, one related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the other to American Baptist churches. Collectively, these four consortia represent 138 church-related institutions of higher education, whose aggregate property, casualty, auto, general liability, and worker's compensation insurance premiums are the equivalent of the insurance premiums paid by a Fortune 200 corporation. In addition, the EIIA staff provides expert advice, support, and on-site visits to participating institution for risk management programs and assessments.

The ELCARM governing documents have been revised recently for two purposes: 1) to comply with the ELCA governance changes established after the 2005 reorganization of churchwide units and committees; and 2) to vest in the participating institutions sufficient membership rights so that ELCARM becomes eligible under federal law to be a member of a risk retention group. The rights being conferred on the participating institutions include authority to elect four of the nine members of the ELCARM board of directors and to vote upon major corporate transactions that are not in the normal course of business. The risk retention group, which is now being formed by the four consortia as a Vermont non-profit and insurance corporation, will facilitate the placement of insurance for the participating institutions.

Previously, the Division for Higher Education and Schools had the authority to approve changes in the ELCARM Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. This authority has now been transferred to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Until now, five of the nine directors had been appointed by the Vocation and Education unit, the Office of the Secretary, and the ELCA Council of College and University Presidents. Under the revised bylaws now being submitted for approval, these churchwide units and the Presidents Council, plus the Council of Seminary Presidents, will make nominations of individuals to serve on the ELCARM board of directors; these appointments must be approved by the Church Council.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.38 **To approve the following resolution on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:**

RESOLVED, that the Church Council, on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, hereby approve the revisions to the restated articles of incorporation and bylaws of ELCA Risk Management, Inc., as presented in Exhibit G, Part 1a and Part 1b, attached hereto and incorporated herein; and

RESOLVED, that the Church Council, on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, hereby appoint the following individuals to serve on the Board of Directors of ELCA Risk Management, Inc., on the basis of nomination by the unit, office, or council indicated: Mr. Mark Wilhelm and Mr. David Hardy, nominated by the Vocation and Education unit; Mr. Phillip H. Harris, nominated by the Office of the Secretary; Mr. Jay Lemons, nominated by the Council of College and University Presidents; and [to be named], nominated by the Council of Seminary Presidents.

5. AUTHORIZATION OF SIGNATORIES

(Agenda IV.E.2)

In April 1990, the Church Council adopted a resolution [CC90.4.31] authorizing signatures by assistant vice presidents and assistant secretaries for the execution of documents on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

> WHEREAS, the Minnesota nonprofit corporation act authorizes the board of directors of a corporation organized thereunder to designate two or more directors to form a committee that shall have authority to act for and on behalf of the board of directors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that any two of the Bishop (President), Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer are hereby appointed as a committee having the authority of the Church Council in the management of the business or fiscal affairs of this corporation to authorize and approve, on behalf of this corporation, transactions to which it is a party; and be it further

RESOLVED, that any one of the Bishop (President), Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer or in the absence of all of the foregoing, any two of the assistant vice presidents may execute, and the Secretary or any assistant secretarymay attest, any document required or desirable in connection with a commercial or fiscal transaction to which this corporation is a party, including but not limited to conveyances, assignments, mortgages, contracts, notes, leases, bills of sale, and financing statements.

Personnel changes necessitate action to update that resolution.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.39 **To adopt the following resolution:**

WHEREAS, in the opinion of legal counsel (Faegre & Benson of Minneapolis), the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act authorizes the Church Council as the board of directors of this corporation to appoint additional officers; and

WHEREAS, this corporation previously has authorized execution of various documents, when necessary, by two assistant vice presidents in the absence of the bishop, vice president, secretary, and treasurer (CC90.4.31*); and

WHEREAS, this corporation previously has appointed various persons to be assistant vice presidents and assistant secretaries of this corporation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the previous appointments of assistant vice presidents and assistant secretaries of this corporation (CC90.4.32, CC92.11.103, CC96.11.61b, CC03.11.85, CC07.11.90, CC08.11.52) be and are hereby rescinded; and be it further

RESOLVED, for the sole purpose of executing documents, as specified in CC90.4.31, that the following be and are hereby appointed as assistant vice presidents of this corporation: M. Wyvetta Bullock, Walter S. May, and Myrna J. Sheie; and be it further

RESOLVED, for the sole purpose of executing documents, as specified in CC90.4.31, that the following be and are hereby appointed as assistant secretaries of this corporation: Ruth E. Hamilton, Phillip H. Harris, Mary Beth Nowak, and David A. Ullrich.

6. AMENDMENTS TO GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

(Agenda IV.E.3)

Background:

As part of the restructuring in 2005 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the boards of trustees of the ELCA Foundation and the Mission Investment Fund were reduced to nine members. Experience has shown that this number is too small to ensure that the board meetings have enough persons with the requisite expertise and diversity in attendance. The absence of one or two trustees from a meeting with only nine trustees can create problems in decision-making. This issue can be addressed by increasing the size of the board. In addition, by providing a range in the number of trustees, potential problems with resignations can be reduced. Because the bylaws provide that one-third of the members be elected each biennium, the word "approximately" should be added to the applicable sentence. In order to implement staggered terms as the boards expand in size, a continuing resolution for each board also is recommended.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC09.03.40 ***To recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the following actions:***

To amend ELCA bylaw 17.41.02 and to add continuing resolution 17.41.C09. as follows:

17.41.02. The Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees that shall be composed of <u>at least nine but not more than 12</u> ~~nine~~ persons elected to six-year terms by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with no consecutive reelection and with <u>approximately</u> one-third of the members elected each biennium . . . *[with the rest unchanged]*

17.41.C09. <u>To implement staggered terms for board members, if more than four persons are elected in 2009, the fifth person elected will serve a four-year term, and the sixth person will serve a two-year term.</u>

To amend ELCA bylaw 17.51.01 and to add continuing resolution 17.51.B09. as follows:

17.51.01. The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees of <u>at least nine but not more than 12</u> ~~nine~~ members,who shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly for six-year terms with no consecutive reelection and with <u>approximately</u> one-third elected each biennium as provided in Chapter 19.

17.51.B09. <u>To implement staggered terms for board members, if more than four persons are elected in 2009, the fifth person elected will serve a four-year term, and the sixth person will serve a two-year term.</u>

7. SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION POLICY

(Agenda IV.G.1; Exhibit K, Part 5)

In 1997, the ELCA Church Council approved "A Social Ministry Partnership," which contained criteria for ELCA affiliation for social ministry organizations. This document presented a joint set of criteria with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), although they utilized the term "recognition" instead of affiliation. In 2007, the LCMS began a churchwide process for revising recognition criteria for all organizations interested in becoming Recognized Service Organizations. The process resulted in a new set of requirements that have diverged considerably from those in the 1997 joint document; therefore, it was deemed impossible to continue to provide a pan-Lutheran document for social ministry organizations.

In addition, the several requirements that the ELCA had added in 1997 to allow for affiliating organizations that would be considered as Category II Organizations (defined as "An Organization with Lutheran and Other Christian, Other Faith, and/or Secular Not-for-Profit Participants without a Lutheran Majority") were deemed inadequate in one regard. Because the ELCA has insisted that no organization with a completely self-perpetuating board would qualify for affiliation, it became apparent that to hold Category II Organizations to that same standard, one additional requirement was needed for this category. That has now been added.

Finally, language of expectations related to membership in Lutheran Services in America (LSA) has been modified slightly and LSA membership has been added to the list of affiliation requirements. In the 1997 document, the statement was labeled an "expectation" and read "participating in and supporting Lutheran Services in America through active participation and payment of annual dues." The new language is as follows: "agreeing to participate in LSA in which,

by affiliating, the organization becomes a member, receiving the benefits accord to LSA members and fully supporting its mission, including paying annual dues."

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.41 **To approve the amendments to "A Social Ministry Partnership" as printed below:**

"A Social Ministry Partnership"

A. Types of Affiliation

1. Category I Organization: Social Ministry Organizations (SMO) with a Lutheran majority
Affiliated SMOs in this category:
- **a. provide services in a manner which is consistent with the social policy documents and positions of the ELCA;**
- **b. have a board of directors of which at least 51 percent are members from ELCA congregations;**
- **c. obtain endorsement or affirmation of Lutheran board members by constituent Lutheran congregations, synods, church body/affiliated social ministry organizations;**
- **d. declare publicly that the organization is affiliated with the ELCA;**
- **e. may have a corporate membership that is at least 51 percent ELCA derived from congregations, synods, or church body organizations* which are corporately sponsored. [* that is, organizations sponsored by congregations/synods/associations which singly or in combination elect board members]**

2. Category II Organization: SMO with Lutheran and other Christian, other faith, or secular not-for-profit participants without a Lutheran majority
Affiliated SMOs in this category:
- **a. provide services in a manner which is consistent with the social policy documents and positions of the ELCA;**
- **b. have a level of Lutheran presence on the organization's board of directors acceptable to the ELCA synod(s) and the church body;**
- **c. obtain endorsement/affirmation of Lutheran board members by constituent Lutheran congregations, synods, or church body/affiliated social ministry organizations;**
- **d. secure endorsement/affirmation of board members representing other Christian, other faith/secular not-for-profit participants (i.e. corporate members from a duly constituted body of that group, such as a congregation, conference/judicatory, or another not-for-profit community organization);**
- **e. furnish evidence of Lutheran congregational participation/synodical support/historical Lutheran identity acceptable to the ELCA and its appropriate synod(s).**

B. Criteria for ELCA Affiliation

1. Becoming affiliated requires meeting the following criteria:
- **a. a declaration of intention to be affiliated with the ELCA in accordance with all affiliation criteria and provisions;**
- **b. operating as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and compliance with all associated requirements;**
- **c. confirmation that endorsement/affirmation of Lutheran board members by their constituent Lutheran congregations/synods/ELCA-affiliated social ministry organizations has been obtained;**

d. acknowledging that the organization is fully responsible for its own management and fiscal affairs, and that church affiliation shall not cause any Lutheran congregation, synod, or the ELCA to incur or be subject to the organization's liabilities of debts (including any loan or bond prospectus);
e. committing residual assets to the ELCA, its congregations, synod(s) or other affiliated social ministry organizations, for continuation of the organization's mission in the event of organizational dissolution;
f. submitting for church body review of any proposed governing document changes which may impact the organization's affiliation status,
g. verifying that rotating, limited terms for board members has been established;
h. documenting that licensing by applicable governing and regulating authorities has been obtained;
i. signing a Letter of Agreement as presented by the ELCA-CS program unit;
j. joining in ministry partnership reviews initiated by the ELCA-CS program unit; and
k. agreeing to participate in Lutheran Services in America in which, by affiliating, the organization becomes a member, receiving the benefits accorded to LSA members and fully supporting its mission, including paying annual dues.

8. AMENDMENTS TO GLOBAL MISSION PERSONNEL POLICIES
(Agenda IV.G.2)

The Global Mission program unit (GM) has forwarded to the ELCA Church Council updated Personnel Policies and Expectations for ELCA mission personnel serving outside the United States. The GM program committee received a report on these changes at its March 13–14, 2009, meeting. Most of the proposed revisions reflect changes in nomenclature relating to the internal reconfiguration of the Global Mission program unit (e.g., from the "international personnel" section to the "global service" section). Also included in these revisions are the following changes:

1. Section 3.0: deletion of paragraph related to outside employment, since this language is better suited in individual Letters of Agreement or in the Terms and Conditions of Support for long-term missionaries.
2. Section 6.3: Change "narcotics" to "illegal drugs" for clarity, since some narcotics are prescribed legally.
3. Section 9.0: Added clarification on personal safety/risk management. This language was taken from GM security policies and is included in this document for purposeful redundancy.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.42 **To adopt the following revisions to the Personnel Policies and Expectations of the Global Mission program unit:**

1. Section 3.0:

~~Outside employment by mission personnel with a defined work assignment must be approved by the ELCA/GM. Employment by any member of the mission personnel family in the country of service must be compatible with Christian values and not detrimental to the mission of this church. For long-term mission personnel, additional information related to outside employment is stated in the Terms and Conditions of Support.~~

2. Section 6.3:

Personal use of alcohol or tobacco should be in moderation and respectful of local norms and customs. Use of ~~narcotics~~ <u>illegal drugs</u> is prohibited.

3. Section 9.0:

Mission personnel acknowledge that global mission service involves potential risk to their safety and well-being. Mission personnel assume personal responsibility for engaging in appropriate risk management in such matters as health, personal security, and safety, both at their location of service and when traveling.

The ELCA/GM takes seriously the risk to which mission personnel are exposed in the course of their service and seeks to support mission personnel in preventing and responding to risk management issues. . . *[with the rest unchanged]*.

4. Additional proposed revisions that reflect changes in nomenclature relating to the internal reconfiguration of the Global Mission program unit.

9. GLOBAL MISSION COOPERATION WITH THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

(Agenda IV.G.3; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit M, Part 1)

The Global Mission program unit (GM) has forwarded to the ELCA Church Council a framework for an agreement between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through GM and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). This agreement reflects a significant deepening of the operational relationship between the ELCA and the ELCIC in the full scope of global mission activities. ELCIC staff participated in the February 13–14, 2009, meeting of the Global Mission program committee and discussed the February 24, 2009, working paper, "Moving in a New Model for ELCIC Mission in the World."

According to this plan, the ELCIC increasingly will utilize ELCA GM systems as it sends mission personnel and receives the gifts of companion churches through various formation and education activities. This new pattern of cooperation will be carried out within the context of the ELCIC's ongoing relationships and mission commitments. The ELCIC's governance body has affirmed this approach. ELCA staff are working closely with ELCIC staff to determine implementation steps and will be present at the June 2009 ELCIC convention in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

VOTED: ***EN BLOC***

CC09.03.43 **To affirm the direction of closer cooperation in global mission between with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the ELCA through the Global Mission program unit of the churchwide organization.**

10. OTHER NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS, AND ELECTIONS

(Agenda IV.H)

A. SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS

(Agenda IV.H.1)

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America serves as a corporate member of certain inter-Lutheran organizations and affiliated social ministry organizations. The role of corporate members includes the responsibility to elect ELCA representatives to the organization's board of directors as prescribed in the organization's governing documents. The relationship of the ELCA to certain inter-Lutheran organizations and affiliated social ministry organizations is expressed through the Church in Society unit. 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.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC09.03.44a **To elect to the board of directors of Mosaic, Inc., to a three-year term expiring in 2012: Mr. Mark Klever;**

To elect to the board of directors of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service: Ms. Kathi Anderson and the Rev. E. Roy Riley Jr. to three-year terms expiring in December 2011; and

To elect to the board of trustees of Lutheran Medical Center: Ms Lynda Anderson to a two-year term expiring in 2011 and Mr. Darin P. McAtee to a three-year term expiring in 2012.

B. BOARDS OF ELCA SEMINARIES

(Agenda IV.H.2)

Bylaw 8.31.02. outlines basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries. Subsection 8.31.02.a. provides for churchwide representation as follows: "At least one-fifth 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.

VOTED:

CC09.03.44b **To elect as a member of the board of directors of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn: the Rev. Gemechis Desta Buba, to a three-year term expiring in 2012;**

To elect as a member of the board of directors of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Chicago, Ill.: Ms. Kathryn Hasselblad-Pascale, to a three-year term expiring in 2012;

To re-elect as members of the board of directors of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Chicago, Ill.: Mr. J. Arthur Gustafson and the Rev. Durk K. Peterson, to two-year terms expiring in 2011; and

To re-elect as members of the board of directors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Penn.: Ms. Priscilla Kinney, and Dr. Nelvin Vos, to three-year terms expiring in 2012.

MEETING EVALUATION AND DEBRIEFING

The Rev. Marie C. Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, thanked the council for the opportunity to serve as a liaison bishop.

Ms. Kristin Kvam appreciated the explicit invitations for comment from advisory members. She found the process observation forms helpful in keeping participants attentive to matters of justice.

Mr. Kai Swanson commented that the discussion and action on the social statement on human sexuality illustrated how the program committee structure can work.

Ms. Sarah M. Lee-Faulkner challenged the Church Council going forward to spend as much time, energy, and passion on congregational outreach and mission as on matters relating to human sexuality.

The Rev. Khader N. El-Yateem affirmed the role of multicultural ministries as enriching the life of this church, and he expressed a desire to see more persons of color or whose primary language is other than English as members of the Church Council. He cautioned that many communities of color in this church do not participate in studies such as the sexuality study.

Ms. Katherine Long described the European American Lutheran Association's commitment to confronting White privilege and power and seeking to dismantle structures within the ELCA that give privilege to White people and disadvantage people of color.

Ms. Elizabeth Gaskins challenged council members to visit multicultural and ethnic congregations. She feels it is part of her responsibility to change the color of the Church Council.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson encouraged returning Church Council members to recognize their role in providing spiritual leadership and to join the prayer team.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary David D. Swartling reminded council members they had received a one-page document with a bullet point summary of actions. Two other documents will be distributed electronically: a summary of actions taken on the social statement on human sexuality and the ministry policies recommendation, as well as a more detailed summary of the actions of this council meeting.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked council members for their work, the officers for all they do every day, and the staff for their work in preparing for the meeting. Council members responded with applause.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson thanked Vice President Peña for his leadership. The council added its applause.

ADJOURNMENT

At the request of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, Mr. John S. Munday led the Church Council in a closing prayer. The sixty-first meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adjourned at 10:17 A.M.