

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN AMERICA**

Church Council

MINUTES

November 12–14, 2010

**Prepared by the
Office of the Secretary**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Organization of Meeting	1
Plenary Session I	4
Adoption of the Agenda	4
Approval of the Minutes	5
Report of the Presiding Bishop	5
Report of the Vice President	10
Amendments Related to “Living into the Future Together” (LIFT)	10
Plenary Session II	20
Revision of Continuing Resolution 19.04.A10	20
Election of Program Committee Members	21
Report of the Treasurer	23
Report of the Budget and Finance Committee	24
Amendments Related to “Living into the Future Together” (<i>continued</i>)	27
Appointment of the Memorials Committee	29
Appointment of Committee of Reference and Counsel	30
Plenary Session III	33
Executive Session	33
Bible Study	33
Report of the Executive for Administration	33
Report of the Planning and Evaluation Committee	35
Report of the Secretary	38
Legal and Constitutional Review Committee Report	39
Plenary Session IV	53
Report of the Conference of Bishops	53
Update on “Living Lutheran” Web site	53
Update on ELCA World Hunger Appeal	54
Legal and Constitutional Review Committee Report (<i>continued</i>)	54
Update on The Episcopal Church Executive Committee	64
Racial Justice Process Observation	65
Plenary Session V	66
Report of the Program and Services Committee	66
Report of the <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee on Board of Pensions Matters	89
Update on Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society	95
Recommendations of the Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team	96
Update on ELCA Constituent Information System	98
<i>En Bloc</i> Approval of Certain Items	99
Executive Session: Personnel Matters, Legal Update	154
Plenary Session VI	155
Primer on Ecclesiology and Polity	155
Committee of the Whole (Closed Session)	156
Concluding Session	156

LIST OF ACTIONS

CC10.11.38	Adoption of the Agenda	4
CC10.11.39	Approval of the minutes of the April 2010, August 2010, and October 2010 Church Council meetings and ratification of the actions of the Executive Committee	5
CC10.11.40	Recommendation that the Churchwide Assembly adopt constitutional amendments proposed by the “Living Into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA” task force regarding the Churchwide Assembly	17
CC10.11.41	Recommendation that the Churchwide Assembly adopt constitutional amendments proposed by the LIFT task force regarding the Church Council and Conference of Bishops	18
CC10.11.42	Recommendation that the Churchwide Assembly adopt constitutional amendments proposed by the LIFT task force regarding interrelationships	18
CC10.11.43	Approval of an amendment to continuing resolution 19.04.A10.	21
CC10.11.44	Election of program committee members for the Global Mission unit	22
CC10.11.45	Election of program committee members for the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit	23
CC10.11.46	Approval of initial 2011 spending authorizations for the current fund and World Hunger	25
CC10.11.47	Affirmation of revised 2010 plans for mission support	26
CC10.11.48	Affirmation of revised 2011 plans for mission support	27
CC10.11.49	Recommendation that the Churchwide Assembly adopt constitutional amendments proposed by the LIFT task force regarding program committees	29
CC10.11.50	Appointment of the Memorials Committee for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly	30
CC10.11.51	Appointment of the Committee on Reference and Counsel for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly	31
CC10.11.52	Election of the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla as executive director of the Global Mission unit for a four-year term beginning February 1, 2011	33
CC10.11.53	Reception of the preliminary report of the LIFT task force	36
CC10.11.54	Reception of “Toward Renewed Christian Education in the ELCA,” the report on the audit of Christian education	37
CC10.11.55	Commendation of the Communal Discernment task force’s draft report to the Churchwide Assembly planning team for consideration of its recommendations	38
CC10.11.56	Approval of continuing resolution amendments related to the redesign of the churchwide organization	40
CC10.11.57	Recommendation that the Churchwide Assembly adopt constitutional amendments to the process for a congregation to terminate its relationship with the ELCA	55
CC10.11.58	Recommendation that the Churchwide Assembly adopt constitutional amendments related to governance of <i>The Lutheran</i> magazine	61
CC10.11.59	Recommendation that the Churchwide Assembly adopt constitutional amendments related to the number of nominees for an election	64
CC10.11.60	Adoption of “People Living with Disabilities” as a message of the ELCA	68, 134
CC10.11.61	Adoption of a revised schedule for preparation of social documents	88
CC10.11.62	Approval of adding the “ELCA Churchwide Organization Electronic Communications Policy” to the Churchwide Personnel Policies	89
CC10.11.63	Authorization to implement the recommendations of the <i>Ad Hoc</i> committee on the Board of Pensions annuity funding	93
CC10.11.64	Request that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit constitute a task force on ministries of service (<i>diakonia</i>)	97
CC10.11.65	Approval of <i>en bloc</i> items	99
CC10.11.66	Responses to synodical resolutions directed to the Church Council	100
CC10.11.66a	Acknowledgment and referral of resolutions related to the termination of the defined benefit plan of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers	103
CC10.11.66b	Acknowledgment of the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council’s commitment to “constructive and positive partnership”	104
CC10.11.66c	Referral of a resolution regarding accessibility in the ELCA	106
CC10.11.66d	Refusal to ask the Churchwide Assembly to reconsider <i>Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust</i>	107
CC10.11.66e	Referral of a resolution to consider a “Decade of Women”	108
CC10.11.66f	Reception of a resolution to recognize all views in this church on matters of sexuality	109
CC10.11.66g	Reception of a resolution on the time line for a social statement on genetics	110

CC10.11.66h	Reception of resolutions related to the Board of Pensions annuity funding	112
CC10.11.66i	Acknowledgment of the <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee’s report as responses to synod resolutions related to the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	117
CC10.11.66j	Reception of the response of the Vocation and Education unit to the resolution of the Western Iowa Synod related to Waldorf College	119
CC10.11.66k	Reception of the response of the Vocation and Education unit to the resolution of the South Carolina Synod related to lay rostered leaders	120
CC10.11.66l	Reception of the response of the Vocation and Education unit to the Upper Susquehanna Synod request for a revision to the Rostered Leader Profile	122
CC10.11.67	Responses to Churchwide Assembly referrals directed to Church Council	122
CC10.11.67a	Reception of the response to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action related to worship and educational materials in Braille, large print and audio	125
CC10.11.67b	Reception of the response of the Church in Society program unit to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly memorial on “Legal Protection and Fairness” related to older adults	129
CC10.11.67c	Refusal to respond to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action regarding environmental stewardship in receipt of memorials to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly on this topic	130
CC10.11.68	Receipt of a congregational petition addressed to the Church Council	139
CC10.11.69	Designation of funds for youth and young adult ministries	140
CC10.11.70	Endorsement of recommendations related to endowments that benefit Waldorf College	141
CC10.11.71	Endorsement of recommendations related to endowments that benefit Dana College	142
CC10.11.72	Approval of the report of the Audit Committee to the Church Council	142
CC10.11.73	Approval of a revision of the Audit Committee Charter	142
CC10.11.74	Approval of certain policies and policy statements	146
CC10.11.75	Appointment of Pr. J. Pablo Obregon as the council’s liaison to the program committee for Congregational and Synodical Mission	146
CC10.11.76	Approval of amendments to certain Synod Constitutions	147
CC10.11.77	Approval of the Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters	148
CC10.11.78	Approval of amendments to the Deaconess Community bylaws	148
CC10.11.79	Adoption of eligibility amendment to ELCA pension and other benefits plans	149
CC10.11.80	Approval of amendments to the ELCA Retirement Plan	149
CC10.11.81	Approval of Corporate Social Responsibility issue paper amendments	150
CC10.11.82	Approval of amendments to the Candidacy Manual: Transfer of Candidacy	151
CC10.11.83	Authorization to revise “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns”	151
CC10.11.84	Election to the board of directors of Mosaic, Omaha, Neb	152
CC10.11.85	Election to the board of directors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa	152
CC10.11.86	Appointment to the board of ELCA Risk Management	153
CC10.11.87	Election to the board of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Incorporated	153
CC10.11.88	Election to the board of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers	153
CC10.11.89	Election of the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman as executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for a four-year term beginning February 1, 2011	154
CC10.11.90	Approval of revisions to the compensation policy of the ELCA Churchwide Personnel Policies	154
CC10.11.91	Enter into a committee of the whole	156
CC10.11.92	Reaffirmation of the representational principles expressed in this church’s constitutions	157

TOPICAL INDEX

2010 Synod Mission-Support Plans	25
Revisions to	25
2011 Expense Authorization	
Current Fund and World Hunger	24
2011 Synod Mission-Support Plans	
Revisions to	26
 A	
Accessibility in the ELCA	
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)	105
<i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee	
Report of the	89
Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness	
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	126
Agenda	
Adoption of the	4
Alaska Synod (1A)	
Message on Human Disability	131
Allegheny Synod Assembly (8C)	
Voices of this Church on the Matter of Sexuality	108
Amendments to Certain Synod Constitutions	
Approval of	146
Announcements	32, 65, 153
Appointments	
Board of ELCA Risk Management	152
Committee of Reference and Counsel	30
Liaison to Unit Program Committee	146
Memorials Committee	29
Audit Committee	
Report of the	142
Audit Committee Charter	
Revision of the	142
Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination	
Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)	102
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	100
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)	101
South Dakota Synod (3C)	102
Southeastern Minnesota Synod (3I)	101
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)	103
Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)	101
Upstate New York Synod (7D)	102
Augsburg Fortress, Publishers	
Election to the Board of	153
 B	
Bible Study	
Bishop Herman R. Yoos III	33
Braille, Large Print, and Audio Materials	122
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	123
New England Synod (7B)	123
Southern Ohio Synod (6F)	123

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 2

Upstate New York Synod (7D)	122
Virginia Synod (9A)	124
Budget and Finance Committee	
2011 Expense Authorization	24
Report of the	24
Revisions to 2010 Synod Mission-Support Plans	25
Revisions to 2011 Synod Mission-Support Plans	26

C

Candidacy Manual	
Amendments to the	150
Christian Education in the ELCA	
Toward Renewed	36
Church Periodical, <i>The Lutheran</i> magazine	
Governing Documents: Proposed Amendments	60
Churchwide Assembly Referrals Directed to Church Council	
Responses to	122
Committee of the Whole	
Closed Session	156
Communal Discernment Task Force Draft Report	37
Compensation Policy	154
Conference of Bishops	
Report of the	53
Congregation Terminating its Relationship with the ELCA	
Governing Documents: Proposed Amendments	48, 54
Constituent Information System, ELCA (ECIS)	
Update on	98
Corporate Social Responsibility	
Issue Paper Amendments	149

D

Dana College	
Endowments That Benefit	141
Deaconess Community Bylaws	
Approval of Amendments to the	148
Decade of Women—Gender Equality, The	
Southwest California Synod (2B)	107
Disabilities	
Message on	66
People Living with Disabilities	68
Disability Message	
Alaska Synod (1A)	131
Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)	133
Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)	132
Nebraska Synod (4A)	131
New England Synod (7B)	133
New Jersey Synod (7A)	132
Pacifica Synod (2C)	134
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)	133

Dwelling in the Word	
Pr. David P. Anderson	10
Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke	38
Bp. Michael L. Burk	94
Pr. Amsalu T. Geleta	53

E

Ecclesiology and Polity	
Primer on	155
ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS)	
Update on	98
ELCA Risk Management	
Appointment to the Board of	152
Election	
Board of an ELCA Seminary	152
Board of Augsburg Fortress Publishers	153
Board of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Incorporated	153
Election of Executive Director	
Pr. Stephen P. Bouman	154
Pr. Rafael Malpica Padilla	33
Election of Program Committee Members	21
Congregational and Synodical Mission	22
Global Mission	21
Mission Advancement	23
Electronic Communications Policy	
Churchwide Organization	88
Eligibility Amendment	
Pension and Other Benefits Plans	149
<i>En Bloc</i> Approval of Certain Items	99
Environmental Stewardship	
Sierra Pacific Synod (2A)	129
Episcopal Church Executive Committee	
Update on The	64
Executive for Administration	
Report of the	33
Executive Session	
Personnel Matters	33
Personnel Matters, Legal Update	154

F

Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E)	
“Stay the Course” in Regard to 2009 Churchwide Assembly Actions	104

G

Governing Documents: Proposed Amendments	
Congregation Terminating Its Relationship with the ELCA	48, 54
Minimum Number of Nominees	63
The Church Periodical, <i>The Lutheran</i> magazine	60

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 4

Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)	
Message on Human Disability	133
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	115
H	
Human Disabilities	
Message on	66
People Living with Disabilities	68
I	
Issue Paper Amendments	
Corporate Social Responsibility	149
J	
Joys and Concerns	31, 153
K	
Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society	
Update on	95
L	
La Crosse Area Synod (5L)	
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	114
Lay Rostered Leaders	
South Carolina Synod (9C)	120
Legal and Constitutional Review Committee Report	39, 54
Continuing Resolutions Related to Redesign of the Churchwide Organization	39
Governing Documents: Proposed Amendments	48, 54
Liaison to Unit Program Committee	
Appointment of Church Council	146
“Living into the Future Together” (LIFT)	
Amendments Related to	10, 27
Task Force Report	35
“Living Lutheran” Web site	
Update on	53
<i>Lutheran</i> magazine, <i>The</i> , Church Periodical	
Governing Documents: Proposed Amendments	60
M	
Management of the Rosters	
Approval of the Manual	148
Memorials Committee	
Appointment of the	29
Message on Human Disability	66
Alaska Synod (1A)	131
Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)	133
Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)	132
Nebraska Synod (4A)	131
New England Synod (7B)	133

New Jersey Synod (7A)	132
Pacifica Synod (2C)	134
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)	133
Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)	
Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination	102
Message on Human Disability	132
Metropolitan New York Synod (7C)	
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	111
Minimum Number of Nominees	
Governing Documents: Proposed Amendments	63
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	
Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness	126
Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination	100
Board of Pension Annuity Commitments	112
Braille, Large Print, and Audio Materials	123
Minutes	
Approval of the	5
Mission Support	
Revisions to 2010 Synod Plans	25
Revisions to 2011 Synod Plans	26

N

National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Incorporated	
Election to the Board of	153
Nebraska Synod (4A)	
Message on Human Disability	131
New England Synod (7B)	
Braille, Large Print, and Audio Materials	123
Message on Human Disability	133
New Jersey Synod (7A)	
Message on Human Disability	132
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	115
Nominations	
One Nominee per Position	63
Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)	
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	111
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)	
Augsburg Fortress Employees and Retirees	101
Northern Illinois Synod (5B)	
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	116

O

Oregon Synod (1E)	
Constitution Amendment	147

P

Pacifica Synod (2C)	
Constitution Amendment	147
Message on Human Disability	134

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 6

Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	
Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)	115
La Crosse Area Synod (5L)	114
Metropolitan New York Synod (7C)	111
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	112
New Jersey Synod (7A)	115
Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)	111
Northern Illinois Synod (5B)	116
South Dakota Synod (3C)	114
Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)	113
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)	110
Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F)	113
Upstate New York Synod Council (7D)	114
Pension and Other Benefits Plans	
Eligibility Amendment	149
“People Living with Disabilities”	68
Personnel Policies	
Compensation Policy	154
Petition Addressed to Church Council	
Receipt of Congregational	135
Planning and Evaluation Committee	
Christian Education in the ELCA, Toward Renewed	36
Communal Discernment Task Force Draft Report	37
Living into the Future Together (LIFT) Task Force Report	35
Report of the	35
Policies and Policy Statements	
Approval of Certain	145
Policies and Procedures of the ELCA	
Authorization to Revise	151
Presiding Bishop	
Report of the	5
Process Observation	
Racial Justice	65, 157
Program and Services Committee	
Development of Social Statements	85
Electronic Communications Policy	88
Message on Human Disability	66
Report of the	66
Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team	
Recommendations of the	96
R	
Racial Justice Process Observation	65, 157
Redesign of the Churchwide Organization	
Continuing Resolutions Related to	39
Reference and Counsel	
Appointment of Committee of	30

Reports	
Budget and Finance Committee	24
Conference of Bishops	53
Executive for Administration	33
Legal and Constitutional Review Committee	39, 54
Planning and Evaluation Committee	35
Presiding Bishop	5
Program and Services Committee	66
Secretary	38
Treasurer	23
Vice President	10
Representational Principles	
Reaffirming the Commitment of the ELCA	156
Retirement Plan	
Amendments to	149
Revisions to 2010 Synod Mission-Support Plans	25
Revisions to 2011 Synod Mission-Support Plans	26
Rostered Leader Profiles	
Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E)	121
Rosters, Management of the	
Approval of the Manual	148
S	
Secretary	
Report of the	38
Seminary	
Election to the Board of a	152
Sierra Pacific Synod (2A)	
Environmental Stewardship	129
Social Statement <i>Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust</i>	
South Carolina Synod (9C)	106
Social Statements	
Development of	85
South Carolina Synod (9C)	
Lay Rostered Leaders	120
Social Statement <i>Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust</i>	106
South Dakota Synod (3C)	
Termination of the Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan	102
Underfunding of ELCA Board of Pensions	114
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)	
Accessibility in the ELCA and South-Central Synod of Wisconsin	105
Southeastern Minnesota Synod (3I)	
Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination	101
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)	
Message on Human Disability	133
Southern Ohio Synod (6F)	
Braille, Large Print, and Audio Materials	123
Southwest California Synod (2B)	
The Decade of Women—Gender Equality	107

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 8

Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)	
Constitution Amendment	147
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	113
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)	
Augsburg Fortress, Publishing	103
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	110
Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)	
Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination	101
“Stay the Course” in Regard to 2009 Churchwide Assembly Actions	
Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E)	104
Synod Constitution Amendments	
Oregon Synod (1E)	147
Pacifica Synod (2C)	147
Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)	147
Synodical Resolutions Directed to the Church Council	
Responses to	100
T	
Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F)	
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	113
Timeline of the Draft Social Statement on Genetics	
West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)	110
Transfer of Candidacy	
Amendments to the Candidacy Manual	150
Treasurer	
Report of the	23
Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E)	
Rostered Leader Profiles	121
Upstate New York Synod (7D)	
Board of Pensions and Augsburg Fortress Pension Issues	102
Braille, Large Print, and Audio Materials	122
Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund	114
V	
Vice President	
Report of the	10
Virginia Synod (9A)	
Braille, Large Print, and Audio Materials	124
Voices of this Church on the Matter of Sexuality	
Allegheny Synod Assembly (8C)	108
W	
Waldorf College	
Endowments That Benefit	140
Waldorf College, Support and Encouragement for	
Western Iowa Synod (5E)	117
Web site	
"Living Lutheran"	53

West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)	
The Timeline of the Draft Social Statement on Genetics	110
Western Iowa Synod (5E)	
Support and Encouragement for Waldorf College	117
World Hunger Appeal	
Update on	54
Worship and Educational Materials	
Braille, Large Print, and Audio	122
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	123
New England Synod (7B)	123
Southern Ohio Synod (6F)	123
Upstate New York Synod (7D)	122
Virginia Synod (9A)	124
Y	
Youth and Young Adult Ministries	
Designation of Funds for	140

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES
November 12-14, 2010
Lutheran Center
Chicago, Illinois**

The sixty-seventh 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. On Friday, November 12, 2010, the Executive Committee met at 10:30 A.M., preceded by a meeting of the Audit Committee and followed by meetings of the Board Development, Budget and Finance, Legal and Constitutional Review, Planning and Evaluation, and Program and Services Committees. The Church Council gathered Friday at 5:30 P.M. for a service of Holy Communion in the Lutheran Center Chapel. The Rev. Amsalu T. Geleta served as presiding minister; the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl preached; Ms. Louise A. Hemstead was the assisting minister; and Mr. Blaire P. Smith served as lector. The council members also met Friday at 7:00 P.M. in closed session for Café Conversations in the Augsburg Room.

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	Pr. Heather S. Lubold
Mr. Baron Blanchard	Ms. Susan W. McArver
Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke	Pr. Raymond A. Miller
Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson	Mr. John S. Munday
Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth	Mr. Mark W. Myers
Pr. Rachel L. Connelly	Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus
Mr. John R. Emery	Pr. J. Pablo Obregon
Pr. Amsalu T. Geleta	Mr. Iván A. Pérez
Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy	Ms. Lynette M. Reitz
Mr. Mark S. Helmke	Ms. Sandra Schlesinger
Ms. Louise A. Hemstead	Pr. Michael J. Schmidt
Mr. William B. Horne II	Mr. Blaire P. Smith
Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger	Pr. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson
Mr. Mark E. Johnson	Pr. Kathryn A. Tiede
Pr. Susan Langhauser	Mr. David Truland
Pr. Steven P. Loy	Pr. Philip R. Wold

Representatives of the Conference of Bishops

Bp. Allan C. Bjornberg	Bp. Margaret G. Payne
Bp. Michael L. Burk	Bp. Harold L. Usgaard (<i>excused</i>)
Bp. Murray D. Finck	Represented by Bp. Peter Rogness
Bp. Callon W. Holloway Jr. (<i>excused</i>)	Bp. Martin D. Wells
Bp. Ralph E. Jones	Bp. Herman R. Yoos III
Bp. Gerald L. Mansholt	

Advisory Members

Youth:

Ms. Arielle Mastellar

Mr. Kyle Teague

Advisors:

Pr. Edmond Yee, Asian and Pacific Islander Association, president, Asian and Pacific Islander Association

Pr. Jaime Dubon, president, Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA (*excused*)

Represented by Ms. Jennifer De Leon

Ms. Elizabeth Gaskins, president, American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association

Mr. Kent L. Henning, colleges and universities

Pr. David J. Keller, Lutheran Services in America

Ms. Kristin Kvam, chair, Justice for Women consulting committee

Ms. Katherine Long, president, European American Association

Pr. O. Dennis Mims, president, African American Lutheran Association (*excused*)

Represented by Pr. Darryl Thompson Powell

Mr. Fuad Nijim, president, Arab and Middle Eastern Association (*excused*)

Represented by Mr. Ghassan Khoury

Pr. Paul D. Ostrem, chair, Church in Society program committee

Pr. Mark R. Ramseth, ELCA seminaries

Pr. Arthur C. “Chris” Repp, chair, Global Mission program committee

Mr. Alfred Sagar, chair, Multicultural Ministries program committee (*excused*)

Mr. Kai S. Swanson, chair, Vocation and Education program committee

Ms. Janet Thompson, chair, Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees (*excused*)

Ms. Deborah Wilson, secretary, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission program committee

Ms. Beth Wrenn, president, Women of the ELCA

Resource Persons

Office of the Presiding Bishop:

Pr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration

Pr. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator for the malaria campaign and the HIV and AIDS strategy

Pr. Marcus R. Kunz, executive for discernment of contextual and theological issues

Pr. Walter S. May, executive for synodical and constituent relations

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 (*excused*)

Pr. Robert G. Schaefer, executive for worship and liturgical resources

Pr. A. Craig Settlage, director for mission support

Ms. Else B. Thompson, executive for human resources

Office of the Secretary:

Pr. Ruth E. Hamilton, executive for Office of the Secretary administration

Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel

Mr. Frank F. Imhoff, director for official documentation

Ms. Mary Beth Nowak, executive assistant to the secretary

Mr. David A. Ullrich, associate general counsel

Office of the Treasurer:

Section Executives and Staff:

Mr. Jonathan H. Beyer, executive for information technology
Mr. Steve Caputo, support specialist, information technology
Ms. Karen M. Rathbun, executive for management services (*excused*)

Program Unit Executives:

Pr. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission
Pr. Brenda K. Smith, director for discipleship
Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director, Women of the ELCA
Pr. Sherman G. Hicks, executive director, Multicultural Ministries
Pr. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director, Church in Society
Ms. Beth A. Lewis, president and chief executive officer, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
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, ELCA Foundation, and executive, Development Services
Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer, ELCA Board of Pensions
Mr. Daniel J. Lehmann, editor, *The Lutheran* magazine
Ms. Eva M. Roby, executive vice president for administration, Mission Investment Fund
Pr. Howard E. Wennes, transitional leader, Mission Advancement

Press:

Mr. John R. Brooks, director, ELCA News Service
Ms. Elizabeth M. Hunter, *The Lutheran* magazine

Ecumenical Guests:

Ms. Lelanda Lee, The Episcopal Church (*excused*)
Represented by Ms. Stephanie Cheney
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]
The United Methodist Church [position vacant]

Registered Guests:

Pr. Kim L. Beckmann, legislative team, Goodsoil
Mr. Tim Fisher, legislative assistant, Lutherans Concerned/North America
Pr. Richard A. Mathisen, steering committee member, Lutheran CORE
Mr. Eric Peterson, legislative team, Goodsoil
Mr. Wayne B. Powell, president, Lenoir-Rhyne University
Ms. Amalia Vagts, executive director, Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries
Mr. George C. Watson, secretary, Southeast Michigan Synod

**Saturday, November 13, 2010
Plenary Session I**

The first plenary session of the sixty-seventh meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was called to order by Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and chair of the Church Council, at 8:18 A.M. The session began with Morning Prayer, which was led by the Rev. Raymond A. Miller.

Vice President Peña welcomed those present and noted those who were excused for various reasons. The chair announced that Ms. Judith E. Barlow-Roberts had resigned from the Church Council to accept the position of director for racial justice ministries within the churchwide organization. He pointed out the new microphones and updated sound system in the Council Room, and he provided protocols for using the microphones during the meeting. The chair gave instructions on how to locate revised pages of the agenda and supporting documents for the meeting. He mentioned that times were appointed throughout the meeting for voicing the “joys and concerns” of council members, and he gave them the e-mail address of the Rev. Cheryl M. Peterson, assistant professor of systematic theology, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, who had asked to receive questions in advance of a primer on ecclesiology and polity that she was scheduled to present by WebEx the afternoon of Sunday, November 14, 2010.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
(Agenda I.G.)**

Background:

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

Church Council Action:

Vice President Peña called attention to the first item on the agenda, the adoption of the agenda.
Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA, moved the following action.

Moved;

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

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

VOTED:

CC10.11.38 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was approved.

Secretary Swartling called the council’s attention to the deadlines in the schedule to remove constitutional provisions from *en bloc* consideration and to remove other items from *en bloc* consideration.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

(Agenda I.H.)

Background:

The minutes of the April 9–11, 2010, and August 4, 2010, meetings of the Church Council had been distributed to council members electronically. Minutes of the open session portions of the meeting on October 8, 2010, were uploaded online to Net Community. Minutes for meetings held in executive session had been added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings on February 23, 2010, April 9, 2010, June 18, 2010, and August 4, 2010, were distributed electronically to members. Minutes of the open session portions of the October 8, 2010, meeting had been uploaded to Net Community. Minutes for meetings held in executive session had been added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

Council members were given opportunity to submit written notations on typographical errors in the distributed text of the minutes to the executive for Office of the Secretary administration. Corrections were entered into the protocol copies of the minutes.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña noted that minutes of several previous meetings had been distributed electronically and were available to the council members on Net Community.

Secretary David D. Swartling made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To approve the minutes of the April 9–11, 2010, August 4, 2010, and October 8, 2010, meetings of the Church Council; and

To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the February 23, 2010, April 9, 2010, June 18, 2010, August 4, 2010, and October 8, 2010, meetings.

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

VOTED:

CC10.11.39

To approve the minutes of the April 9–11, 2010, August 4, 2010, and October 8, 2010, meetings of the Church Council; and

To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the February 23, 2010, April 9, 2010, June 18, 2010, August 4, 2010, and October 8, 2010, meetings.

Vice President Peña declared the motion approved.

The chair called on the presiding bishop for his report.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

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

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the ELCA, reported:

"I begin with familiar words from Philippians, the first chapter and third verse: 'I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now' (Philippians 1:3 NRSV). Words of thanksgiving flow throughout all of Scripture as our response to the grace and mercy of Christ Jesus, and words of gratitude shape our relationship with one another.

“This morning I begin with words of thanksgiving to God for all those who have participated in and been affected by the recent redesign of the churchwide organization and the reductions in our work force. I want to begin by thanking all those who have served on the design team. On top of all their other responsibilities, they have spent endless hours in a really short time: Wyvetta Bullock, Christina Jackson-Skelton, Jonathan Beyer, Sherman Hicks, Kenneth Inskip, and Else Thompson. [Applause] I also want to thank David Swartling and his staff in the Office of the Secretary, who have accompanied us in this process, and you see the fruits of their labors. Thank you.

“I wish I could name each person who has served so faithfully and well in this organization during their years of service but are now no longer serving with us because of the reduction in work force. As you have occasion to do so, please thank them. But this morning I do want to thank, in particular, two colleagues by name because you have elected them to their service, which is now coming to completion: the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Larson, whom you elected to serve as executive director of the program unit for Church in Society, and the Rev. Dr. Stan Olson, whom you elected to serve as executive director of the program unit for Vocation and Education.

“You have come to know Rebecca as a passionate, prophetic leader who continually calls this church to be a church in society, responding to disasters, advocating for justice and peace, and working for immigration reform. With incredible gifts as a theologian, she has accompanied the process of developing social statements. Moreover, I am convinced that, without her artistry of words and the depth of her theological understanding, we would not have had that rich social statement on human sexuality that was adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

“Stan Olson brought together critical pieces of the ELCA ecology in the formation of the Vocation and Education unit. We cannot be this church without their work and our interdependence with them. They include campus ministries, outdoor ministries, youth and young adult ministries, our work with schools, higher education, and most particularly his work with the process of calling and forming leaders for this church as we work with candidacy committees and seminaries. He has done that so effectively that last week he was elected president of Wartburg Seminary. He has taken the work of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on ministry policies and, given only the precision of Stan Olson, has developed those actions into policies for this whole church.

“So, I would ask you on this day to join me in giving gratitude to God for the leadership of Rebecca Larson and Stan Olson. [Applause]

“I do not know how it is for you in your life, but in mine it seems that I create a lot of stress for myself and others and even conflict around expectations—the expectations others hold for me that I may not meet, the expectations I hold of others, or even of myself. I’ve often quoted the saying I saw in the office of a pastor in Florida, ‘Unspoken expectations are resentments in waiting.’

“So as we turn to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly and the next three years, this morning I invite you to reflect with me upon three questions regarding expectations.

“First, what can God expect from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the next three years? So, what do you think? What can God expect from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America? Do we want to say, ‘Well, God, we highly recommend that you expect past and present trends to continue?’ or ‘Yup, God, you can pretty well expect a continued loss of between 50,000 and 90,000 baptized members a year. Yup, God, you can pretty well expect a continued decrease in worship attendance. You can expect that giving to your work in and beyond congregations should continue to fall, God.’ Should we tell God to continue to lower God’s expectations of what the Holy Spirit can do in us and through us? Or: ‘Maybe it would be better, God, if you just hold on and not have any expectations for this church as we get through this period as individuals, congregations, and leaders decide if they want to be part of and support the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or not. God, maybe this would be a good time to take a sabbatical year for any expectations from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.’

“It may be presumptuous of me to speak for God this morning, but somehow I think God has much higher expectations of us and for us than that. Maybe that isn’t completely accurate, because we are Lutherans after all. We know we are both saints and sinners, and at any given moment we will be confessing and repenting of our sins. And yet, God must have high expectations for us, because as much as we continue sinning and repenting and confessing, God keeps forgiving us, right? That would indicate that a God with steadfast love and mercy towards God’s people must have expectations for how those people will respond to that grace and mercy.

“So, what can God expect from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the next three years? God, you can expect that the good news of Jesus Christ will continue to have free course among us. We are going to get so jazzed—that will shake God’s expectations right there—by the good news that in Christ we are a new creation that we are going to want to share that good news passionately and persistently with our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Yes, God, you can expect that we will be a church of everyday evangelists numbering four million plus.

“And, God, you can expect that the pastors of this church are going to continue to proclaim the good news of salvation in Jesus’ name with evangelical passion and perseverance, with the creativity of the poet, the courage of the prophet, the wisdom of the sage and the humility of a forgiven sinner. Maybe not all of those qualities will be in every sermon, but they will be there.

“God, you can expect that your living word will continue at the center of this church’s life and witness—the Word of God made flesh in Jesus the Christ, the word proclaimed as law and gospel, your word recorded in the holy Scriptures. Yes, God, we mean it when we say we are a Book of Faith church.

“God, you can expect that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for the next three years, will continue to define ourselves first on the basis of our relatedness to others in the Body of Christ, not on the basis of what sets us apart. God, we take very seriously that you have entrusted to us the ministry and message of reconciliation. And at least for us, God, we do not believe the Body of Christ is served by further fragmentation of any of its parts. Rather, we are committed to the call you have given us to further the gift of unity with others in the one holy catholic and apostolic church. We will do that by also making unity through witness and service our task so that we will experience your gifts of both unity and diversity.

“God, you can expect that we take very seriously Jesus’ words on the plain when he said, ‘Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be fed’ (Luke 6: 20-21 NRSV). So, God, we in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are going to join with people of other faiths and those who claim no religious convictions, and we are going to work tirelessly to feed the hungry and serve the poor. But we know we cannot do that work without simultaneously addressing the root causes of poverty and hunger in the world. Therefore, we will advocate for just policies and practices that reduce hunger and poverty.

“This commitment is what I said to President Obama when I met with him last week. We began by talking about how many church bodies, congregations, and members are represented in the National Council of Churches. Then I said, ‘Mr. President, this morning I want to call to mind for us the words of the prophet who said that finally God does not look upon the faith of God’s people and listen first to the eloquence of our preaching or the melodies of our songs or the beauty of our sanctuaries. But God describes and defines and sees the faith of God’s people by looking first upon the condition of those who live in poverty among us. Therefore, Mr. President, we in the religious community are ready to partner with the public sector and the private sector to end hunger and reduce poverty, believing that it is not God’s intention that one in five children in the United States live in poverty, as is true today. It is not a desire of God and God’s creation of God’s children that almost two billion people will spend this day looking for bread and shelter from violence.’ So I said, ‘We in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Mr. President, are ready to get to work with you to extend the child nutrition bill, to work for the creation of jobs, especially for those who live in poverty, looking especially to greening jobs and extending unemployment benefits for those for whom finding work is hardest.’

“Yes, God, you can expect with the power of your Holy Spirit that we will be a church of over four million people who seek each day to live out the covenant you made with us in baptism. We will proclaim the Good News of God in Christ through word and deed. We will serve our neighbor, following the example of Jesus, and we will strive for justice and peace in all the world.

“And, God, as shocking as it may seem, you can expect some joy from us in our serving and believing, like the joy I experienced on a bus in New Orleans this week as we were being transported to the opening worship for the National Council of Churches General Assembly. I sat next to an ELCA layperson who told me about his Sunday School class. This fall, in his rural Iowa congregation where about 40 or 50 people worship, he has five new students in fifth grade to seventh grade, not one of whom has ever been exposed to the biblical story. He said, ‘Can you imagine what it is like to have all five students never having heard of Abraham or the birth of Jesus, and how excited I am to see their excitement in the wonder of these stories of God’s promises and God’s people?’

“Yes, God, you can expect joy in believing and serving. And, God, as humble as we are about our sinfulness and as ready as we are to make daily confession, you can pretty well expect, at least for the next three years, that we are no longer are going to describe ourselves on the basis of our timidity, but in our faith in Jesus Christ, our joy, our boldness and our courage, our believing and our testifying. So, God, maybe you should raise your expectations of us for carrying out your work of restoring community in the life of the world in Jesus’ name. And, oh yes, God, we know that none of these expectations will be met absent the power of your Holy Spirit among us.

“A second question: What can this church expect from us who have been called and elected to positions of leadership? Years ago Walter Brueggeman reminded us of what Pastor Andrea Degroot-Nesdal told us in her sermon yesterday, that is, what fear does to us. Fear causes us to be possessive of what we have, distrustful of others, especially those in leadership. Finally, fear makes us downright anti-neighborly. In the current culture of fear in which we live, both in church and in society, we face the daily challenge as people in leadership of proving ourselves worthy of the trust of the people who have called and elected us to these positions.

“We have shown that we are worthy of the trust given to us to shape the ministry and mission of this church within the resources that this church provides for us. You also have done so in authorizing the movement towards the design proposal in August and in adopting that proposal in October. The Executive Committee, Planning and Evaluation Committee, LIFT task force, the Conference of Bishops, and churchwide colleagues assisted by participating in the development of that proposal.

“This church can expect from us as leaders that the two priorities for mission, which are foundational to the redesign of this churchwide organization, will continue to drive and lead this church. We are going to work collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies, institutions, and other partners to accompany congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission, and we will build capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and work for justice and peace in all the world.

“I think this church can expect from us as leaders not only that we will model generosity in our own stewardship, but also will continue to hold each other accountable. We have kind of dropped the ball on the [Board of Pensions] wellness wheel. It’s time to bring it out and have those one-to-one conversations with each other, asking each other, ‘How are you doing in stewarding all the parts of your life? How are you doing in growing towards a tithe and beyond a tithe in your own giving?’

“This church can expect that we will lead as persons of faith. The center of our work will always be the gathering of the assembly around the means of grace, and we will lead by living our lives dwelling richly in the word of Christ and being constant in prayer. Leaders who are not fed regularly on Christ, the Bread of Life, will be a famished lot.

“At the heart of our leading will be our deep, rich understanding of a Lutheran interpretation of the faith that has come down through 500 years of the ongoing Lutheran Reformation, and yet also the conviction that a church of the Reformation is always being reformed. We will lead believing that this is Christ’s church and not ours. This church belongs to Jesus Christ, and we are here because God has called us by name. It is through baptism that we share in God’s grace. Christ’s church is not ours to control. And so let us lead this church by consistently making the resounding and clear call to all that there is a place for you in this church.

“Two weeks ago, I decided to respond to the continued bullying of those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender—or even identified by others as being so—by making a video in the YouTube series, ‘It Gets Better.’ I spoke in that brief two-and-a-half-minute video of the power of words to harm and to heal, acknowledging that sometimes it has been the words of Christians that have bullied and harmed gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth and young adults, and sometimes it has been our silence. But I also spoke words of promise, seeking to offer hope in Christ. I said to each one who viewed, ‘You are a beloved child of God. Your life carries the dignity and beauty of God’s creation. God has called you by name and claimed you forever. There is a place for you in this church and in the world.’

“I never imagined how those words of God’s grace in a matter of hours and days would go so viral through the means of social networking. I have been moved daily by the responses—not to what I said, but what God was saying through me. In New Orleans I was sitting with a mother describing what it was like to watch that video with her lesbian daughter, both sobbing tears. Her daughter turned to her and said, ‘Mom, does he really mean it? Is there a place for me in this church?’ A young man from Utah wrote to me saying, ‘I have never been a person of faith in my life, but my

friend sent this to my Facebook page and I watched it. Do you mean this, bishop? I need to learn more about this church.’

“Friends, do you realize how many people out there have never heard and are longing to hear God’s gracious word of invitation and salvation in Jesus Christ, longing to hear God’s ‘yes’ to us in Jesus? Let us as leaders—let this whole church—not become so preoccupied with our losses and our diminishment and our internal controversies that we don’t seize the opportunity that we have to bear witness to our living, confident faith in God’s grace, saying to all, especially those at the margins, there is a place for you in this church. This is an evangelical moment given to us like none other, because we live in a culture where most people see the Christian witness as an obsession with drawing lines in the sand and expending enormous energies defining who is on the right side of that line and who is on the rejected side. We know from the biblical witness, however, to beware of drawing lines in the sand, because Jesus is going to be standing on both sides of the line of the sand. For that, he got nailed to a cross.

“Let’s take this moment to continue to lead this church in a manner that shows, in this church at least, that dialogue isn’t just possible, it is expected. There is room in this church for people of one faith, one baptism, one spirit, who have deep, deep disagreements about how that faith is lived out in a complex and changing world. The world, the Body of Christ, plagued by incivility and willful misunderstanding, needs us to be courageous leaders who are willing to say such behavior stops with us and will not be tolerated in this church. Last night we modeled a different way to have respectful, honest conversation based upon mutual trust and regard for one another.

“Let’s lead in these challenging economic times by resisting the temptation to become turned inward, preoccupied with our own survival—whether it is of the churchwide organization or your congregation, synod, institution or agency of this church. Let us continue to tend to the whole ecology of the ELCA. Let us lead in a way that recognizes that our future is inseparable from the future of the whole Body of Christ, all of our ecumenical partners, all of our global companions.

“Let us lead in a way that reflects our deep conviction that both unity and diversity are works and gifts of the Holy Spirit, that we will not let unity turn into a demand for uniformity in all things, and that we will continue to confront the scandalous realities of sexism and racism that turn our differences into systems of power and privilege for domination and exploitation.

“Let us lead in a way that makes it absolutely clear that there is a central narrative woven through our work and our worship and our preaching and our witnessing. After the midterm elections, I was talking to a president and CEO of a large communications consulting firm. She has worked with major candidates for office for years in this country. I said, ‘What do you think went wrong with President Obama and the Democratic Party that they could fall so quickly and so far in such a brief time?’ She said, ‘They never found a compelling narrative in which the American people could find their voice and story.’ We have been given such a compelling narrative that defines our work, our witness, and our lives of faith. Edwin Searcy describes it this way: ‘It is the narrative of the movement from the aching loss of Good Friday for the forsaken absence of Saturday to the astonishing newness of Easter Day that stands in stark contrast to the figural narrative provided by a culture of satiation and self-reliant success.’¹

“As those days of searching continued for our colleague, James Nelson, who was lost on his solo hike in the Colorado mountains, the family gathered with Amber, his fiancée. The ranger said, ‘Would you like to have a chaplain?’ They said, ‘Oh, yes.’ He said, ‘Would you mind if we had a Lutheran chaplain?’ They said, ‘No, that would be OK.’ So, Pastor Scott Beebe, an ELCA pastor trained to be a chaplain to such searches, began to accompany them on their journey. What would Pastor Scott Beebe have to say? To what would Amber’s and James’s family hold if it were not for the figural narrative of the Paschal mystery of Jesus? For in their moments of aching loss and forsaken absence, they could cling to the cross, the sign of God’s presence in those moments—God’s merciful loving presence—and they could live in the promise of resurrection to new life in Christ. It is this narrative that will continue to be woven throughout our living and our leading, our believing and our following.

“So, one last brief question: What can we expect from God? Last week I was asked by one of the writers of *The Lutheran* magazine to share a favorite Bible verse that has had meaning throughout my life. I hate those questions. I

¹ Edwin Searcy, “Seven Working Assumptions for Preaching in a Missional Church,” *The Gospel and Our Culture*, vol. 15, nos. 1 and 2 (March and June 2003) 3.

never have one, and I can't remember my confirmation verse, so there! But I did begin to think about the 103rd Psalm. That psalm was read at every family celebration in my family of origin. When you are young and your birthday cake is on the table, but the candles aren't lit, and the gifts are sitting off on a table, and you know that you will not hear the song 'Happy Birthday,' taste the cake, and open the gifts until somebody reads that long 103rd Psalm—you wonder why it is my favorite. It is because the deeper memory is of one verse in that psalm: 'The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love' (Psalm 103:8 NRSV). You can bet your life that God will be faithful to God's promise, because God bet the life of Jesus on God's faithfulness, and in Christ we live and lead."

The council responded with applause.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked Presiding Bishop Hanson for his report, noting there was no written report of the presiding bishop, but the oral report would be transcribed and distributed to the Church Council.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. David P. Anderson to reflect on "Dwelling in the Word." Pr. Anderson related an experience with a parishioner who, near the end of her life, expressed confidence in God.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

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

Vice President Carlos E. Peña relinquished the chair to Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, who called for the report of the vice president.

Vice President Peña read Philippians 4:12–13 and reflected on the rich moments and the low moments of his life. He questioned whether he felt that God was closer in adversity or in prosperity.

Recalling the Gospel lesson of All Saints Sunday (Luke 6:20–31), Vice President Peña said the challenging times confronting this church and country amplify Christ's call to do God's will, share the gospel, witness in the world to alleviate poverty, and work for justice and peace.

Vice President Peña noted the readings said nothing about exacting revenge or about feeling sorry for oneself. Instead, he remarked, they advocate patience and trust.

From the readings, the vice president concluded "it is time to move forward, boldly stepping forward, doing what we know is right, sharing the promise of the gospel, and God will take care of the rest." He closed his report with prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Vice President Peña for his report, and the vice president returned to the chair.

AMENDMENTS RELATED TO "LIVING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER" (LIFT)

(Agenda III.E.1.a.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 1a)

Background:

The progress report of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force was provided to the Church Council in Exhibit E, Parts 2a–2d. Detailed information related to proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* was included in the section of the report related to "Sustainability, Structure, and Governance."

Proposed amendments related to the recommendations of the LIFT task force were provided in Exhibit G, Part 1a. The council's Legal and Constitutional Review Committee had reviewed the proposed amendments.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña introduced the report of the Executive Committee. He outlined the proposed amendments to the ELCA constitution being recommended by the LIFT task force in four sections:

- Churchwide Assembly
- Church Council and Conference of Bishops

- Program Committees
- Interrelationships

The chair suggested that the council members discuss each section of proposed amendments, entertain any further amendments, and take action on all the amendments. He called on Secretary David D. Swartling to lead the discussion.

Secretary Swartling gave the council background information about the work of the LIFT task force and the methods it used to develop the proposed amendments to the ELCA constitution. The first section of proposed amendments would set processes in motion to establish a three-year cycle of Churchwide Assemblies beginning after 2013, he reported.

Ms. Susan W. McArver requested more information about differences in the governance of this church between biennial Churchwide Assemblies and between triennial Churchwide Assemblies.

Secretary Swartling replied that the schedule for Synod Assemblies would continue. The Church Council was the interim authority of the churchwide organization between Churchwide Assemblies, and that authority may expand in a three-year cycle. He also responded that concerns had been expressed to the LIFT task force about the limits of implementing actions of one Churchwide Assembly within a two-year period while gearing up for the next Churchwide Assembly. Triennial assemblies would slow that process. The LIFT task force also discussed other possible means of processing legislation interdependently during the three-year cycle, such as in regional gatherings, theological gatherings, or gatherings of youth, women, and men.

Hearing no further questions, the chair asked the secretary to present the second section of proposed amendments.

Secretary Swartling said the second section included two proposals from the LIFT task force, one regarding the Church Council and the other regarding the Conference of Bishops. The LIFT task force noted the geographical emphasis of the Church Council's membership, but the election process did not include the expertise the council needed. The proposed solution was to allow for council members to be elected at large, he stated. Thirty-three members would be elected using current methods, but the Church Council would be able to assess its expertise and other representational needs and to instruct the Nominating Committee on at-large candidacies. To open those candidacies to this whole church, the limit of council members from a single synod would be amended from one to two, he remarked. Feedback to the LIFT task force indicated that the Conference of Bishops was underutilized in the governance of this church, Secretary Swartling added. The LIFT task force recommended a constitutional amendment to give the chair of the Conference of Bishops voice and vote privileges on the Church Council.

Mr. Mark W. Myers suggested that the wording of the proposed amendment on the size of the Church Council could be interpreted to allow for up to 78 members.

Secretary Swartling answered that the proposed 33 to 45 members was a range and not a sum of members.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke questioned the timing of the Church Council recognizing a need in its membership that could not be addressed until the next Churchwide Assembly in three years.

Secretary Swartling recalled that nominations for the Church Council are made by synods a year in advance of the Churchwide Assembly, giving the council time to assess its needs for representation.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger asked whether the previous answer assumed the synods' nominees for each position on the council would be homogenous and that the election process would not eliminate a candidate with a certain expertise.

Secretary Swartling responded that, without guessing who will win an election, it is possible for the Church Council to use the slate of candidates to determine needed expertise. The proposed process may not be perfect, but it would more accurate than the current process.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon said he understood that the current election procedures were already designed to include the representation that the proposal sought.

Secretary Swartling replied that the proposal began with the current procedures and added possibilities to address resignations or representational principles that were not met.

Mr. Mark E. Johnson cautioned the council not to become dependent on the possibility of adding at-large members, thus undermining the purposes of the nominating process to meet this church's representational principles.

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus noted that Ms. Judith E. Barlow-Roberts was a young, African American woman, and her resignation from the Church Council created several needs for representation that at-large positions could meet.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, asked Secretary Swartling whether the LIFT task force proposal to amend the limit of council members from a single synod from one to two implied that the 32 synods currently without members on the council was not a large enough pool from which to nominate at-large members.

The secretary responded that the task force's intent was that a national pool would provide flexibility for the Church Council's work and be in the best interest of this church from a governance perspective.

Ms. Brakke expressed the concern that the availability of 12 at-large positions on the Church Council would be a temptation to fill all these positions. She suggested that five at-large positions may be enough.

Secretary Swartling stated that, while hers was a legitimate concern, he would not advocate that there be 12 at-large members of the council at first. The LIFT task force had proposed 12 at-large as being up to one-third of the current 37 members of the Church Council. The secretary added that the Conference of Bishops had raised the concern that proposal could reduce the frequency of nominations from paired synods.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson asked for clarification of at which point in the discussion council members could offer amendments to the LIFT proposals.

Secretary Swartling suggested the question on LIFT proposals could be divided. He pointed out that the chair advised saving amendments until after the discussion.

Pr. Sorenson asked whether the LIFT proposals were to be considered *en bloc* and whether items could be removed from *en bloc* after the discussion.

Secretary Swartling indicated that the LIFT proposals were not to be considered *en bloc*, but other proposed constitutional amendments were to be considered *en bloc*.

Mr. Baron Blanchard pointed out that youth advisors would be removed from the Church Council, and there was no specific mention of youth representation on the council.

Secretary Swartling responded that one of the representational principles to be embedded in the instructions to the Nominating Committee would be to nominate young candidates. If that principle was not met in the elections to the regular 33 positions, it could be met in the at-large positions, he remarked.

Ms. Sandra Schlesinger asked whether half of the council members would be elected to six-year terms at each triennial Churchwide Assembly, and she expressed the concern that a larger council would reduce the involvement of quieter members. She added that synods were directed to nominate a lay female, for example, and expertise was not considered.

Secretary Swartling replied that the allocation process would remain unchanged but could be changed in the future. The election process continued to be a matter of discussion, especially among this church's separately incorporated ministries, and the proposal defers many decisions until 2013. He stated that the issue can be addressed in a number of ways and that the concept of triennial Churchwide Assemblies could be dealt with first on its own merit.

Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy referred to the concern raised by Mr. Myers about the proposed amendment to provision 14.31. of the ELCA constitution:

The voting members of the Church Council shall consist of the four churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and at least 33 and not more than 45 other persons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly.

She suggested that replacing the second "and" with "but" may make it clear that 45 would be the maximum number of Church Council members. She also asked whether the youth advisors would speak to this proposal.

Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson pointed out that the two youth advisors to the council are named by the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO), and she questioned how the council's relationship with the LYO would continue. She also cautioned that defining "youth and young adult" representation on the council as being provided by anyone under the age of 30 may result in less representation of people 18–20 years of age. She said "youth" and "young adults" should be defined and represented separately.

Ms. Arielle Mastellar added that she was a college student, while some "young adults" may be married with children, and the other youth advisor, Mr. Kyle Teague, was a high school student. She reasoned that "youth" and "young adults" are very different groups of people.

Ms. Kristin Kvam asked why her advisory position as chair of the Justice for Women consulting committee was not among the proposed deletions.

Secretary Swartling indicated that deletion may be included in the next section of proposed amendments which would eliminate program committees. He went on to explain that the travel, housing, and related expenses of advisory members attending Church Council meetings were paid by the churchwide organization, and eliminating the advisory status will change who pays those expenses.

Ms. Kvam asked whether the theological discernment program would be able to pay the expenses of a volunteer to attend a Church Council meeting.

The secretary hesitated to answer the question as hypothetical but suggested such questions would need to be dealt with individually.

Ms. Kvam described the perspective that staff would be more likely to serve the council as advisors under the LIFT task force proposal, and added that at times it may be important for the council to hear from members not on staff.

Secretary Swartling raised the issue of stewardship and suggested that the wise use of technology may be able to include people without physically bringing them to meetings.

Ms. Kvam requested the number of advisors who regularly attend Church Council meetings.

Ms. Graddy requested the schedule of which synods nominate which types of people to the Church Council.

Ms. Mastellar pointed out that the council has two youth advisors but could have only one youth advisor.

The Rev. Philip R. Wold asked Secretary Swartling whether the LIFT task force had considered recommending that the synods elect members of the Church Council rather than the Churchwide Assembly.

The secretary replied that the Churchwide Assembly is the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization, and the Church Council is its board of directors. From a governance perspective, it makes sense for the Churchwide Assembly to elect council members.

Pr. Wold suggested that, in the Church Council's instructions to the Nominating Committee regarding candidates for at-large positions on the council, it consider giving preference to under-represented synods.

Ms. McArver stressed the importance of youth representation at council meetings and asked whether an at-large position on the council could be designated for someone under the age of 21 and another position for someone between the ages of 21 and 30.

Secretary Swartling responded that the LIFT task force proposal is designed to provide the Church Council with as much flexibility as possible to define the at-large positions.

Pr. Obregon emphasized that eliminating advisors will send a negative message to members of the ELCA.

The secretary replied that it will be important for this church's leaders to be able to explain that the council will hear the voices of the advisors in places other than meetings, and the recommendation was meant to address budget realities.

Hearing no other comments on that section of constitutional amendments, Vice President Peña asked Secretary Swartling to present the third section of recommendations.

The secretary said the third section of recommendations from the LIFT task force dealt with the elimination of program committees. He noted that one amendment to provision 12.41.31. of the ELCA constitution would give the Church Council authority to appoint advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Secretary Swartling gave a brief history of program committees and their roles in the ELCA. He stated that the LIFT task force considered the purposes of program committees and explored other means of fulfilling them. The secretary added that this proposal had elicited the greatest amount of feedback.

The Rev. Brenda K. Smith noted that she represented the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) unit. At its recent meeting, the EOCM program committee discussed the LIFT task force's recommendation and adopted a resolution, which had been distributed to the Church Council members.

Ms. Deborah Wilson read the final paragraph of the resolution:

RESOLVED . . . that the members of the EOCM program committee, elected by the "highest legislative authority" in the ELCA, do call the ELCA Church Council to propose alternative ways to harvest and use grassroots voices and make a proposal to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly for such use which is both fiscally responsible and in accordance with the best use of the priesthood of all believers within the ELCA as a whole -or- remove the recommendation to eliminate program committees before sending the document to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly for consideration.

She described the discussion of the program committee that resulted in its resolution, stressing its perspective that program committees provided the churchwide organization with a conduit to this church's grass roots that would be eliminated along with the program committees.

Secretary Swartling clarified that the EOCM resolution is not a parliamentary motion. He suggested the Church Council vote separately on the third section of constitutional amendments recommended by the LIFT task force.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy expressed the view that the tension of the proposal was between fiscal responsibility and the character of this church, and he cautioned that this church not be so fiscally careful that it undermines its ability to be the kind of church it had committed itself to be.

Pr. Hunsinger asked whether the performance reviews of unit executives stressed the importance of the leaders getting away from their offices and maintaining contact with the membership of the ELCA. He also suggested that the cost of operating a program committee may pay two salaried positions in the unit.

The Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, responded that staff members of the churchwide organization work through consultation both in person and through surveys, across this church. She noted that the new design of the churchwide organization retained the network of directors of evangelical mission in each synod, which indicated its emphasis on maintaining contact with local ministries.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson stated that the perception was that the churchwide organization was out of touch with the membership of this church, and the churchwide organization could counter that perception through structures and relationships. Program committees provided that connection to the grass roots, he said, but he questioned whether they were the most effective communication means available. The perception may have been that the churchwide organization was isolating itself by eliminating program committees, he remarked, while greater interaction with the membership of this church may be possible through other means.

Ms. Niedringhaus, who served as the council's liaison to the EOCM program committee, mentioned that the EOCM resolution grew out of a feeling that the program committee had no voice in the redesign process and that, through its elimination, the churchwide organization was losing its connection to this church's grass roots. A grassroots conversation ensued, she added.

The Rev. Paul D. Ostrem, chair of the Church in Society (CS) program committee, told the council that the CS program committee had raised similar concerns at a recent Web-based meeting. It also mentioned the "ambassador" role of its members as they go back to their synods and congregations and represent the work of the unit.

Pr. Sorenson drew attention to the "-or-" in the EOCM resolution and asked whether the council could do both—retaining program committees and exploring ways of making them more effective, especially by involving them more closely in the council's committee structure.

The Rev. Donald J. McCoid noted that ecumenical and inter-religious relations did not have a program committee but received input from across this church through the Lutheran Ecumenical Representatives Network, which had a representative in each of 62 synods, regional conference calls, and a liaison relationship with the Conference of Bishops.

Ms. McArver recalled the comments of Pr. Loy regarding the tension between fiscal responsibility and the character of this church. She remarked that moving from biennial to triennial assemblies and eliminating program committees was not merely a perception but a reality that the churchwide organization was cutting itself off from the voices of more people.

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education (VE) program unit, noted that VE comprised more than a dozen distinct programs, and the 15 elected members of its program committee appointed advisory members to represent almost every program. The new Congregational and Synodical Mission unit brings together the programs of Vocation and Education plus the primary elements of three other former units, and he questioned whether the grassroots voices of all those elements could be represented at meetings of a Congregational and Synodical Mission program committee. It would still need other means to hear the diversity of voices concerning the unit's work, he concluded.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society program unit, described the program committee's regular summary reporting function for its unit. Without program committees, she recommended the Church Council consider alternatives for capturing the archival reports of churchwide organization units.

Pr. Loy asked how many program committees existed before the new design and how many there would be if they were retained in the new design.

Pr. Bullock reported there were five unincorporated program units that had program committees, and the new design had three unincorporated units.

Pr. Loy asked whether each of the three units would benefit from having a program committee, or whether some would benefit from having program committees while others would benefit from some other system.

The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission program unit, described the issue as designing the best structure to remain engaged with the broad base of this church so that its voice and concerns may shape the work of the churchwide organization. Various structures had been discussed already, he said, depicting the Global Mission unit as using companion synod liaisons, the Conference of Bishops, and regional global mission networks. Units of the churchwide organization need a common method of engaging the base of this church while being fiscally responsible, he said, and the units will develop wider networks within that structure to harvest grassroots input.

Pr. Loy mentioned what he envisioned as an opportunity for the council to be descriptive rather than prescriptive—describing the means available or prescribing program committees.

Secretary Swartling noted that the phrase “program committee” appeared several times in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*. Removing program committees would provide flexibility for the units, rather than making the committees part of the governing documents.

The Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod, reported that the Church Council had discussed the elimination of program committees more than the Conference of Bishop had when it accepted the concept, and he gave his personal opinion of why he thought that was the case. Engaging the grass roots is a critical function of synods and their bishops, and recent reductions in finances and staff have prompted the synods to adopt means of doing that more effectively, primarily through streamlined structures. The “-or-“ in the EOCM resolution illustrated that this church does not have the capacity to do both, he said, and a governance-mandated model of engaging the grass roots may eliminate other, more effective means.

The Rev. Howard E. Wennes, transitional leader of the Mission Advancement unit, stated that Mission Advancement incorporated more than 20 means of sending and receiving messages. Giving the response to Presiding Bishop Hanson’s video as an example, he said he was amazed by the means available to this church to communicate.

Hearing no further comments, Vice President Peña asked the secretary to present the fourth section of constitutional amendments the LIFT task force recommended.

Secretary Swartling explained that the task force’s fourth proposal stemmed from its conversations about involving this church’s grass roots in shaping the churchwide organization’s work in different ways. Two constitutional provisions—one in the churchwide constitution and one in the synod constitution—using networks both “intra-synodical” and “inter-synodical.” He gave the example of synods in the state of Washington being able to create a network to address statewide health care legislation.

Vice President Peña called for questions or comments on the fourth proposal of the LIFT task force. Hearing none, he asked the secretary to put forward the action.

Secretary Swartling indicated that the motion came from the Executive Committee and referred to all four areas of structure and governance identified by the LIFT task force. He added that the Church Council had the parliamentary opportunity to divide the question.

Moved: To adopt the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as detailed in Exhibit G, Part 1a; and
To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting.

Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth moved to divide the question.

Moved;

Seconded: That the Church Council consider the first, second, and fourth sections of proposed amendments to the constitutions, as detailed in Exhibit G, Part 1a, before considering separately the third section.

Secretary Swartling noted that the motion to divide the question was not debatable but could be amended.

Pr. Sorenson asked whether the motion would preclude amendments to the first, second, and fourth sections of the proposed actions.

Secretary Swartling replied that it would not and that the motion was to handle those sections separately.

Mr. John S. Munday asked whether each section could be considered individually.

Secretary Swartling responded that it was possible.

Mr. Munday moved to amend the motion.

Moved;

Seconded: *To amend the motion by deletion and insertion:*

That the Church Council consider separately each section of the ~~first, second, and fourth sections~~ of proposed amendments to the constitutions, as detailed in Exhibit G, Part 1a, ~~before considering separately the third section.~~

Secretary Swartling clarified the effect of the amendment.

Vice President Peña called for the vote on the amendment.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: *To amend the motion by deletion and insertion:*

That the Church Council consider separately each section of the ~~first, second, and fourth sections~~ of proposed amendments to the constitutions, as detailed in Exhibit G, Part 1a, ~~before considering separately the third section.~~

Vice President Peña declared the motion had been amended. He called for a vote on the motion as amended.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: That the Church Council consider separately each section of the proposed amendments to the constitutions, as detailed in Exhibit G, Part 1a.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was approved. He asked that the council postpone its break to begin consideration of the proposed amendments to the constitutions. The chair called for discussion of the first section of LIFT recommendations dealing with the Churchwide Assembly.

Ms. Brakke noted that college corporation meetings are conducted biennially during Churchwide Assemblies and asked whether those colleges had been consulted about changing to triennial meetings.

Secretary Swartling replied that the colleges had not been specifically consulted but that the president of Luther College, Mr. Richard L. Torgerson, served on the LIFT task force.

Pr. Olson added that the three colleges that would hold corporation meetings during assemblies were in conversation about alternatives to biennial meetings and did not consider triennial Churchwide Assemblies a problem.

The Rev. Amsalu T. Geleta asked whether the amendments would also apply to synods.

He was informed that they would not apply to synods.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for a vote on the motion.

VOTED:

CC10.11.40

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as detailed in the first section, “LIFT Recommendations: Churchwide Assembly,” of Exhibit G, Part 1a.

Vice President Peña declared the motion approved. The chair called for discussion of the second section of LIFT recommendations dealing with the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops.

Pr. Hunsinger asked whether the council action would recommend the proposed amendments to the constitutions for final action by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Secretary Swartling responded that was the motion.

Ms. Graddy asked whether it would be appropriate to offer an amendment to change the “and” proposed to be added to provision 14.31. to “but.”

Secretary Swartling replied that it would be appropriate but he advised against doing so, because the proposed language was consistent with language elsewhere in the governing documents.

Pr. Sorenson moved to strike the recommendation that two members of the same synod be allowed to serve on the council.

Moved;

Seconded:

To remove the recommendation to permit two members of a single synod to serve on the Church Council, retaining the following sentence in constitutional provision 19.02.:

Excluding the churchwide officers, there shall not be more than one member of the Church Council from a synod, nor shall more than two-thirds of the synods in a region have members on the Church Council at the same time.

Pr. Sorenson spoke in favor of providing flexibility in the nomination process for at-large members of the council. He stressed the council members’ roles in representing the Church Council in their home synods, and said that having two members from the same synod would take the possibility of that representation from another synod. The 32 synods without members on the council could provide the candidates needed for flexibility in the process, he argued.

Bp. Burk spoke against the motion, noting that one of the benefits was that a member, especially a young person who tends to be more mobile, would not need to resign should she or he relocate to a synod that already has a member on the Church Council.

The Rev. Ralph E. Jones, bishop of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, said that without the constitutional amendment, some exception would have to be made elsewhere to allow the chair of the Conference of Bishops to serve on the council.

Secretary Swartling responded that would need to be considered. He added that a purpose for the proposed amendment was to allow the Nominating Committee to find an accountant, for example, without the restriction of excluding accountants from certain synods. He also mentioned that the Church Council would still be able to consider the regional representation of this church on the council during the process.

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede requested clarification of Bp. Burk’s point. Using the example of Pr. Carlson moving to attend graduate school and transferring her membership to another synod, Pr. Tiede asked whether the amendment would allow her to continue on the Church Council.

Bp. Burk replied that it was his point.

Ms. Chenoweth spoke against the motion and against amending the constitutional provision, and she stressed the ability of the council to instruct the Nominating Committee about the council's regional representation.

Mr. John R. Emery pointed out that, even with "two" in the provision, if a council member moves to a synod with two members on the council, one of them would need to resign.

Pr. Sorenson moved to amend his motion to exclude the chair of the Conference of Bishops in the same manner the provision excluded the officers.

Secretary Swartling suggested that the issue be dealt with separately.

Pr. Sorenson agreed.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for a vote on the motion.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

To remove the recommendation to permit two members of a single synod to serve on the Church Council, retaining the following sentence in constitutional provision 19.02.:

Excluding the churchwide officers, there shall not be more than one member of the Church Council from a synod, nor shall more than two-thirds of the synods in a region have members on the Church Council at the same time.

Vice President Peña declared that the motion failed. He invited further discussion of the second section of LIFT recommendations.

Mr. Blanchard asked whether the availability of at-large members would change the rotation of synods nominating the initial 33 council members.

Secretary Swartling replied that it would not change the rotation.

Hearing no further discussion, the chair called for a vote on the motion.

VOTED:

CC10.11.41

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt the amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as detailed in the second section, "LIFT Recommendations: ELCA Church Council and the Conference of Bishops," of Exhibit G, Part 1a.

Vice President Peña declared the motion approved and called for discussion of the fourth section of LIFT recommendations dealing with interrelationships. Hearing none, he called for a vote on the motion. After the vote, the chair declared the following motion approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.42

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as detailed in the fourth section, “LIFT Recommendations on Interrelationships,” of Exhibit G, Part 1a.

RECESS

The first plenary session of the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 10:44 A.M.

**Saturday, November 13, 2010
Plenary Session II**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called Plenary Session Two to order at 11:04 A.M.

REVISION OF CONTINUING RESOLUTION 19.04.A10.

(Agenda III.A.2.)

Background:

As approved in October 2010, continuing resolution 19.04.A10. provided for the election of 15 members from four program committees to the program committee of the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened discussion on amending continuing resolution 19.04.A10., noting that its revision would require two-thirds approval.

Secretary David D. Swartling stated that the four units comprising the CSM unit each named four members to the transitional program committee of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. So, instead of asking the Church Council to remove one of the names, a technical revision of the continuing resolution would allow all 16 members to serve.

Moved;

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded:

To approve the following amendment:

19.04.A10. Implementation Process

To implement the transition in the number of program committees, the Church Council shall take the following actions during its November 2010 meeting:

- a. invite the duly elected members of the program committee related, as of October 2010, to the Global Mission unit to serve the remainder of their terms;*
- b. elect from the members of the program committees related, as of October 2010, to the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, the Vocation and Education unit, the Church in Society unit, and the Multicultural Ministries unit, ~~fifteen (15)~~ sixteen (16) people to serve the remainder of their terms as the program committee of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;*
- c. appoint, in accordance with bylaw 16.12.12., one member of the Church Council to serve as a liaison member of the Congregational and Synodical Mission program committee; and*
- d. request the Conference of Bishops to select, in accordance with bylaw 16.12.12., one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the Congregational and Synodical Mission program committee.*

The Rev. David P. Anderson noted that, if the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force recommendation to eliminate program committees is approved, the program committee of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit will exist for one year.

Secretary Swartling responded that the purpose of the continuing resolution was to implement the transition.

Pr. Anderson inquired about the effect of this vote should the Church Council retain program committees.

Secretary Swartling replied that the Churchwide Assembly would replace program committee members as their terms expire.

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede asked whether it would be more appropriate to deal with the LIFT task force recommendation before revising the continuing resolution.

Secretary Swartling answered that the purpose of the continuing resolution is to provide for the membership of a program committee until the Churchwide Assembly decides whether to eliminate program committees.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote. After the vote, he declared the motion approved.

VOTED:

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

CC10.11.43

To approve the following amendment:

19.04.A10. Implementation Process

To implement the transition in the number of program committees, the Church Council shall take the following actions during its November 2010 meeting:

- a. invite the duly elected members of the program committee related, as of October 2010, to the Global Mission unit to serve the remainder of their terms;*
- b. elect from the members of the program committees related, as of October 2010, to the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, the Vocation and Education unit, the Church in Society unit, and the Multicultural Ministries unit, ~~fifteen (15)~~ sixteen (16) people to serve the remainder of their terms as the program committee of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;*
- c. appoint, in accordance with bylaw 16.12.12., one member of the Church Council to serve as a liaison member of the Congregational and Synodical Mission program committee; and*
- d. request the Conference of Bishops to select, in accordance with bylaw 16.12.12., one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the Congregational and Synodical Mission program committee.*

ELECTION OF PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

(Agenda III.A.2.)

Background:

Continuing resolution 19.04.A10. indicated that the Church Council would elect the members of two program committees at its November 2010 meeting.

The 16 members of the program committee for the new Congregational and Synodical Mission unit were from the program committees of four former units: Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM), Vocation and Education, Church in Society, and Multicultural Ministries. Each of these program committees nominated four people from their existing membership. From this slate of nominees, the Church Council would ensure that representational principles are observed for the election.

The existing members of the program unit for Global Mission had been nominated for the new unit's program committee.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña directed the council's attention to the list of names in the agenda of 15 nominees for the program committee of the Global Mission unit.

Moved;

Seconded:

To elect the following people to serve as the program committee for the Global Mission unit:

1. Ms. Terry Cole, Albuquerque, N.M. (2E)
2. Pr. Douglas S. Cox, Excelsior, Minn. (3G)
3. Pr. Sarah J. Geddada, Floral Park, N.Y. (7C)
4. Mr. John A. Henderson, Baltimore, Md. (8F)

5. Mr. George T. (“G.T.”) Johnson, Xenia, Ohio (6F)
6. Ms. Sharon Magelssen, Mason City, Iowa (5F)
7. Pr. Dennis M. Maurer, Pandora, Ohio (6D)
8. Mr. R. Timothy Muth, Delafield, Wis. (5J)
9. Ms. Martha R. Norat, Dorado, Puerto Rico (9F)
10. Pr. Michelle L. Olson, Wausa, Neb. (4A)
11. Pr. Arthur C. Repp, Carbondale, Ill. (5C)
12. Pr. Lisa A Smith, Anchorage, Alaska (1A)
13. Pr. Paula M. Stecker, York, Pa. (8D)
14. Mr. Henry T. Tkachuk, Moorhead, Minn. (3D)
15. Ms. Amanda F. Tompkins, Henryville, Pa. (7E)

Secretary David D. Swartling noted that the existing members of the program unit for Global Mission had been nominated for the new unit’s program committee.

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

VOTED:

CC10.11.44 **To elect the following people to serve as the program committee for the Global Mission unit:**

1. **Ms. Terry Cole, Albuquerque, N.M. (2E)**
2. **Pr. Douglas S. Cox, Excelsior, Minn. (3G)**
3. **Pr. Sarah J. Geddada, Floral Park, N.Y. (7C)**
4. **Mr. John A. Henderson, Baltimore, Md. (8F)**
5. **Mr. George T. (“G.T.”) Johnson, Xenia, Ohio (6F)**
6. **Ms. Sharon Magelssen, Mason City, Iowa (5F)**
7. **Pr. Dennis M. Maurer, Pandora, Ohio (6D)**
8. **Mr. R. Timothy Muth, Delafield, Wis. (5J)**
9. **Ms. Martha R. Norat, Dorado, Puerto Rico (9F)**
10. **Pr. Michelle L. Olson, Wausa, Neb. (4A)**
11. **Pr. Arthur C. Repp, Carbondale, Ill. (5C)**
12. **Pr. Lisa A Smith, Anchorage, Alaska (1A)**
13. **Pr. Paula M. Stecker, York, Pa. (8D)**
14. **Mr. Henry T. Tkachuk, Moorhead, Minn. (3D)**
15. **Ms. Amanda F. Tompkins, Henryville, Pa. (7E)**

Vice President Peña declared the motion approved and called for the election of the program committee for the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

Moved;

Seconded: **To elect the following people to serve as the program committee for the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit:**

1. Pr. Rani R. Abdulmasih, Wyandotte, Mich. (6A)
2. Ms. Julia H. Accola, Rochester, Minn. (3I)
3. Pr. Megan J. Jones, Chicago, Ill. (5A)
4. Mr. Paul H. Lewellan, Bettendorf, Iowa (5D)
5. Ms. Fumei Liang, Huntington Beach, Calif. (2C)
6. Ms. Kari A. Lipke, Sommerville, Mass. (7B)

7. Pr. Kevin R. Maly, Denver, Colo. (2E)
8. Mr. Daniel Namarra, Brooklyn Park, Minn. (3G)
9. Pr. Paul D. Ostrem, Iowa City, Iowa (5D)
10. Mr. Alfred Sagar, Brandon, Miss. (9D)
11. Pr. Rosemary Sanchez-Guzman, El Paso, Texas (2E)
12. Mr. Robert S. Schroeder, Shawnee, Kan. (4B)
13. Pr. Lori Ann Strang, Toledo, Ohio (6D)
14. Pr. William O. Voss, Scottsbluff, Neb. (4A)
15. Pr. Lamont A. Wells, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F)
16. Ms. Deborah Covin Wilson, Ellenwood, Ga. (9D)

Hearing no discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC10.11.45 To elect the following people to serve as the program committee for the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit:

1. Pr. Rani R. Abdulmasih, Wyandotte, Mich. (6A)
2. Ms. Julia H. Accola, Rochester, Minn. (3I)
3. Pr. Megan J. Jones, Chicago, Ill. (5A)
4. Mr. Paul H. Lewellan, Bettendorf, Iowa (5D)
5. Ms. Fumei Liang, Huntington Beach, Calif. (2C)
6. Ms. Kari A. Lipke, Sommerville, Mass. (7B)
7. Pr. Kevin R. Maly, Denver, Colo. (2E)
8. Mr. Daniel Namarra, Brooklyn Park, Minn. (3G)
9. Pr. Paul D. Ostrem, Iowa City, Iowa (5D)
10. Mr. Alfred Sagar, Brandon, Miss. (9D)
11. Pr. Rosemary Sanchez-Guzman, El Paso, Texas (2E)
12. Mr. Robert S. Schroeder, Shawnee, Kan. (4B)
13. Pr. Lori Ann Strang, Toledo, Ohio (6D)
14. Pr. William O. Voss, Scottsbluff, Neb. (4A)
15. Pr. Lamont A. Wells, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F)
16. Ms. Deborah Covin Wilson, Ellenwood, Ga. (9D)

The chair declared the motion approved.

The Rev. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson asked how the program committee of the Mission Advancement unit would be elected, if program committees are retained.

Secretary Swartling replied that the Nominating Committee would probably bring a slate of candidates to the Churchwide Assembly. This will be a matter to discuss with the executive director of the Mission Advancement unit once that person is hired.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

(Agenda II.A.4.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Parts 4–4a; Exhibit F, Part 1)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña requested the report of Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton outlined her report as providing the council with a financial update for the churchwide organization and with background information for the 2011 spending authorization.

The treasurer reviewed the two-year budget development process, spending authorizations, and contingency underspending plans. In August 2010, the Church Council had approved a \$65.1 million spending authorization for the churchwide organization, based on mission support of \$51 million, she stated. An existing contingency plan had been developed to operate within the newly approved spending authorization, and another contingency plan had been developed to operate 4 percent under the spending authorization.

In March 2009 the synods had projected their mission support to the churchwide organization at \$66.6 million for 2010, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton reported. Those projections had been adjusted by the synods to \$56.6 million, and the treasurer estimated the churchwide organization would receive \$51 million in mission support in 2010.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton referred to the data in the council's exhibits to present a summary of the churchwide organization's revenue and expenses from February 1, 2010, through September 30, 2010.

The treasurer described the process used to develop the churchwide organization's 2011 budget and the effect adjustments in mission support from the synods have had on the organization's new design, budget planning, and the proposal for a spending authorization of \$62.6 million for 2011 with mission support of \$48 million and a World Hunger budget of \$17 million.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton noted that in the history of the ELCA there had been few fluctuations in operating income other than mission support, which accounts for about 80 percent of the churchwide organization's operating income.

The treasurer drew attention to the World Hunger budget of \$18.7 million for 2010 and of \$17 million for 2011. She mentioned that a contingency plan for 2010 was in place, because World Hunger income was down 17.9 percent from the same period in 2009.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton indicated that a three-year (2011–2013) income projection, which was included in the council's exhibits, would help the Church Council prepare for the next budget cycle and a possible spending authorization vote in April 2011. It also would benefit this church's partners as they prepare their budgets, she said. The projections show the decline in mission support possibly leveling off, with totals rising by 2014.

There being no questions for the treasurer, Vice President Peña thanked her for her report.

REPORT OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE (Agenda III.D.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, for the committee's report.

2011 EXPENSE AUTHORIZATION: CURRENT FUND AND WORLD HUNGER (Agenda III.D.1.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Parts 2a–2c)

Background:

Exhibit F, Part 2a reflected income estimates that had been revised since the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The revised income estimates also incorporated changes in the churchwide structure, including the operations of the ELCA Foundation, previously not included in the current fund operations. Current income for 2011 was projected to be \$62,614,500, a decrease of \$2,485,500, or 3.8 percent, from the revised 2010 spending authorization and \$14,163,500 less than the budget approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

The mission-support estimate had been revised downward from the current 2010 level of \$51,000,000 to \$48,000,000, a decrease of \$3,000,000, or 5.9 percent. This mission-support estimate was based on estimates from ELCA synods and recent income trends. The estimate will be revisited in February 2010. In addition to the adjusted mission-support estimate, a decrease of \$50,000 was anticipated in unit designated giving. Increases were anticipated for Vision for Mission (\$100,000); endowment distributions (\$301,000, primarily a result of the ELCA Foundation income and expenses now being included in the current operating fund); rental income (\$100,000 in anticipated lease

of unoccupied space); missionary sponsorship (\$50,000); and other miscellaneous income (\$13,500, including fee income on Foundation receipts).

The World Hunger Appeal estimate was adjusted downward to \$17,000,000, based on current 2010 receipts. This was a reduction of \$1,700,000, or 9.1 percent, from the current 2010 budget.

Exhibit F, Part 2b presented the 2011 unit allocations in accordance with the new organizational structure, as approved by the Church Council in October 2010.

Exhibit F, Part 2c showed the current working estimate of income for the 2012–2013 biennium. The estimate included a further decline in mission support over the period. These estimates will be reviewed at the close of 2010 and adjusted as appropriate before being considered by the Church Council for forwarding to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus noted elements of the treasurer's report about adjustments in spending authorizations for both the current fund and for World Hunger. She moved the committee's recommended action.

Moved: To approve an initial 2011 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$62,614,500; and
To approve an initial World Hunger spending authorization for the 2011 fiscal year of \$17,000,000.

Hearing no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

**CC10.11.46 To approve an initial 2011 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$62,614,500; and
To approve an initial World Hunger spending authorization for the 2011 fiscal year of \$17,000,000.**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña declared the motion passed and asked Ms. Niedringhaus to continue with the Budget and Finance Committee report.

REVISIONS TO 2010 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

(Agenda III.D.2.a.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Parts 5a–5b)

Background:

The Church Council reviews and approves or withholds approval for synodical mission-support plans. Exhibit F, Part 5b showed the actual mission support received from each synod for 2009 with plans and any revisions for the 2010 and 2011 fiscal years.

Since the April 2010 Church Council meeting, the Office of the Presiding Bishop had received revisions for 2010 mission-support plans from 12 synods.

Church Council Action:

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus expressed the appreciation of the Budget and Finance Committee for those in the churchwide organization who addressed the various components of this church's finances while focused on God's mission. She presented the committee's recommended action on revisions to 2010 synod mission-support plans.

Moved: 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 synod: North Carolina Synod;

To affirm the revised 2010 mission-support dollar estimates for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Southwestern Washington; Rocky Mountain; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Allegheny; Southeastern; and Florida-Bahamas synods; and

To acknowledge the percentage change in mission support resulting from revised estimates of congregational mission support for the following synods: Eastern Washington-Idaho; Pacifica; Southeastern Michigan; North/West Lower Michigan; and South Carolina synods.

Hearing no discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC10.11.47

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 synod: North Carolina Synod;

To affirm the revised 2010 mission-support dollar estimates for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Southwestern Washington; Rocky Mountain; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Allegheny; Southeastern; and Florida-Bahamas synods; and

To acknowledge the percentage change in mission support resulting from revised estimates of congregational mission support for the following synods: Eastern Washington-Idaho; Pacifica; Southeastern Michigan; North/West Lower Michigan; and South Carolina synods.

The chair declared the motion passed and asked Ms. Niedringhaus to continue with the report of the Budget and Finance Committee.

REVISIONS TO 2011 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

(Agenda III.D.2.b.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Parts 5a–5b)

Background:

Since the April 2010 Church Council meeting, the Office of the Presiding Bishop had received either original plans or revisions to 2011 mission-support plans from 37 synods.

Church Council Action:

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus presented the new and revised plans from synods for mission support in 2011 and moved the committee's recommended action on the revisions.

Moved:

To affirm with sincere appreciation the increases in the percentage for the sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Southwestern Washington; Oregon; Western North Dakota; Western Iowa; Southern Ohio; Upstate New York; Virginia; and Caribbean synods;

To affirm the revised 2011 mission-support dollar estimates for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Alaska; Northwest Washington; Montana; Sierra-Pacific; Southwest California; Pacifica; Northwestern Minnesota; Minneapolis Area; Saint Paul Area; Nebraska; Southwestern Texas; Metropolitan Chicago; Northern Illinois; Northern Great Lakes; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee;

Indiana-Kentucky; Southeastern Pennsylvania; Slovak Zion; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Allegheny; Delaware-Maryland; and West Virginia-Western Maryland synods; and

To acknowledge the percentage change in mission support resulting from revised estimates of congregational mission support for the following synods: Northeastern Iowa; Upper Susquehanna; Metropolitan Washington, D.C.; North Carolina; South Carolina; and Florida-Bahamas synods.

Hearing no discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC10.11.48

To affirm with sincere appreciation the increases in the percentage for the sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Southwestern Washington; Oregon; Western North Dakota; Western Iowa; Southern Ohio; Upstate New York; Virginia; and Caribbean synods;

To affirm the revised 2011 mission-support dollar estimates for the sharing of mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries of the following synods: Alaska; Northwest Washington; Montana; Sierra-Pacific; Southwest California; Pacifica; Northwestern Minnesota; Minneapolis Area; Saint Paul Area; Nebraska; Southwestern Texas; Metropolitan Chicago; Northern Illinois; Northern Great Lakes; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee; Indiana-Kentucky; Southeastern Pennsylvania; Slovak Zion; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Allegheny; Delaware-Maryland; and West Virginia-Western Maryland synods; and

To acknowledge the percentage change in mission support resulting from revised estimates of congregational mission support for the following synods: Northeastern Iowa; Upper Susquehanna; Metropolitan Washington, D.C.; North Carolina; South Carolina; and Florida-Bahamas synods.

Vice President Peña declared the motion passed and thanked Ms. Niedringhaus for the Budget and Finance Committee report.

AMENDMENTS RELATED TO “LIVING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER” (CONTINUED)
(Agenda III.E.1.a.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 1a)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Church Council to return to its discussion of proposed constitutional amendments recommended by the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force. The recommendations detailed in the third section dealt with program committees.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy observed that the proposed constitutional amendments do not preclude a program unit from establishing a program committee or other type of committee. Removing the bylaws requiring program committees would eliminate lines in the churchwide budget to finance them, he said.

Mr. Mark S. Helmke stated that the LIFT task force proposal provided units with the flexibility of establishing committees. It also supplied units with clear lines of reporting and accountability to the redesigned churchwide structure.

Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth, a member of the LIFT task force, noted discrepancies in how well program committees had functioned, and she stated the task force’s intention to let program units pursue other means of engaging the membership of this church.

The Rev. Philip R. Wold cautioned that the council did not want to send program committee members the message that their contributions to this church had not been important.

Mr. Helmke noted that the council's Legal and Constitutional Review Committee had reviewed the proposed amendments. To allow the chair of the Conference of Bishops to serve as a member of Church Council, the task force recommended deleting the last sentence of 19.11.01.f.: "No synodical bishop shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit.

Mr. Helmke moved the recommendation of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee to retain and amend the sentence.

Moved: *To amend the specific recommended amendment of the LIFT task force to the last sentence of 19.11.01.f. of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions:*

19.11.01.f. No synodical bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit.

Mr. John S. Munday asked whether "or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit" would be struck from the bylaw.

Secretary David D. Swartling replied that it would be moot, if the task force recommendation to eliminate program committees is approved.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon asked the synodical bishops present whether they wanted to discuss this motion.

Hearing no other discussion, Vice President Peña called for a vote on the amendment.

Moved;

Carried: *To amend the specific recommended amendment of the LIFT task force to the last sentence of 19.11.01.f. of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions:*

19.11.01.f. No synodical bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit.

The chair declared that the amendment was approved and asked the council to continue discussion of the third section of the LIFT task force recommendations as amended.

The Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson inquired into the cost of operating a program committee.

Secretary Swartling responded that the LIFT task force was told that an in-person meeting of an existing program committee costs about \$9,000, with the actual size of the committee providing a variable.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked whether that figure included staff time and related materials.

Secretary Swartling replied that it did not include such indirect expenses.

The Rev. David P. Anderson expressed the opinion that the issue was one more of effectiveness than of expense, and he said he was concerned that eliminating program committees from the constitution may signal that they are ineffective in all circumstances.

Ms. Susan W. McArver cited the task force report: "A single Church Council committee—the Planning and Evaluation Committee or a newly configured committee—would receive reports on policies and strategies from all program units on a regular basis, probably at least yearly." She characterized the recommendation as "unrealistic."

Pr. Sorenson agreed and said he disliked the idea of funneling what was the work of all program committees through a single committee of the Church Council.

Presiding Bishop Hanson stated that the Planning and Evaluation Committee would continue in its role of receiving reports from the program units, and it is not being asked to assume the responsibilities of program committees.

Secretary Swartling added that the Church Council was not voting on the narrative of the task force report, and the details of governance were in transition.

Ms. Louise A. Hemstead noted that the narrative talked about eliminating program committees but the recommendation was only to eliminate their mandate.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote on the recommendations as amended.

VOTED:

CC10.11.49

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt the amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as detailed in the third section, “LIFT Recommendations: Program Committees,” of Exhibit G, Part 1a, and as amended.

The chair declared the motion was approved.

APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.E.2.)

Background:

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

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña indicated that the appointment of the Memorials Committee for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly was removed from the *en bloc* action, so the slate of names was in that section of the agenda.

Secretary David D. Swartling referred to the bylaws regarding the Memorials Committee and the Committee of Reference and Counsel. He described the manner in which their members are selected: synod bishops recommend voting members for the committees, and the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary used those recommendations and the representational principles of this church to prepare the slates.

Vice President Peña presented the recommended action of the Executive Committee.

Moved:

To appoint the members of the Memorials Committee for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly:

1. Bp. Elizabeth A. Eaton (6E)
2. Mr. James Ellefsen (5D)
3. Pr. Khader S. Khalilia (2A)
4. Pr. Steven P. Loy (2E), co-chair
5. Pr. Heather S. Lubold (8B), co-chair
6. Mr. Evan M. Moilan Jr. (4F)
7. Ms. Gail M. Olson (3H)

8. Bp. Duane C. Pederson (5H)
9. Ms. Lynette M. Reitz (8E)
10. Mr. Anthony T. Rhodes (1B)
11. Ms. Trudi A. Schmidt (1F)
12. Pr. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson (3C)
13. Ms. Amanda F. Tompkins (7E)
14. Ms. Doris Underwood (9D)
15. Mr. Christopher M. Wertman (9A)

The Rev. Steven P. Loy noted that this action had been removed from the *en bloc* resolution to allow Secretary Swartling to discuss how the slate was created.

There being no further discussion, the chair called for the vote. After the vote, Vice President Peña declared the motion approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.50 To appoint the members of the Memorials Committee for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly:

1. Bp. Elizabeth A. Eaton (6E)
2. Mr. James Ellefsen (5D)
3. Pr. Khader S. Khalilia (2A)
4. Pr. Steven P. Loy (2E), co-chair
5. Pr. Heather S. Lubold (8B), co-chair
6. Mr. Evan M. Moilan Jr. (4F)
7. Ms. Gail M. Olson (3H)
8. Bp. Duane C. Pederson (5H)
9. Ms. Lynette M. Reitz (8E)
10. Mr. Anthony T. Rhodes (1B)
11. Ms. Trudi A. Schmidt (1F)
12. Pr. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson (3C)
13. Ms. Amanda F. Tompkins (7E)
14. Ms. Doris Underwood (9D)
15. Mr. Christopher M. Wertman (9A)

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE AND COUNSEL
(Agenda III.E.3.)

Background:

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

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña presented the action recommended by the Executive Committee.

Moved: To appoint the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly:

1. Bp. Leonard H. Bolick (9B)
2. Mr. Larry D. Ehrlich (4B)
3. Mr. John R. Emery (5I), co-chair
4. Ms. Louise A. Hemstead (5L), co-chair
5. Mr. Christian M. Hicks (7F)
6. Pr. Abigail Z. Hoffman (7D)
7. Mr. William B. Horne II (9E)
8. Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger (6D)
9. Mr. James Hushhagen (1C)
10. Ms. S. Christine Mummert (8D)
11. Pr. Gretchen E. Ritola (4A)
12. Ms. Paula L. Sturgeon (2D)
13. Ms. Yolanda A. Tanner (8F)
14. Pr. Jonathan L. Vehar (3C)
15. Bp. Martin D. Wells (1D)

Vice President Peña asked for discussion of the motion. Hearing no discussion, he called for the vote. After the vote the chair declared the motion was approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.51 To appoint the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly:

1. **Bp. Leonard H. Bolick (9B)**
2. **Mr. Larry D. Ehrlich (4B)**
3. **Mr. John R. Emery (5I), co-chair**
4. **Ms. Louise A. Hemstead (5L), co-chair**
5. **Mr. Christian M. Hicks (7F)**
6. **Pr. Abigail Z. Hoffman (7D)**
7. **Mr. William B. Horne II (9E)**
8. **Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger (6D)**
9. **Mr. James Hushhagen (1C)**
10. **Ms. S. Christine Mummert (8D)**
11. **Pr. Gretchen E. Ritola (4A)**
12. **Ms. Paula L. Sturgeon (2D)**
13. **Ms. Yolanda A. Tanner (8F)**
14. **Pr. Jonathan L. Vehar (3C)**
15. **Bp. Martin D. Wells (1D)**

JOYS AND CONCERNS

At the request of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, joys and concerns were offered by the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, and Ms. Kristin Kvam.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling for announcements.

Secretary Swartling noted that this meeting's third plenary would begin in executive session to deal with personnel matters. He summarized the schedule for the remainder of the day. He reminded the members that the Rev. Cheryl M. Peterson, assistant professor of systematic theology, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, had asked to receive questions by e-mail in advance of a primer on ecclesiology and polity that she was scheduled to present by WebEx the afternoon of Sunday, November 14, 2010.

TABLE GRACE

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke, who led those present in table grace.

RECESS

The November 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 11:55 A.M.

**Saturday, November 13, 2010
Plenary Session III**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called Plenary Session Three to order at 1:02 P.M. The Church Council entered into executive session to consider personnel matters.

Vice President Peña declared the end of the executive session at 1:11 P.M.

OPEN SESSION

The Church Council returned to open session at 1:14 P.M. Vice President Carlos E. Peña announced the action taken in executive session.

VOTED:

CC10.11.52 To elect the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla to a four-year term as executive director of the Global Mission unit beginning February 1, 2011.

BIBLE STUDY

Vice President Carlos E. Peña introduced the Rev. Herman R. Yoos III, bishop of the South Carolina Synod, who led the Church Council in a Bible study.

Bp. Yoos read Acts 15:1–5 and requested that the council members discuss what God was doing in the midst of the disagreement over circumcision and the relationship between the church in Jerusalem and the church in Antioch.

Ms. Susan W. McArver read Acts 15:6–12, and Bp. Yoos reflected on the communal discernment that the Scriptures described and how discernment silenced the dispute.

Mr. Mark E. Johnson read Acts 15:13–21, and Bp. Yoos noted that the Scriptures were introduced into the process of discernment.

The Rev. Rachel L. Connelly read Acts 15:22–35, and Bp. Yoos asked the council members to consider the churches' interdependence and how it was strengthened through the conflict.

Mr. John R. Emery read Acts 15:36–41, and Bp. Yoos pointed out the personal differences among the leaders.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger read Acts 16:1–3, and Bp. Yoos added that the mission of the church became more important than resolving conflict.

Vice President Peña thanked Bp. Yoos for his reflections.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE FOR ADMINISTRATION

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

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, to present her report.

Pr. Bullock commended the written reports of her colleagues who headed units, noting that they had led the churchwide organization in its ministries during times of reorganization. Her report focused on that reorganization, which was grounded in the biblical foundation, strategic directions, and vision and mission statements of this church. The Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force and the Conference of Bishops had been consulted throughout the reorganizing process, she said.

The LIFT task force had been constituted to address the equilibrium of this church, Pr. Bullock noted. The design team was assembled to deal with this church's financial realities, providing opportunity for the two groups to relate, counsel, and learn with each other. She noted that their conversation continued to emphasize the importance of congregations and synods.

The Conference of Bishops advised that the churchwide organization should find a way through regional gatherings to sustain the theological and confessional identity of this church, she stated, and the LIFT task force made similar recommendations about the identity of this church.

Pr. Bullock presented Appendix C of her report, which was a graph detailing the churchwide organization's staffing patterns from 2004 through estimates for 2011. It also illustrated the reductions in force associated with spending decreases and the redesign of the churchwide organization.

The executive for administration reported that before and after the new design, 29 percent of the churchwide staff was people of color. Women accounted for 58 percent of staff in the previous design and 55 percent in the new design, she declared. Ninety-nine percent of administrative assistant positions were held by women, and reductions in those positions have had an uneven effect on lay women among the churchwide staff, she stated. Lay people made up 70 percent of staff in the previous design and 68 percent in the new design. She indicated that the representational principles of this church were integral to the selection of the senior leadership of the churchwide organization.

While consulting with various groups and individuals on the new design for the churchwide organization, Pr. Bullock said, a recurring question was: What will you not do? Positioning the organization for the future meant developing a smaller and more nimble design, streamlining and centralizing many functions. The library had been closed, and efforts to rent space in the Lutheran Center will intensify, she remarked. The redesign focused on infrastructure and management, and not on reducing grants and programs.

The new design included the flexibility to enter 2011 with a sustainable budget and the possibility to continue conversations about the funding and the functions of the churchwide organization, Pr. Bullock reported. The focus of work was also intended to increase the capacity of both the synods and the churchwide organization to support congregations in carrying on ministry with and on behalf of this church, she said. The expressions of this church will work out the details as they work together to do things differently.

Pr. Bullock observed that the spending authorization approved at this meeting did not include major reductions in programs and grants, but contingency planning is underway with the Conference of Bishops.

Each expression of this church was in a time of transition, she stated. The churchwide organization was working with two transition teams: an administrative team to manage structural changes and a support team to help staff consider how to do things differently and how to bring some things to closure. Staff members were learning to collaborate, to adapt, and to assess the efficiency of the new design.

Pr. Bullock concluded with a word of thanks for the work of the Church Council.

Vice President Peña asked whether there were any questions for Pr. Bullock.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy asked where he could find the demographic percentages of churchwide staff.

Pr. Bullock replied that those percentages were not in the written report, but Appendix C presented some data.

Ms. Kristin Kvam expressed her appreciation for close attention to the demographics of the churchwide staff, noting that the Church Council had constitutional oversight for implementing this church's representational principles. She asked whether similar data could be gathered about the whole "ecology" of this church.

Pr. Bullock responded that some of that data may be available.

Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep added that an audit of this church's representational profile may be possible.

Pr. Bullock indicated that some of the comparative data is difficult to use because categories of staffing, for example, have changed even since 2004. She said she thought that responsibilities increased for nine women and four men in the new design.

Ms. Else B. Thompson, executive for human resources, replied that detailed information was available as a series of snapshots against the backdrop of the representational principles. "Job families" and grades had not changed significantly by percentages, but the churchwide organization was adopting a new model of categorizing jobs. She affirmed that the most significant change recently had been among administrative assistants.

Pr. Bullock reiterated that a demographic "ecological" audit could be developed.

The Rev. Michael J. Schmidt, referring to the graph in Appendix C, noted an increase in the number of mission directors and the elimination of mission developers.

Pr. Bullock declared that the churchwide organization had put directors for evangelical mission in place in synods. Some had been mission developers, eliminating that category on the churchwide payroll.

Ms. Thompson added that the payroll responsibility for mission developers had shifted to local fiscal agents.

The Rev. Gerald L. Mansholt, bishop of the Central States Synod, asked for clarification about the graph in Appendix C and the status of the 49 directors for evangelical mission.

Ms. Thompson stated that 49 directors for evangelical mission were on the churchwide payroll, alternative salary arrangements had been made for other directors for evangelical mission, and one position remains to be filled.

Bp. Mansholt asked whether directors for evangelical mission were ordained.

Ms. Thompson responded that one or two were lay and 17 were female. She indicated she would gather information about how many were people of color.

Pr. Bullock pointed out that directors for evangelical mission were hired in consultation with synod bishops.

The Rev. Rachel L. Connelly asked whether the elimination of the mission developers from the churchwide payroll meant that the Church Council would no longer receive reports from them, and that funding new ministry starts will not be coordinated churchwide.

Pr. Bullock said the Church Council will continue to receive reports on mission development. Decisions about funding new ministry starts were made in conversation with bishops at a churchwide review table, so any concerns could be raised with bishops, with directors for evangelical mission, or with churchwide staff. Plans were developed locally, so that was the place to start, she advised.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson added that funding concerns could be shared with congregations that have decided to withhold benevolence, so they understand the consequences of their decisions.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña thanked Pr. Bullock for her report.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE (Agenda III.G.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Susan Langhauser, chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, for the committee's report.

“LIVING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER: RENEWING THE ECOLOGY OF THE ELCA”

(Agenda III.G.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit E, Parts 2a–2d)

Background:

The purpose of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force was to “recognize the evolving societal and economic changes of the twenty years since the formation of this church and to evaluate the organization, governance and interrelationships among this church's expressions in light of those changes.” The work of the task force had been guided by two questions: 1) What is God calling this church to be and to do in the future? and 2) What changes are in order to accomplish these tasks more faithfully?

The task force focused on seven critical areas, each addressed by a working group: identity, opportunities, interrelationships, congregations, partnerships, financial resources, and structure and governance.

The final report and recommendations of the LIFT task force will be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Susan Langhauser introduced the Rev. Diane “Dee” H. Pederson, chair of the LIFT task force, who read from Isaiah 43:19 before updating the council on the task force's work to discover the “new thing” that God was doing in this church. She pointed out the task force report, executive summary, and appendices in the council meeting's exhibits.

Pr. Pederson noted that the task force's preliminary recommendations had varying degrees of specificity, balancing descriptiveness and prescriptiveness. They included findings regarding this church's identity, interrelationships, partnerships, sustainability, structure, and governance.

Pr. Pederson thanked the Church Council members for their involvement in the conversations that had informed the work of the task force, and she encouraged them to continue sharing their thoughts online and elsewhere.

Pr. Langhauser moved the recommended action of the Planning and Evaluation Committee.

Moved:

- To receive the preliminary report from the Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force;
- To thank the task force for its work to date;
- To anticipate that the task force will continue its engagement with this church as we live in changing contexts;
- To encourage the task force to explore bold and creative ways that are grounded in the central Lutheran affirmations;
- To call this church to participate in God’s mission, and to bring a report to the April 2011 Church Council meeting.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for a vote. After the vote, he declared the motion approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.53

- To receive the preliminary report from the Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force;**
- To thank the task force for its work to date;**
- To anticipate that the task force will continue its engagement with this church as we live in changing contexts;**
- To encourage the task force to explore bold and creative ways that are grounded in the central Lutheran affirmations;**
- To call this church to participate in God’s mission, and to bring a report to the April 2011 Church Council meeting.**

TOWARD RENEWED CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE ELCA

(Agenda III.G.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit L, Part 1)

Background:

At the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council, Ms. Susan W. McArver requested that the Church Council consider a way “. . . to address the issue of Christian Education/Faith Formation more intentionally at the churchwide level, especially in light of recent cuts in positions.” Secretary David D. Swartling suggested that the request be referred to the Administrative Team, in consultation with the Vocation and Education unit, for a report with recommendations to be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

The Administrative Team considered the request and asked the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, Vocation and Education, and Augsburg Fortress units to prepare an “audit” of Christian education and faith formation within the churchwide organization.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Susan Langhauser presented the written report that the Rev. Stanley N. Olson brought to the council’s Planning and Evaluation Committee. She moved the committee’s recommended action.

Moved:

- To receive with gratitude the report on the audit of Christian Education, “Toward Renewed Christian Education in the ELCA,” and to acknowledge the importance of these vital ministries within the renewed mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To give thanks for the strong networks that support Christian education throughout this church, including LACE (Lutheran Association of Christian Educators), Vibrant Faith (Youth and Family Institute), seminary Christian educators, lifelong learning networks, synod learning networks, the Book of Faith initiative synod advocates, Lifelong Learning Partners, the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association (ELEA), Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, synodical lay schools, synodical mission tables, and many others;

To encourage all appropriate churchwide units to attend to the importance of faith education for children, youth, and adults;

To seek ways to collaborate with colleges, seminaries, synods, congregations, networks, associations, and para-church organizations in addressing this work;

To anticipate the ongoing work of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in collaboration with other partners, toward the possibility of a national “missional school” to focus and calibrate current educational work toward a shared commitment to mission.

There being no discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a vote. After the vote, he declared the motion approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.54

To receive with gratitude the report on the audit of Christian Education, “Toward Renewed Christian Education in the ELCA,” and to acknowledge the importance of these vital ministries within the renewed mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To give thanks for the strong networks that support Christian education throughout this church, including LACE (Lutheran Association of Christian Educators), Vibrant Faith (Youth and Family Institute), seminary Christian educators, lifelong learning networks, synod learning networks, the Book of Faith initiative synod advocates, Lifelong Learning Partners, the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association (ELEA), Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, synodical lay schools, synodical mission tables, and many others;

To encourage all appropriate churchwide units to attend to the importance of faith education for children, youth, and adults;

To seek ways to collaborate with colleges, seminaries, synods, congregations, networks, associations, and para-church organizations in addressing this work;

To anticipate the ongoing work of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in collaboration with other partners, toward the possibility of a national “missional school” to focus and calibrate current educational work toward a shared commitment to mission.

COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT TASK FORCE DRAFT REPORT
(Agenda III.G.3.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Part 1)

The Rev. Susan Langhauser called attention to the draft report of the Communal Discernment task force in the meeting’s exhibits. The Planning and Evaluation Committee brought this preliminary draft to the council because it wanted the Churchwide Assembly planning team to see some of the recommendations the task force was considering, she said. Commending the draft report would let the planning team review the recommendations informally in time to use them for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Pr. Langhauser moved the Planning and Evaluation Committee’s recommended action.

Moved: To commend the draft report of the Communal Discernment task force to the Churchwide Assembly planning team for consideration of its recommendations.

There being no discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a vote.

VOTED:
CC10.11.55 To commend the draft report of the Communal Discernment task force to the Churchwide Assembly planning team for consideration of its recommendations.

The chair declared the motion approved.

Pr. Langhauser invited the council members to read the draft report of the Communal Discernment task force and share questions and comments with the Rev. Marcus R. Kunz or her.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke to reflect on “Dwelling in the Word.” Ms. Brakke recalled a “Sunday school memory” at Split Rock Lutheran Church and read from Matthew 25:31–40.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

(Agenda II.A.3.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 3)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling for his report.

Secretary Swartling called the council members “signs of hope,” and he illustrated his report with images of “signs of hope” that he had collected during recent travels.

The secretary pointed out appendices in his written report that included data from congregational reports and recommendations on how that data could be used. He described the information as “discouraging” with “signs of hope embedded in it.”

Secretary Swartling reported that in 2009 the ELCA had 10,348 congregations—48 less than in 2008. Baptized membership decreased 91,000 to 4.5 million—the largest decrease in the history of the ELCA. Since 2002 the ELCA has lost 9.8 percent of its baptized membership. “Signs of hope” were the 58,328 baptisms in 2009, he said.

Worship attendance had dropped 3 percent in 2009 and 16 percent since 2002, the secretary stated. More than 300,000 fewer people worshiped in ELCA congregations in 2009 than in 1988. Average weekly worship attendance per congregation declined from 149 in 1988 to 125 in 2009, which indicated that many congregations soon would no longer be able to support an adequate staff, he remarked.

Total indebtedness in ELCA congregations was less than \$600 million in 1988 and was approaching \$2 billion in 2009, Secretary Swartling noted. Indebtedness increased by \$160 million or 9 percent in 2009. In 1998 there were 2,920 congregations running operating deficits, and in 2009 there were 4,420 congregations doing so. He reported that total congregational income dipped in each of the past two years to \$2.66 billion in 2009.

A “sign of hope” was that total assets for ELCA congregations rose to \$20.9 billion in 2009—a 50 percent increase in the past decade, the secretary said. He considered the increase to be a challenge to translate the wealth of this church into effective ministry.

In 2009 the least number—252—of clergy retired than in any other year in the ELCA, the secretary reported. The average age of active clergy was rising.

Secretary Swartling thanked the synodical bishops for their handling of congregations considering whether to leave the ELCA. He stated that as of November 3, 2010, there were 596 congregations that took 629 first votes to leave the ELCA—31 congregations took two first votes and one congregation took three first votes—of which 431 passed and 198 failed. Of those whose first votes passed, 308 congregations took 309 second votes—including one congregation that

took two second votes—of which 291 passed and 18 failed. A total 220 congregations have completed the process of leaving the ELCA, he declared, with about 75 percent joining Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.

In 2010, there were 307 clergy who either resigned or were removed from the ELCA roster, compared to 115 in 2009 and 87 in 2008, the secretary said.

Congregations withdrawing from the ELCA were generally larger than the average congregation, Secretary Swartling announced. Withdrawing congregations tended to receive more income and had larger current operating budgets than remaining congregations. ELCA congregations gave more mission support, but withdrawing congregations had more overall benevolence.

The secretary mentioned work that had been done on amendments to the ELCA's governing documents and thanked those who had worked on the details.

Secretary Swartling discussed plans for a webinar for synod secretaries, a project to simplify minutes, an online portal for synod council minutes, risk management initiatives, and the work of the Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force.

Ninety-seven percent of the voting members for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly had been reported to the Office of the Secretary without using a piece of paper, the secretary declared. Of the voting members who were identified as clergy, 38 percent were women. Of all registered voting members, 13 percent were people of color, and 13 percent were under age of 30. Nominating processes will be online, and forms will be distributed soon, he stated.

Secretary Swartling invited Church Council members to become charter members of Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society.

The secretary displayed more “signs of hope”—two Masai graduates of Concordia College—and a series of photos from the ELCA Archive.

Vice President Peña thanked Secretary Swartling for his report.

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT (Agenda III.F. and IV.D.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. Mark S. Helmke, chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, for the committee's report.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS RELATED TO REDESIGN OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION (Agenda III.F.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Parts 2a–b)

Mr. Mark S. Helmke reported that the committee had reviewed about 300 amendments to this church's governing documents, amendments to three synod constitutions, revisions to various plans of the Board of Pensions, amendments to the bylaws of the Deaconess Community, and changes to the roster manual. It also began work on the 2011 Churchwide Assembly's rules of organization and procedure.

Mr. Helmke pointed out that a summary of the proposed amendments to the continuing resolutions was provided in Exhibit G, Part 2a. He described the amendments as reorganizing and renumbering portions of the governing documents, revising terminology, reducing detail regarding various functions, and consolidating the theological discernment function in the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

Mr. Helmke noted that most of the committee's recommendations for Church Council action were in the *en bloc* resolution. He presented the committee's recommended action regarding continuing resolutions related to the redesign of the churchwide organization, which required a two-thirds vote for approval.

Moved:

Two-Thirds Vote Required

To adopt the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as detailed in Exhibit G, Part 2b; and

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for discussion of the motion.

Ms. Kristin Kvam expressed her concern regarding changes in the continuing resolutions regarding justice for women, locating its functions among those of theological discernment in the Office of the Presiding Bishop. She said the description of theological discernment does not mention justice for women, and contrasted that with the detailed description that had been part of the Church in Society unit's mandate.

Secretary David D. Swartling responded that this church's governing documents, and continuing resolutions in particular, had become too detailed. The revised documents were meant to enable rather than dictate. He stated that there was no less commitment to justice for women, and the consolidated continuing resolutions would provide more flexibility in how to address it.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson indicated that extensive descriptions in continuing resolutions had been cause for concern when considering budget implications and that detailing the functions of units limited creativity within those units.

Ms. Susan W. McArver asked how the Church Council could ensure that issues of justice for women not be lost without naming them in the governing documents.

Secretary Swartling replied that 500 pages of continuing resolutions would be needed to ensure that all issues are detailed. Inclusivity principles were defined in the constitution, he said, and the council must go back to those principles to assess all churchwide plans and strategies.

Presiding Bishop Hanson affirmed that matters of accountability were ongoing, and the council continued to struggle with creating a culture of accountability.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger recalled that diversity principles had been central in election recommendations sent to the Churchwide Assembly, and as this church continued to elect people for whom these are living issues, there will be accountability.

Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth asked whether the council was considering only changes to continuing resolutions and not to constitutional provisions.

Mr. Helmke replied that only amendments to continuing resolutions were being considered.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson related that Ms. Mary Streufert, director for justice for women in the Church in Society unit, expressed the concern that justice for women was broader than theological. She considered that other aspects of that work, such as addressing sexism and patriarchy, were not reflected in theological discernment.

The Rev. Marcus R. Kunz remarked that organizations often lose track of what is written on paper, and the full participation of women in the life of this church must continue to be on the hearts of those who serve it.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy pointed out that the study for a social statement on justice for women was on the schedule which should provide this church with a more detailed commitment than continuing resolutions could.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, indicated that other items that members struggled to include in continuing resolutions were being eliminated, but this church's commitment remained.

Ms. Kvam asked whether the phrase "justice for women" would appear in the new text, other than in the organizational chart.

Secretary Swartling replied that he did not think the phrase was in the revised governing documents.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote, noting that it would require two-thirds for approval. After the vote, the chair declared the motion had been approved.

VOTED:

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

CC10.11.56

To adopt the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as detailed in Exhibit G, Part 2b; and To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting.

**Redesign of the Churchwide Organization
Continuing Resolutions for Church Council Action
November 12, 2010**

~~13.22.A04. Ecumenical Representatives~~

~~Ecumenical representatives shall be chosen by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the following pattern:~~

- ~~a. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of delegations to national and international inter-church entities in which this church holds membership.~~
- ~~b. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of inter-Lutheran, inter-faith, and ecumenical discussions, including bilateral dialogues and conversations, in which this church participates.~~
- ~~c. All such appointments shall be reported to the Church Council as information.~~

~~13.41.A03. Responsibilities for Risk Management~~

~~The Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in collaboration with the treasurer of this church, shall provide and manage insurance (exclusive of life and health) programs for the churchwide organization and shall make available insurance programs to congregations, synods, regions, and related institutions, agencies, and organizations. Recommendations on standards for adequate, continuous insurance coverage to be maintained by synods, as required in constitutional provision 10.74., shall be provided.~~

~~13.52.A05. Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer~~

- ~~a. This office shall be related to the treasurer, who shall be its full-time executive officer.~~
- ~~b. This office shall have the sole authority and responsibility to establish and maintain banking relationships.~~
- ~~c. This office shall have the authority to borrow, issue bonds, notes, certificates, or other evidence of obligation; or increase contingent liabilities within the overall limits determined by the Churchwide Assembly and the more restrictive limits established by the Church Council. No churchwide board or program committee shall make a commitment that binds the churchwide organization to an outside lending or other similar institution or which creates a liability of this church to such an institution without prior approval of the Office of the Treasurer.~~
- ~~d. This office, through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council, shall recommend to the Church Council a certified public accounting firm to audit the financial records of the churchwide organization. Synodical financial reports shall be submitted to this office for compilation.~~
- ~~e. This office shall provide for internal audit procedures of the churchwide organization.~~
- ~~f. This office shall provide legal documents pertaining to the financial and property management matters of the churchwide organization. These legal documents shall be signed by the officers authorized by the Church Council.~~
- ~~g. This office shall be authorized, within policies established by this church, to purchase or otherwise acquire title to real property; to mortgage, lease, sell, or otherwise dispose of the same; and to act on behalf of the units of the churchwide organization after receiving their direction regarding the purchase or disposition of real property.~~
- ~~h. This office shall provide for a common system of financial reporting from synods and regions.~~

- ~~i. This office shall provide, upon request, a financial management system for synods.~~
- ~~j. This office shall provide, upon request, counsel in financial matters to the women's organization, congregations, synods, regions, and institutions.~~
- ~~k. This office, within the policies established by the Church Council, shall assure the implementation of a donor gift acknowledgment process in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~
- ~~l. This office, in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall recommend:
 - ~~1) approved policy for the valuation process for noncash gifts;~~
 - ~~2) the management of assets of life-income agreements;~~
 - ~~3) the establishment and management of memorial funds received by the foundation; and~~
 - ~~4) the distribution of earned-income payments to remainder beneficiaries as regulated by the life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.~~~~
- ~~m. This office shall provide for the management of capital funds.~~
- ~~n. This office shall manage capital loan funds established by the Church Council. The management shall be within policies established jointly by the Office of the Treasurer and other affected churchwide units.~~
- ~~o. This office, in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary, shall examine the risk management and insurance needs of the churchwide organization and synods.~~

~~13.52.B05. Responsibility for Information Technology~~

~~The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of this church and the operation of Chicago-based churchwide units. In so doing, the treasurer shall have an executive for information technology, appointed by the treasurer, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church.~~

~~13.52.C05. Responsibility for Operational Support~~

~~The treasurer shall make provision for facilities management in support of the operation of the Lutheran Center and the function of Chicago-based churchwide units and, in so doing, the treasurer shall maintain management services with an executive for management services appointed by the treasurer who shall be responsible for building management for the churchwide organization and the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units.~~

14.32.C05:10. *One voting member of the Church Council shall be selected in each biennium to serve as a liaison with voice but not vote on each program committee of the program churchwide units. In addition, a member of the Church Council, upon invitation, may serve as liaison for the respective boards of trustees of the separately incorporated program units (i.e., Publishing House of the ELCA and Women of the ELCA) ministries.*

14.41.A05:10. Budget and Finance Committee

A Budget and Finance Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council and the treasurer of this church as an ex officio member of the committee. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer. The committee shall prepare and present a comprehensive budget to the Church Council for its consideration and

presentation to the Churchwide Assembly. ~~In addition, the~~ The committee shall relate to the work of the Office of the Treasurer and the Development Services unit.

~~15.11.A04.12.A10.~~ **12.A10. Duties of the Executive for Administration**

~~The executive for administration shall be accountable to the presiding bishop and shall serve as chief administrator of the churchwide organization. The executive for administration shall be elected by the Church Council upon nomination of the presiding bishop and shall have an appointment serve coterminous with the term of the presiding bishop. At the direction of the presiding bishop, the executive for administration shall:~~

- a. supervise the day-to-day functioning of the churchwide organization and coordinate the work of churchwide units;
- b. coordinate the strategic planning and day-to-day staff activities within the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the functioning of the administrative team;
- c. facilitate the interdependent functioning of churchwide units in the fulfillment of the responsibilities assigned to them;
- d. develop the budget for the churchwide organization and report to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council with regard to the preparation of the budget;
- e. provide staff services and documentation to the Planning and Evaluation Committee and the Board Development Committee of the Church Council; ~~and~~
- f. ~~oversee the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units.~~

~~15.11.B05.12.B10.~~ **12.B10. Responsibility for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations**

~~Responsibility for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.~~

a. ~~An executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall coordinate the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious activities of this church, and shall recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies relative thereto to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall:~~

- 1) assist the presiding bishop of this church in carrying out the presiding bishop's role as the chief ecumenical officer of this church;
- 2) administer the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious discussions (including bilateral dialogues) in which this church is involved;
- 3) ~~administer (including personnel and financial support)~~ provide active support of the membership of this church in ecumenical organizations, such as World Council of Churches, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and Lutheran World Federation;
- 4) ~~study and give advice in matters of fellowship and unity with other Lutheran churches;~~
- 5) 4) guide the process of reception of theological agreements and give advice in matters of fellowship and unity with other Lutheran churches; and
- 6) ~~encourage the study of theological topics of common concern; and~~
- 7) 5) assist the synods, congregations, and churchwide units of this church in carrying out their ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious responsibilities by giving guidance and by preparing guidelines for action.

b. ~~From time to time as necessary, the Executive Committee of the Church Council shall convene as the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. In serving in such capacity, the committee shall be augmented by The U.S.A.~~

~~National Committee also consists of the members of this church and the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diaspora who serve as voting members of the council of the Lutheran World Federation. One staff member of the Global Mission unit and the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall serve as a consultants to the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation.~~

- c. Ecumenical representatives shall be chosen by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council. These representatives include members of delegations to national and international inter-church entities in which this church holds membership and members of inter-Lutheran, inter-faith, and ecumenical discussions, including bilateral dialogues and conversations, in which this church participates. All such appointments shall be reported to the Church Council as information.*

15.11.C05:12.C10. Responsibility for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries

~~Responsibility for~~ To assist in the fulfillment of constitutional provision 13.21.j., the presiding bishop shall have a staff member appointed by the presiding bishop who shall be an assistant to the presiding bishop of this church to carry out duties related to the chaplaincies of this church in the U.S. armed forces, the Veterans Affairs Administration, and other federal agencies and institutions shall be carried out by an ~~The assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries, who shall:~~

- a. supervise the operation of the Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;*
b. fulfill the requirements for endorsement of candidates for services in federal chaplaincies; ~~and~~
c. seek periodically the advice and counsel of the inter-Lutheran committee for federal chaplaincies, whose members from this church shall be appointed by the presiding bishop, ~~and;~~
d. be appointed by the presiding bishop.

15.11.D05:12.D10. Responsibility for Human Resources

~~Responsibility for human resources shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide management of which shall develop and manage the personnel policies and procedures for the churchwide organization, except as otherwise determined, including policies and procedures regarding equal-employment opportunity and affirmative action; recruitment, interview, and selection of staff; compensation and benefits; employee-assistance programs; fair-employment practices, staff position description, just and equitable employee-relations practices; performance evaluation; maintenance of personnel records; and training. In accordance with bylaw 14.21.06., the Church Council shall adopt personnel policies upon recommendation of the Office of the Presiding Bishop.~~

a. ~~To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for human resources shall:~~

- ~~1) recommend personnel policies, procedures, and standards to the presiding bishop for submission to the Church Council, and, upon approval by the Church Council, be responsible for the implementation, administration, and evaluation of personnel policies, procedures, and standards for units, as applicable, of the churchwide organization;~~*
~~2) guide the recruitment, personnel interviews, and process of selection of staff;~~
~~3) authorize necessary research to update compensation packages and make recommendations to the Church Council for upgrading pension and other benefits plans;~~

- ~~4) make employee assistance programs, such as family-crisis counseling and retirement-planning services, available to the employees of this church;~~
 - ~~5) recommend policy and procedures to the Church Council for ongoing performance evaluation;~~
 - ~~6) provide for just and equitable employee-relations practices, including grievance procedures, and provide employee services appropriate to the churchwide office;~~
 - ~~7) maintain personnel records for all employees, including employee-performance evaluations; and~~
 - ~~8) offer such policies to the synods and congregations as guidelines and be available to counsel and advise the synods as requested.~~
- ~~b. The executive for human resources shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.~~

15.11.F05.12.E10. Responsibility for Research and Evaluation

Responsibility for research and evaluation shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide reliable and valid research, relevant information, and appropriate evaluation related to the purposes of this church in order to assist the presiding bishop, other leaders, and staff of the churchwide organization to accomplish their duties.

- ~~a. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for research and evaluation shall:~~
- ~~1) recommend research and evaluation policies, processes, procedures, and standards through the presiding bishop to the Church Council and implement them upon approval by the Church Council.~~
 - ~~2) serve as the center for this church in the area of research and evaluation by:~~
 - ~~a) conducting systematic, ongoing research on issues, attitudes, and contextual developments;~~
 - ~~b) conducting individual research projects on behalf of the churchwide organization and its units;~~
 - ~~c) overseeing the development and execution of research plans for each unit; and~~
 - ~~d) providing consultation to all churchwide units on matters related to research and evaluation.~~
 - ~~3) undertake at the direction of the presiding bishop coordinated comprehensive research and evaluation of the work of the churchwide organization.~~
 - ~~4) provide interpretation of the results of research conducted or reviewed in support of the work of churchwide units.~~
 - ~~5) provide the churchwide organization, its units, and other expressions of this church with demographic data and analysis.~~
 - ~~6) offer upon request counsel and advice about research and evaluation to congregations, synods, regions, agencies, and institutions of this church.~~
- ~~b. The executive for research and evaluation shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.~~

15.11.G05.12.F10. Responsibility for Synodical Relations

Responsibility for synodical relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop in order to coordinate the relationships between the churchwide organization and synods, ~~develop and implement synodical-churchwide consultations and services,~~ render support for synodical bishops and synodical staff, and provide staff services for the Conference of Bishops. To fulfill these responsibilities, an executive for synodical relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall:

- a. relate to the Conference of Bishops in fulfillment of the conference's assigned responsibilities and provide staff services for development of programs and other needs;
- b. relate to the Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries and the assistant to the presiding bishop ~~of this church~~ for federal chaplaincy ministries;
- c. ~~plan and coordinate synodical churchwide consultations and churchwide participation in synodical assemblies;~~
- d. provide for synodical services, including assistance to synods for organizational concerns, long-range planning, and ongoing evaluation; and
- e. ~~direct efforts for growth and strength in mission-support contributions from congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries;~~
- f. coordinate the interaction of churchwide units with synodical responsibilities and programs; and
- g. ~~oversee churchwide participation in regions.~~

15.12.G10. Responsibility for Theological Discernment

Responsibility shall be exercised in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for serving the Church's theological work by promoting, coordinating, and facilitating theological discernment of the Church's message and its theological foundations in collaboration with all who share in the responsibilities to be teachers of the faith in the Church, including the Conference of Bishops, the seminary faculties, the association of teaching theologians, networks such as Lutheran ethicists and women theologians, the editorial staff of the ELCA publishing ministry and publications, and all rostered leaders. To fulfill these responsibilities the presiding bishop shall appoint an executive for theological discernment, who will assist the presiding bishop and coordinate the service of staff groups that provide theological resources and assistance in programmatic implementation.

13.41.A03.15.13.A10. Responsibility for Risk Management

~~The Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in collaboration with the Office of the Treasurer~~ ~~treasurer of this church~~, shall provide and manage insurance (exclusive of life and health) programs for the churchwide organization and shall make available insurance programs to congregations, synods, regions, and related institutions, agencies, and organizations. Recommendations on standards for adequate, continuous insurance coverage to be maintained by synods, as required in constitutional provision 10.74., ~~shall~~ may be provided.

13.52.A05.15.14.A10. Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer

- a. This office shall be related to the treasurer, who shall be its full-time executive officer.
- b. This office shall have the sole authority and responsibility to establish and maintain banking relationships.
- c. This office shall have the authority to borrow; issue bonds, notes, certificates, or other evidence of obligation; or increase contingent liabilities within the overall limits determined by the Churchwide Assembly and the more restrictive limits established by the Church Council. No churchwide board or program committee shall make a commitment that binds the churchwide organization to an outside lending or other similar institution or which creates a liability ~~of this church~~ to such an institution without prior approval of the Office of the Treasurer.
- d. This office, through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council, shall recommend to the Church Council a certified public accounting firm to audit the financial records of the churchwide organization. Synodical financial reports shall be submitted to this office for compilation.

- e. This office shall provide for internal audit procedures of the churchwide organization.
- f. This office shall provide legal documents pertaining to the financial and property management matters of the churchwide organization. These legal documents shall be signed by the officers authorized by the Church Council.
- g. This office shall be authorized, within policies established by ~~this church~~ the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council, to purchase or otherwise acquire title to real property; to mortgage, lease, sell, or otherwise dispose of the same; and otherwise to act on behalf ~~of the units~~ of the churchwide organization ~~after receiving their direction regarding the purchase or disposition of real property.~~
- h. This office shall provide for a common system of financial reporting from synods and regions.
- ~~i. This office shall provide, upon request, a financial management system for synods.~~
- ~~j. This office shall provide, upon request, counsel in financial matters to the women's organization, congregations, synods, regions, and institutions.~~
- ~~ki. This office, within the policies established by the Church Council, shall assure the implementation of a donor gift acknowledgment process in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~
- ~~tj. This office, in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall recommend:
 - 1) approved policy for the valuation process for noncash gifts;
 - 2) the management of assets of life-income agreements;
 - 3) the establishment and management of memorial funds received by the foundation; and
 - 4) the distribution of earned-income payments to remainder beneficiaries as regulated by the life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.~~
- ~~mk. This office shall provide for the management of capital funds.~~
- ~~nl. This office shall manage capital loan funds established by the Church Council. The management shall be within policies established jointly by the Office of the Treasurer and other affected churchwide units.~~
- ~~om. This office, in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary, shall examine the risk management and insurance needs of the churchwide organization and synods.~~
- n. This office shall be responsible for building management and the coordination of central services for the churchwide organization.

~~13.52.B05.15.14.B10.~~ Responsibility for Information Technology

~~The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of this church and the operation of Chicago-based churchwide units~~ the churchwide organization. In so doing, the treasurer shall have an executive for information technology, appointed by the treasurer, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church.

~~15.21.A05.~~ Staffing Assumptions

~~Wherever practical, staff should be shared between churchwide units and synods, either as deployed staff or shared-time staff. When staff are "deployed" or are "shared synodical-churchwide" staff, this shall occur only after all affected organizations of this church in use of such staff have agreed to the purposes and details of such an arrangement.~~

- ~~_____ a. Deployed staff shall be understood to mean fully funded by the deploying churchwide unit(s).~~
- ~~_____ b. Shared synodical-churchwide staff shall be understood to mean shared funding by the deploying churchwide unit(s) and the synod(s).~~

15.21.B05. Appointment by Presiding Bishop

~~_____ The executive for a unit, section, or function for whom selection is not otherwise provided in the bylaws shall be appointed by the presiding bishop for a defined term to a maximum of four years. The appointment may be renewed for a defined term upon the decision of the presiding bishop. Service of an executive for a unit, section, or function, who was appointed by the presiding bishop, may be terminated by the presiding bishop, consistent with the personnel policies of the churchwide organization.~~

15.31.C03:10. Staff Services for the Conference of Bishops

Staff services for meetings of the Conference of Bishops shall be provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary. The executive assistant to the presiding bishop for synodical ministries relations shall coordinate the operation of the Conference of Bishops.

**GOVERNING DOCUMENTS: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS REMOVED FROM THE EN BLOC RESOLUTION
CONGREGATION TERMINATING ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ELCA**
(Agenda IV.D.1.b.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 1b)

Mr. Mark S. Helmke, chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, indicated that proposed amendments to provisions 9.62. and *C6.05. of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, which deal with a congregation terminating its relationship with the ELCA, had been removed from *en bloc* consideration.

Mr. Helmke said the committee had discussed a proposal to delete 9.62.g., which requires synodical approval before a congregation of the former Lutheran Church in America could terminate its relationship with the ELCA, but it had decided to retain that subsection in the new proposal as 9.62.h. at the request of a number of bishops. He moved the action that the committee recommended.

Moved: *To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and
To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

To adopt amendments to 9.62. and *C6.05. of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by deletion and insertion:

9.62. A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- ~~_____ a. A resolution indicating desire to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.~~
- ~~_____ b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.~~
- ~~_____ c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with the congregation during a period of at least 90 days.~~

- ~~d. If the congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the synodical bishop or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.~~
- ~~e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated.~~
- ~~f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.~~
- ~~g. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.~~
- ~~h. Congregations that are established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.~~

A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting to the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the congregation council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g. and h. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.

- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.**
- g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in 9.62., shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.**
- h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.**
- I. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.**
- j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of 9.62 and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.**

- *C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- ~~a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.~~
 - ~~b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.~~
 - ~~c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.~~
 - ~~d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.~~
 - ~~e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.~~
 - ~~f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.~~
 - ~~g.[†] Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical~~

[†] ~~This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that formerly were a part of the Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.g. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

~~h.² Since this congregation was established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting to the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the congregation council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g. and h. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the churchwide assembly.
- g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in 9.62., shall be required to receive synod council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

² ~~This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that have been established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.h. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

- h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- I. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive synod council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of 9.62. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

Secretary David D. Swartling provided background information on the proposed revisions. He said, as the number of congregations voting to terminate their relationships with the ELCA rose, the Conference of Bishops had reviewed the related constitutional provisions. The bishops considered leaving the provisions as they were, making “technical” amendments to fix those elements that were not working, or amending the termination process on a comprehensive basis. The secretary stated that Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel, had drafted a comprehensive revision to the process from the bishops’ discussions. Secretary Swartling said the bishops seemed to favor a comprehensive revision but suggested removing distinctions regarding predecessor church bodies. The council’s Legal and Constitutional Review Committee considered that suggestion but was proposing the subsection regarding congregations of the former Lutheran Church in America remain in the new provision.

The secretary also noted that the Conference of Bishops had considered the timing of a proposal to revise this provision and favored changing the process now, evaluating it, and possibly bringing further constitutional amendments to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. Secretary Swartling supported correcting the governing documents as soon as possible. He cited Mr. Harris’s emphases that the provisions are designed to ensure due process, to protect the rights of the congregation’s members, and to equip those members with the information they would need to make their decisions.

Mr. Harris stated that these provisions address the process for a congregation to vote to leave the ELCA, and the purpose of process was to protect rights. The provisions needed technical changes to protect the rights of the members, who were not previously mentioned in the provisions, he asserted. He pointed out several shortcomings of the current provisions and suggested changes to address them, especially to provide timely notice to all parties involved.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke expressed surprise by the possibility that a congregational vote in the negative did not end the process.

Mr. Harris replied that paragraph “j” under both provisions was in response to situations in which congregational meetings were repeated until the desired outcome of a few members was achieved. The new provisions would provide time for the members to resolve their differences in some other manner, he said.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña acknowledged that more council members had questions for Mr. Harris, and asked that the conversation continue later in the meeting.

RECESS

The third plenary session of the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 3:35 P.M.

**Saturday, November 13, 2010
Plenary Session IV**

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called Plenary Session Four to order at 4:15 P.M. and invited the Rev. Amsalu T. Geleta to reflect on “Dwelling in the Word.” Pr. Geleta described his parents as examples of hospitality for him and for this church.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

(Agenda II.B., Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 5)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked that the Rev. Allan C. Bjornberg, bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops, present the conference report.

Bp. Bjornberg stated that, at its October meeting, the Conference of Bishops welcomed two new members: the Rev. William O. Gafkjen, bishop of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, and the Rev. Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, and met with synod vice presidents and seminary presidents.

He praised the synod bishops for voicing the “narrative of this church” in their synods, often in situations where conflicting narratives were being put forward. The conference had reflected on identifying this church’s signs of hope and weaving them into a narrative of hope.

Bp. Bjornberg provided his personal perspective that the Conference of Bishops had appropriately grown into a pastoral and consultative relationship with the Church Council and with the rest of this church. He added that the conference appreciated that the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force had acknowledged and affirmed that relationship.

Bp. Bjornberg noted that synod bishops attending the Church Council meeting had spoken informally about how to offer their suggestions regarding the constitutional revisions under discussion, and they intended to raise the issues surrounding synodical approval for congregations to leave the ELCA at the Bishops Academy in January 2011.

Bp. Bjornberg called the conference a “microcosm of this church” in that its members hold the spectrum of views on a given issue that can be found across the ELCA.

Bp. Bjornberg related that at three recent consecrations of Episcopal bishops he had experienced a deep hospitality and The Episcopal Church’s serious attention to its full-communion agreement with the ELCA. He also told of a “sign of hope” in this church’s congregation in Dillon, Colo., which hosted with the local Rotary Club a community meal for 350 of the wealthiest and the poorest people of this country.

Bp. Bjornberg noted that seven of the congregations in the Rocky Mountain Synod had separated or were in the process of separating from this church. He reminded the council that the other 170 ELCA congregations provided a “narrative of hope” in that synod.

Bp. Bjornberg expressed his gratitude for the relationship between the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, and he asked the other bishops present whether they had any additional comments.

Hearing no other comments, Vice President Peña thanks Bp. Bjornberg for the report.

UPDATE ON “LIVING LUTHERAN” WEB SITE

(Agenda VI.D.)

Background:

According to an August 2010 announcement, *LivingLutheran.com* “will serve up a daily blend of stories, culture, and community to ELCA members and friends.”

Church Council Information:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. Scott J. Hendrickson, associate executive director and director for marketing, public relations, and creative services in Communication Services, to provide an update and virtual tour of the *LivingLutheran.com* site.

Mr. Hendrickson said about 60 percent of the visitors to *elca.org* were regular visitors and about 30 percent are new visitors, so much of the site was dedicated to resources and to information for “seekers.”

The new Web site, *LivingLutheran.com*, was a response to a recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding to create an every-member publication, Mr. Hendrickson stated. The site was meant to take advantage of advances in social media, which provided opportunities for ELCA members to interact and to define what it means to be a Lutheran for prospective members, he remarked.

Mr. Hendrickson had a “live” image of the site projected for the council members to see, and he navigated through many of the site’s pages. He noted that several writers received compensation to blog regularly on the site. He described the “Action” and “My Synod” sections, which were still under development.

The Rev. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson asked whether the new Web site would link to the sites of ELCA congregations.

Mr. Hendrickson replied that the “Find a Congregation” program on *elca.org* was being revised and would be employed on the *LivingLutheran.com* site, because a chief purpose of the new site is to help people find their local congregations.

Mr. Blaire P. Smith inquired into the number of “hits” that the new site was getting each day.

Mr. Hendrickson answered that the new site is getting about 200 hits daily and about 300 people have been invited to use the site, which was still in testing. He added that it was projected that *LivingLutheran.com* would receive more visitors than *elca.org* after the new site is fully functional.

Hearing no further discussion, the chair thanked Mr. Hendrickson for the update.

UPDATE ON ELCA WORLD HUNGER APPEAL (Agenda VI.G.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Rev. Daniel Rift, director for the World Hunger and Disaster Appeal, to provide the Church Council with an update.

Pr. Rift used the “live” projection of *elca.org* to present the council with information about the World Hunger appeal. He also displayed T-shirts, which bore the message that during the course of a year one in six people struggle for sufficient food, and spoke of the World Hunger program developing relationships to meet a variety of human needs and to bring hope to people around the world in response to the Gospel.

While contributions to the World Hunger appeal were down from previous years, Pr. Rift noted that 45 percent of gifts to the appeal were given at the end of the year. He described several efforts to reach out to new and regular donors through various media during the Christmas season. He also presented resources available to address giving during other church seasons in 2011. Pr. Rift asked to be invited to events across this church to speak about the World Hunger program and its work to share food and hope.

Vice President Peña thanked Pr. Rift for the update.

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT (CONTINUED) GOVERNING DOCUMENTS: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC* (CONTINUED) CONGREGATION TERMINATING ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ELCA (CONTINUED) (Agenda IV.D.1.b.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 1b)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Mr. Mark S. Helmke to continue the report of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee and called for further discussion of proposed amendments to provisions 9.62. and *C6.05. of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, which dealt with a congregation terminating its relationship with the ELCA. Mr. Helmke restated the motion.

Mr. Phillip H. Harris noted that the provisions do not allow for a claim on property, but some circumstances could arise in which claims on property could be challenged, especially if the congregation voted to become independent or join a denomination that was not Lutheran.

Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger asked why the proposal retained language regarding former Lutheran Church in America congregations.

Mr. Helmke responded that the reference was based on the policy of a predecessor church body.

Secretary David D. Swartling added that staff of the Office of the Secretary had debated whether or not to retain the language and suggested it be a matter of discussion for the Conference of Bishops.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, asked whether the intent of the section requiring that congregations established by the ELCA satisfy all financial obligations and receive Synod Council approval was that the congregations receive synodical approval, regardless of any outstanding financial obligations.

Secretary Swartling replied that it was.

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

VOTED:

CC10.11.57

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

*To adopt amendments to 9.62. and *C6.05. of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by deletion and insertion:*

~~9.62. A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:~~

- ~~a. A resolution indicating desire to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.~~
- ~~b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.~~
- ~~c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with the congregation during a period of at least 90 days.~~
- ~~d. If the congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the synodical bishop or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.~~
- ~~e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated.~~

- ~~f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.~~
- ~~g. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.~~
- ~~h. Congregations that are established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.~~

A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting to the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the congregation council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g. and h. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the

congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.

- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
- g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in 9.62., shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- i. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of 9.62 and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

~~*C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:~~

- ~~a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.~~
- ~~b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.~~
- ~~c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.~~
- ~~d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.~~

- ~~e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.~~
- ~~f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.~~
- ~~g.¹ Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~
- ~~h.² Since this congregation was established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting to the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the congregation council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting

¹ *This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that formerly were a part of the Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.g. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

² *This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that have been established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.h. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

- members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- e.** A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g. and h. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
 - f.** Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the churchwide assembly.
 - g.** Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in 9.62., shall be required to receive synod council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - h.** Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - i.** Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive synod council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - j.** If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of 9.62. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

Vice President Peña declared the motion had been approved.

THE CHURCH PERIODICAL, *THE LUTHERAN*

(Agenda IV.D.1.a.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 2c)

Mr. Mark S. Helmke stated that two other sets of proposed amendments had been removed from *en bloc* consideration, the first dealing with *The Lutheran* magazine. He moved the committee's recommended action.

Moved: *To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and
To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

To adopt the following amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

Chapter 16.

PROGRAM-UNITS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

16.10. ~~PROGRAM-CHURCHWIDE UNITS~~

16.11. ~~A program unit is a unit of the churchwide organization to which is assigned leadership responsibility for a major, identified portions of the program mission and ministry of this church.~~

16.11.A10:11. ~~Program-Identity of Units~~

~~Program-units—Units of the churchwide organization, which shall function through cooperation, coordination, and collaboration, are the following:~~

- ~~a. Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;~~
- ~~b. Global Mission unit;~~
- ~~c. Mission Advancement unit.~~

16.12.16:01. ~~The responsibilities of the program-units shall be enumerated-described in continuing resolutions.~~

17:11.A10:16.12.C11. ~~Mission Advancement Unit~~

~~The service unit of the churchwide organization is the Mission Advancement unit, which shall be responsible for coordinating this church's communication, marketing, public relations, mission funding, major gifts, planned gifts, and constituent data management. It also shall oversee the work of the following:~~

- ~~a. The Lutheran magazine~~
- ~~b. The ELCA Foundation.~~

16.12.D11. ~~The church periodical, The Lutheran, shall be published by the churchwide organization. The following shall apply to the church periodical:~~

- ~~a. The Church Council shall elect the editor of the church periodical by a two-thirds vote to a four-year term. The editor shall be eligible for reelection. Employment of the editor may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of this church and a two-thirds vote of the members of the Church Council present and voting.~~
- ~~b. The editor shall be responsible to the Church Council. The editor shall select the editorial staff of the church periodical and shall be solely responsible for the periodical's content.~~
- ~~c. Official notices of this church shall be published in the periodical.~~
- ~~d. An advisory committee for The Lutheran shall have the responsibility for the church periodical. The advisory committee, in consultation with the presiding bishop of this church, shall nominate the editor for the church periodical. The advisory committee of the church periodical shall be composed of nine members elected by the Church Council.~~

- 1) The members of the advisory committee of the church periodical, who shall be nominated through the Church Council's nomination process, shall include persons chosen for their understanding of periodical publishing.
- 2) Each member of the advisory committee for The Lutheran shall be elected for one six-year term, with no consecutive reelection and with one-third of the members elected every two years.
- 3) The terms of office of persons so elected to regular terms on the advisory committee of the church periodical shall begin on the first day of the month following each regular meeting of the Church Council.
- 4) The Church Council shall appoint one voting member of the council to serve as an advisory member of this committee.
- 5) The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of this committee.
- 6) The advisory committee of the church periodical shall:
 - a. develop editorial and advertising guidelines.
 - b. receive periodic reports from the editor.
 - c. consult with the editor from the perspective of the expertise of committee members.
 - d. be responsible, together with the presiding bishop of this church, for the annual performance review of the editor.

Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth said that the proposed revisions had been discussed during a recent meeting of *The Lutheran* magazine's advisory board and a concern was expressed about the magazine losing its ability—or at least losing the perception of its ability—to report the news of this church independently and without bias. If the magazine was “absorbed” into the Mission Advancement unit, it may lose its journalistic freedom, she added.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson stated he had spoken with the advisory board about the magazine's journalistic freedom and stressed that *The Lutheran* was not a unit of this church but its official periodical. The proposed amendments would retain that relationship and challenge the magazine to become more fully a part of how this church tells its story, he remarked, building on the magazine's strengths while recognizing the realities of diminishing subscriptions and resources.

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

VOTED:

CC10.11.58

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt the following amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

Chapter 16.

~~PROGRAM~~ UNITS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

16.10. ~~PROGRAM~~ CHURCHWIDE UNITS

16.11. A ~~program unit~~ is a unit of the churchwide organization to which is assigned leadership responsibility for a major, identified portions of the program mission and ministry of this church.

16.11.A10.11. ~~16.11.A10.11.~~ *Program-Identity of Units*

~~Program units~~—Units of the churchwide organization, which shall function through cooperation, coordination, and collaboration, are the following:

- a. *Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;*
- b. *Global Mission unit;*
- c. *Mission Advancement unit.*

16.12.16.01. The responsibilities of the ~~program~~ units shall be ~~enumerated~~ described in continuing resolutions.

~~17.11.A10.16.12.C11.~~ 16.12.C11. *Mission Advancement Unit*

~~The service unit of the churchwide organization is the Mission Advancement unit, which shall be responsible for coordinating this church's communication, marketing, public relations, mission funding, major gifts, planned gifts, and constituent data management. It also shall oversee the work of the following:~~

- a. *The Lutheran magazine*
- b. *The ELCA Foundation.*

16.12.D11. The church periodical, The Lutheran, shall be published by the churchwide organization. The following shall apply to the church periodical:

- a. The Church Council shall elect the editor of the church periodical by a two-thirds vote to a four-year term. The editor shall be eligible for reelection. Employment of the editor may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of this church and a two-thirds vote of the members of the Church Council present and voting.
- b. The editor shall be responsible to the Church Council. The editor shall select the editorial staff of the church periodical and shall be solely responsible for the periodical's content.
- c. Official notices of this church shall be published in the periodical.
- d. An advisory committee for The Lutheran shall have the responsibility for the church periodical. The advisory committee, in consultation with the presiding bishop of this church, shall nominate the editor for the church periodical. The advisory committee of the church periodical shall be composed of nine members elected by the Church Council.
 - 1) The members of the advisory committee of the church periodical, who shall be nominated through the Church Council's nomination process, shall include persons chosen for their understanding of periodical publishing.
 - 2) Each member of the advisory committee for The Lutheran shall be elected for one six-year term, with no consecutive reelection and with one-third of the members elected every two years.
 - 3) The terms of office of persons so elected to regular terms on the advisory committee of the church periodical shall begin on the first day of the month following each regular meeting of the Church Council.
 - 4) The Church Council shall appoint one voting member of the council to serve as an advisory member of this committee.
 - 5) The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of this committee.
 - 6) The advisory committee of the church periodical shall:
 - a. develop editorial and advertising guidelines.
 - b. receive periodic reports from the editor.
 - c. consult with the editor from the perspective of the expertise of committee members.

d. be responsible, together with the presiding bishop of this church, for the annual performance review of the editor.

Vice President Peña declared the motion had been approved.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF NOMINEES

(Agenda IV.D.1.b.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 1b)

Mr. Mark S. Helmke introduced the final group of proposed amendments regarding nominations and moved the action that the committee recommended.

Moved: *To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and To recommend the following amendments for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

- 12.51.31.** A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate at least one ~~two~~ persons for each position for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly and for which a nominating procedure has not otherwise been designated in the constitution, ~~and~~ bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.
- S9.05.** The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one ~~two~~ persons for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.06.** The Synod Council shall nominate at least one ~~two~~ persons for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.07.** ~~If the treasurer is elected, the~~ The Synod Council shall nominate at least one ~~two~~ persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

The Rev. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson spoke against the proposal, arguing that for the Nominating Committee to bring one name for election will have the effect of electing that person, because floor nominations were rare.

Secretary David D. Swartling responded that this church’s governing documents must reflect the reality that the Nominating Committee was not always able to slate two names for each vacancy. Whenever a synod slated only one person for a vacant position, it was in violation of its own constitution, he said. The unique expertise sought for some boards made it difficult to match two candidates against each other, the secretary remarked. He also mentioned that the proposed amendment would keep the preference but not the necessity that more than one person be nominated.

The Rev. Heather S. Lubold commented that it would be easiest for the Nominating Committee to do the minimum, and the proposed amendments could replace this church’s elections with the Nominating Committee providing one candidate for each vacancy. She suggested that the governing document delineate exceptions rather than set the rules to meet lower expectations.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke related the observations of a congregation that stopped nominating two candidates for each position, because it was a negative experience for the candidates who lost the elections. She added that the work of the Nominating Committee fulfilled the purposes of the elections.

At the request of the chair, Secretary Swartling repeated the motion.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for the vote. After the vote, the chair declared the motion was approved.

Secretary Swartling called for a division of the assembly.

Vice President Peña asked that the members vote by show of hands.

VOTED:

CC10.11.59

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting; and

To recommend the following amendments for adoption by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

12.51.31. A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate at least one two persons for each position for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly and for which a nominating procedure has not otherwise been designated in the constitution, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.

S9.05. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one two persons for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

S9.06. The Synod Council shall nominate at least one two persons for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

S9.07. If the treasurer is elected, the The Synod Council shall nominate at least one two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was approved, and he thanked Mr. Helmke and the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee for their work.

UPDATE ON THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(Agenda VI.E.)

Background:

At the invitation of the The Episcopal Church, Vice President Carlos E. Peña had appointed the Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede to represent the Church Council at meetings of The Episcopal Church Executive Council.

Church Council Information:

Vice President Peña introduced Pr. Tiede, who expressed her appreciation to The Episcopal Church and to the Church Council for her opportunity to serve as an ecumenical liaison for the two church bodies and to experience their ongoing relationship of full communion. She described a number of programs and resources the churches share.

Pr. Tiede introduced Ms. Stephanie Cheney, who represented Ms. Lelanda Lee of The Episcopal Church at this meeting.

Ms. Cheney brought greetings from the presiding bishop, the president of the House of Deputies, and the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church. She outlined several similarities between the two church bodies and emphasized the significance of full communion.

The Rev. Herman R. Yoos III, bishop of the South Carolina Synod, asked Pr. Tiede to lead the council in prayer. Pr. Tiede prayed for the mission, ministry, and unity of the ELCA and The Episcopal Church.

RACIAL JUSTICE PROCESS OBSERVATION

(Agenda V.A.)

Background:

Members of the Racial Justice Working Group are Mr. Baron Blanchard, Ms. Arielle Mastellar, Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, Mr. Iván A. Pérez, Ms. Lynette M. Reitz, Mr. David Truland, and Ms. Deborah Wilson. At the invitation of the Board Development Committee, the group observed Church Council meetings and provided periodic reports on:

- Process
- Who was in the room? Who spoke or addressed the plenary? How often? Whose voices were brought into the room?
- Climate: disconnect between advisors and council; comfort in sharing, speaking in plenary

Church Council Information:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña requested that members of the Racial Justice Working Group present their process observations.

Ms. Lynette M. Reitz said the morning was positive from a process perspective—more voices, more dissent—and cited a comment by Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson about pursuing unity rather than uniformity.

Mr. Blaire P. Smith added that the morning's discussion about youth and young adults was constructive.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon noted that, when an advisor raised concerns that voices would not be heard regarding issues of justice for women, the response was “trust us” from a white male.

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus mentioned the variety of opinions expressed during the meeting, a report outlining the importance of diversity in the new churchwide organization, and the diversity of this church illustrated by archival photos.

Ms. Lynette M. Reitz pointed out that evaluation forms were available, and she asked that completed forms be returned.

Vice President Peña thanked the group for its observations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The chair called on Secretary David D. Swartling, who made a number of announcements regarding dinner, breakfast, and Sunday worship. He stated that Evening Prayer would begin immediately after recess. He corrected the e-mail address previously given for the Rev. Cheryl M. Peterson and said that it was still possible to send her questions in advance of the primer on ecclesiology and polity.

RECESS

The fourth plenary session of the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 5:34 P.M.

Following the plenary session, the Rev. Ruth E. Hamilton led a service of Evening Prayer in the 1st Floor Chapel.

The Anti-Racism Team of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod conducted racial justice process observation training (Agenda V.A.1.) the evening of Saturday, November 13, 2010, for members of the Church Council whose terms end in 2013 and 2015 toward the council's goal of providing the training for all its members.

**Sunday, November 14, 2010
Plenary Session V**

Prior to the convening of Plenary Session Five of the Church Council meeting on Sunday, November 14, 2010, council members and advisors gathered for a service of Holy Communion in the 1st Floor Chapel. The Rev. Rachel Connelly preached; Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson served as presiding minister; Mr. Baron Blanchard was assisting minister; Ms. Elizabeth Gaskins and the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon were lectors; and the Rev. Martin A. Seltz provided music.

Vice President Peña called the fifth plenary session to order at 9:25 A.M., expressing gratitude to those who had led worship.

**REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE
(Agenda III.H.)**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the Program and Services Committee, for the committee's report.

MESSAGE ON DISABILITIES

(Agenda III.H.1.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Part 2a)

Background:

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly received memorials from eight synods requesting the development of a social statement on human disability. In response, the assembly approved the recommendation of the Memorials Committee [CA09.06.37]:

To thank the Alaska, Pacifica, Nebraska, Metropolitan Chicago, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, New England, and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods for their call for strengthened awareness within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the particular challenges faced by people living with disability as well as this church's responsibility to address issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome;

To acknowledge with gratitude the many resources available through the churchwide organization, synods, social ministry organizations, and congregations and urge their use throughout this church in its ongoing commitment to address both the challenges of stigmatization and discrimination within church and society and the issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

To decline to authorize the development of a social statement on human disability, but to request the Church in Society unit to consider development of a message on human disability, as financial and staff resources permit, that would aid awareness, deliberation, and action within this church, giving special attention to the unique issues (e.g., physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual) of the different types of disability.

At its November 2009 meeting, the Church Council had referred the action of the Churchwide Assembly to the Church in Society unit in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns," which described messages in the following way:

Messages are normally brief communications that draw attention to a social issue and encourage action on it. They provide this church flexibility to respond on selected occasions with timely and perceptive counsel on new situations and pressing concerns.

Messages are communications that the Church Council adopts and are thus distinct from social statements, which are adopted only by the Churchwide Assembly. Messages are not the result of widespread deliberation in this church (as are social statements) but are intended primarily to encourage further discussion and action on specific current social issues among ELCA members. They

are not new policy positions of the ELCA but build upon previously adopted social statements and social policy resolutions.

Messages address the contemporary situation in light of the prophetic and compassionate traditions of Scripture. They point to human suffering, grave injustice, pending danger, social perplexity, or hopeful developments and urge that evil be resisted, justice done, and commitment renewed.

Messages express the convictions of the leaders of this church who communicate them and who believe that their message should be heard in this church and beyond. They signal certain priority concerns that arise from this church's mission in the world. Messages are based upon and are consistent with this church's social statements and social policy resolutions. Normally, no more than one message is considered in each meeting of the Church Council.

The Church in Society unit and the Office of the Presiding Bishop shall consult with each other to ensure proper coordination in the preparation and distribution of non-policy churchwide messages on social concerns.

Background from the Church in Society unit:

The program unit for Church in Society contracted with the Rev. Ronald W. Duty to take the lead in developing the message. A consultation was held in January 2010, followed by the development of a draft based on research and regular consultation with members of the disabilities community. Pr. Duty also prepared a Web site and authored a background document that sketched previous developments related to disabilities within the ELCA and its predecessors. In June 2010 the background document and a draft of a message on disabilities was posted on the ELCA Web site, allowing comment and suggestions by e-mail or mail. Comments and recommendations for revision were received from over 100 individuals, some representing networks and agencies.

Staff of the Church in Society unit then revised the draft and conducted a process of review and further revision. As prescribed by "Policies and Procedures," this process included review by members of the Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee of the Conference of Bishops and the program committee for the Church in Society unit. The proposed message, "People Living with Disabilities," was recommended for adoption by the executive director of the Church in Society unit, according to "Policies and Procedures."

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy made the following motion on behalf of the Program and Services Committee.

Moved: To adopt "People Living with Disabilities" as a message of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To express the gratitude of the Church Council for individuals and ministries throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who have provided not only vital initiatives and innovative models, but also prophetic witness and determined leadership toward the spirit and commitments now expressed in the message, "People Living with Disabilities"; and

To request that the 2011 Churchwide Assembly lift up and acknowledge this message and those who made it possible.

An advisor noted that the proposed message referred to "society," and she recommended it be more specific about referring to "society in the United States."

Pr. Loy responded that the committee had discussed the message being more specific about "society."

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede pointed out in the proposed message how the committee addressed the issue.

Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, executive for governance and institutional relations, said the final version of the proposed message was available in Exhibit K, Part 2a.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson requested a description of the committee's thoughts about this church's capacity to meet the commitments the message would make.

Pr. Loy suggested the Church Council discuss the commitments of the proposed message.

The Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for studies, replied by reading from the proposed message:

In the ELCA people with disabilities and those who accompany them look to the churchwide organization for leadership, resource coordination, and collaboration. For this reason, it is important for promises regarding financial resources and staff capacities to be realistic and clearly communicated as the churchwide organization seeks to fulfill its role.

He added that the proposed message included no mandates other than that this church work with disabilities communities.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked whether those hoping this church would make commitments would find that helpful.

The Rev. Stephen P. Bouman stated that the new Congregational and Synodical Mission unit probably would assume this church's work in disabilities ministries. He remarked that the proposed message would help new and renewing congregations emphasize the involvement of people living with disabilities, assist this church's advocacy efforts, emphasize collaboration between this church and its social ministry organizations, and involve people living with disabilities in the leadership of this church.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson stressed that hospitality is at the heart of the proposed message—hospitality to this particular community within this church.

Mr. John S. Munday expressed the view that it is helpful that the proposed message had recommendations for many agencies and organizations regarding people living with disabilities.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote. After the vote, the chair declared the motion approved.

Pr. Loy expressed his gratitude to those who developed the message.

VOTED:

CC10.11.60 To adopt “People Living with Disabilities” as a message of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To express the gratitude of the Church Council for individuals and ministries throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who have provided not only vital initiatives and innovative models, but also prophetic witness and determined leadership toward the spirit and commitments now expressed in the message, “People Living with Disabilities”; and

To request that the 2011 Churchwide Assembly lift up and acknowledge this message and those who made it possible.

A message on

People Living with Disabilities

I. Introduction

As a church committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is called to welcome all people into full participation as baptized members of the body of Christ in all its congregations and ministries (1 Corinthians 12:14-26). Christians confess that all members have been baptized into Christ and made part of his body. Just as in Christ “there is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female” (Galatians 3:28), so also in Christ there are neither people with disabilities nor people without disabilities. All are one in Christ Jesus.

This church believes that God, as creator and sustainer, intends that society regard all people as of equal worth and make it possible for all—those without and those with disabilities—to participate freely and fully as members of society in all important aspects of common life.

God's gift of unity in Christ and these convictions commit the ELCA to work toward the full, just and equitable involvement of people living with disabilities in its own life and in this society. This commitment has been expressed in the ELCA's existing statements¹ and its various ministries. In recent years people who live with disabilities have achieved greater participation within this church

and within society. In the latter half of the twentieth century the disability rights movement has secured many needed legal and civil rights.

Nevertheless, there is much more to attain in both church and society. There also are crucial reasons at this time for articulating better this church's teaching, calling and commitments regarding ministry and mission with those who live with physical, sensory, intellectual, mental² and developmental disabilities.*

These crucial reasons are many. The Lutheran communion across the globe has registered the need for closer attention to these concerns.³ Actions by governments, employers and various other actors within U.S. society continue to reflect inequality and resistance to equitable participation. The population of those with disabilities continues to face core issues of poverty, unemployment and underemployment. People with disabilities remain significantly underrepresented as U.S. citizens in all levels of the political process.

The positive trends toward in-home support have increased challenges around basic standards of care, quality of life and access to personal, social and economic services. The cost of long-term care, rising national debt and an aging population have led to a political debate that increasingly expresses troubling signs. Political rhetoric increasingly expresses the belief that the economic cost of providing accessibility or other means for enabling participation in society for people with disabilities is too high or not worth the benefit to society.

Within the ELCA many believe and can testify from their own experience that this church's ministry, life and work has fallen short of God's call to provide means for ministry with and to people who live with disabilities. It is clear that this church can live into its identity as Christ's body better than it has so far both by increasing its attention to and more fully opening itself to people with disabilities. Its failures to do so in practice scandalize Christ's visible church and muffle its prophetic witness to society.

This message, therefore, provides an occasion for the ELCA to address concerns related to the participation of people with disabilities through theological reflection (Section II), confession (Section III) and calls to renewed commitment and action within the ELCA (Section IV) and for the society at large (Section V).

II. Perspectives of Christian Faith

Creation in the Image of God

God freely creates humankind in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27), an image given clarity and promise in Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:15-20). Just as God freely creates and commits God's self to human beings, so human beings reflect God's image because they are creatures free to love and serve God, other people and the creation itself. Human freedom for such relationships constitute the image of God⁴ and is the ground of human dignity.⁵

While a person's dignity is a gift of God, it is within individual relationships, families, communities and the larger society that human beings exercise that freedom. It is through participation in face-to-face relationships involving bodily actions, postures and mutual recognition that human freedom and dignity become apparent.⁶ All people with disabilities are created in God's image and share the gift of freedom for relationship and its dignity, regardless of their particular disabilities or range of personal capacities to respond to God and others.

The particular freedom of Christians is to live in the joyful assurance of a faith relationship with the God revealed in Jesus Christ, who loves all despite their sins. Theirs also is the freedom to live joyfully with and for their neighbor regardless of any disabilities that either they or others may have.⁷

* See glossary for meaning of these terms.

The Human Condition and Disabilities

Human beings are part of a world in which a variety of abilities and skills, impairments and disabilities⁸ are a common feature of life.* Vulnerability to and the risk of disability are a natural part of the human condition *for all people*. While most people may assume that they will never become impaired and disabled themselves, many individuals, in fact, will be impaired or disabled at some point in their life.⁹ For some, these impairments and disabilities will be temporary or moderate-term conditions, perhaps occurring near the end of life; for others, these will be either long-term or life-long.

Human life emerges from within the natural world and is limited and conditioned by it. Physical and sensory, intellectual and mental, and developmental disabilities arise within the natural and social worlds from factors that are genetic, chemical, behavioral, social, and accidental. A number of disabilities appear to result from various combinations of these factors.

Whatever the causes, a disability or impairment requires a person to exercise his or her abilities and skills in ways affected by that reality. Only in rare cases is the disability so severe that it deprives or completely eliminates one's capacity to act. Even then there remains freedom for meaningful human relationships.

Medical cures and assistance are blessings, but cures are rare and, sometimes, not desired.¹⁰ Like all aspects of health, living with a physical, intellectual or developmental disability is a fact of life calling for the resourceful and determined exercise of one's other abilities and freedom for relationship.

All people are free to care for each other in ways that are appropriate, purposeful and meaningful to everyone involved. Flourishing relationships among people both with and without disabilities will be lived out in various mixtures of support, interdependence and dependence. Various forms can be mutually positive and can improve lives and social conditions.

Sin and Injustice

In contrast to a Christian view of the human being as free in relationship, the most prevalent mindset within this culture—often present in the church—champions individual autonomy or individual “independence.” This view equates “freedom” with being able to choose from among self-selected alternatives and with being in control of one's own life.

This mindset tends toward an idolatry of human will and often is connected with idealized human perfection. It substitutes unfettered autonomous human choice for human freedom in mutually responsible relationships. Instead of freely loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves, this mindset celebrates using freedom for one's own wishes and toward one's own perfectibility.

This view of individual autonomy is false. The actions of *all* people require interdependence and are limited by natural causation, personal situation and location within a given social context. This view, however, remains dominant and our society tends to equate an idealized and unrealizable human perfection and autonomy with being “normal.” This view judges *all* people against this standard.

Against the standard of “individual autonomy,” people who have disabilities are judged as socially different or even inferior from those who are “normal.” Because their capacity for individual autonomy may be compromised to some degree, they are regarded or treated as somehow less fully human than other people.

This standard contributes to the perception that people with disabilities are mainly objects in need of charitable care. Such perception leads many to disregard how people living with disabilities are worthy of respect and have the same basic rights as all members of society. Far too often being “handicapped” or “disabled” has been a limiting label and a motive for either patronizing response or unfair treatment. The standard also has been used to justify inequalities in opportunities for employment and housing.

* See glossary for meaning of these terms.

The standard of autonomy leads many to discount how people living with disabilities also have wonderful capacities for relationships with others and significant abilities to contribute to society. The resulting judgments and labeling too often have prevented the joyous inclusion of the gifts, skills and personalities of many people with disabilities within families, churches and communities.

The emphasis on autonomy also has deprived people with disabilities of the freedom and responsibility to participate fully in making important life decisions for themselves and in experiencing the consequences. It has deprived others of the experience and joy of knowing and working with them.

Whether intended or not, such attitudes and treatment demean and harm those who have disabilities and, in fact, impoverish the lives of all. These views and attitudes, actions and outcomes must be named for what they are—expressions of sin.

Jesus Christ and Human Disabilities

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—the Word that became flesh (John 1:14)—demonstrate that all aspects of life including disabilities and impairment are encompassed in God’s loving care. In being born of Mary and living among us, Jesus took on all the risks and vulnerabilities of being human, including those of suffering hate, rejection, cruelty, injustice, disability and death. Jesus did not do so for the purpose of suffering these things for their own sake. Rather, his suffering was a necessary consequence of his walking the way of the cross, (Luke 24:27), so that *all* might be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:19).

Christians follow and pray to a living Lord who felt abandoned by God, suffered, and died, all with hope in the promises of God. This crucified Lord no doubt experienced disability¹¹ and the risen Christ’s wounds were significant in his post-resurrection appearance to Thomas and the other disciples. They demonstrated that the same Jesus who was crucified, died and was buried (Apostles’ Creed) in the flesh also was resurrected in the flesh (John 20:19-29). Death no longer has dominion over him, nor ultimate power or dominion over those who trust in his grace (Romans 5:16–6:11).

In his earthly ministry, Jesus’ attitude was marked by compassion, understanding and a willingness to walk with all people, whatever their situation. He healed and cured people who were sick, impaired and disabled “because in him was the full presence of God¹².” He related to all around him in a way that acknowledged their full humanity. All believers who call Jesus Lord are called to imitate his ways. Against this standard, it is clear that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

Christians, then, understand the need to confess what we have done and what we have left undone that harms people living with disabilities. In light of sinful actions and God’s call to love and justice, we acknowledge the need for confession as members of this church and society.

III. Confession

When Christians examine themselves individually and corporately, they may be led to confess ways in which as individuals they:

- assume, or act as if people with physical and sensory, mental and intellectual, or developmental disabilities are fundamentally different or inferior rather than celebrate these individuals as sharing a basic humanity given in the image of God;
- too often assume that a person’s disability is the primary source of their identity rather than just a condition they live with;
- doubt the capability of people with disabilities to function competently in their own ministry settings in the positions to which God calls them in the church, whether rostered or non-rostered leaders; and
- assume an idealism of perfection that imposes a sense of being fundamentally different from and, often, superior to people with disabilities.

When Christians examine themselves individually and corporately they may be led to confess ways in which congregations and other local ministries in this church:

- fail to prepare hearts and minds to welcome people with disabilities as sisters and brothers in Christ;
- fail to accept people living with disabilities as partners in a common ministry although many are able to share their stories, invite others to faith in Christ, serve in the ministries of this church and care for the needs of their neighbor in various ways;
- have fallen short of preparing church buildings to receive, welcome and ease the way for individuals with disabilities into their sanctuaries; and
- have not actively opposed--or have even encouraged--religious explanations that teach or imply that disabilities and impairments are punishment for individual sins or for those of parents and other family members¹³ or are sent as a test from God meant to bless, refine or redeem.¹⁴

When Christians examine themselves individually and corporately as part of this society, they may be led to confess ways in which:

- the common perception views people without obvious disabilities as self-controlled and autonomous, while identifying people with noticeable disabilities, by contrast, as largely lacking in autonomy and personal responsibility despite evidence to the contrary;
- the dominant mindset of this society idolizes the perfect body,¹⁵ often based on images of perfection from the mass media;
- the practice of modern medicine too often exaggerates its ability to control natural processes¹⁶ regards people with disabilities primarily as those in need of a cure or as those who need to be fixed and overlooks those who cannot be “cured”;
- social structures have been prone to isolate people with disabilities on its margins or to hide them out of public view;
- political and social structures unduly and unjustly restrict the spheres of choice for people with disabilities and the degree of personal responsibility they are able to assume for themselves as participants and citizens in society; and
- many perceive universal access as a special accommodation and therefore not worth the effort or expense needed to change existing social structures, patterns of behavior or means of communication.

Such confessions are not ends in themselves. By the power of the God who creates all and who makes us alive in faith, such confession becomes the occasion for all people to recommit themselves in freedom, hope and joy to one another. It becomes the occasion to articulate the commitments and courses of action that could better conform this church to the ways of Jesus in the treatment of people living with disabilities. It becomes the occasion to seek justice and fuller participation in both church and society.

IV. The Church’s Ministry and People with Disabilities

This church commits itself to the full inclusion and equitable participation within its own life of all people along *the entire spectrum of abilities and disabilities*. The ELCA rejoices in the presence of individuals, congregations, ministries and organizations within it that have demonstrated this commitment in creative and sustained ways. We commend their work and witness and encourage their continued efforts.

At the same time, we acknowledge that this commitment belongs to every member of the ELCA and that the Holy Spirit is calling for new, renewed and continuing efforts that will please God and bless the neighbor in this respect. This church is called to make fresh commitments in all dimensions of its ministry and mission among people with disabilities.

Congregations

Congregations gathered around word and sacrament bear crucial responsibilities in the life of this church as centers for evangelical mission with doors open to all, including those living with physical and sensory, intellectual, mental and developmental disabilities. The goal is that all people, including those with disabilities, may participate fully in the assembly of God's people and may experience together being the body of Christ. Without the presence of people with disabilities, the visible church is less than the whole people of God.¹⁷

We call upon and encourage congregations to:

- ensure that members or non-members who are disabled have accessibility to the worship space and transportation, with an appropriate companion, if desired;
- ensure that necessary alteration to worship practices are undertaken to enable participation, such as aids to interpretation of worship for people with visual and hearing impairments;¹⁸
- expect, encourage and support individuals with disabilities to assume leadership responsibilities in all aspects of congregational life, ministry and governance, with particular concern for worship leadership;
- plan for and include both children and adults with disabilities in the congregation's groups and all of its programs and outreach;
- undertake a periodic accessibility study of the congregation's facilities, programs and activities, and make results of this audit available to all, such as on its Web site;¹⁹
- make specific plans to address the shortcomings revealed by an accessibility study, consulting with people who have disabilities or their caregivers when planning and implementing physical improvements, programmatic innovations or schedule changes;
- welcome the leadership of individuals with disabilities as pastors, associates in ministry, diaconal ministers, deaconesses and lay staff;
- find appropriate ways to support caregivers of people who live with disabilities;
- support people with disabilities and caregivers during difficult decisions regarding level and location of care, independence and life milestones and honor those decisions;
- develop relationships with Lutheran or other social ministry and community organizations that support people with disabilities so that opportunities and areas for cooperation, service and learning may be explored; and
- support advocacy by its members for public policies, programs and adequate funding to benefit the needs of people with disabilities and the common good.

We commend:

- congregations that audit and improve the accessibility of their facilities, programs, and activities to people with disabilities; and
- congregations and synods that organize or host regular worship gatherings for people with disabilities and their families and friends when it is not feasible for them to participate in existing worship opportunities.

We call upon rostered and lay leaders of congregations to:

- be mindful of the circumstances and needs of people with disabilities and their caregivers for pastoral care, and include in public worship, where appropriate, elements of lament with which the congregation can help them express their grief and frustrations as well as their praise, thanksgiving and rejoicing;²⁰ and
- identify and encourage people with disabilities who show potential to enter rostered leadership to consider such callings seriously.

We urge individuals with disabilities to:

- be clear and forthcoming about what they personally can and cannot do within congregational life and as potential leaders and to share their unique gifts and perspectives in their congregations and with the wider church;

- take initiative in exploring what accommodations in congregational life may be helpful, necessary and possible; and
- take initiative to develop systems of social support based on their individual needs.

Synods

Synods and the ministries on their territories can play pivotal leadership roles in demonstrating commitment to people with disabilities and the value of encouraging their participation in its ministries. Synods also play a fundamental role in encouraging and supporting the development of rostered leaders who have disabilities.

We commend and encourage synods that:

- recognize the importance of ministry with people with disabilities and have given attention to foster such ministries;
- lift up congregations, outdoor ministries, campus ministries and other ministry sites that have made their facilities accessible to people with physical and sensory disabilities, and included people with all kinds of disabilities in their ministry and programs; and
- have supported participation of youth with disabilities in synod and churchwide²¹ youth activities.

We encourage synods, their congregations and other ministry sites on their territory to:

- find appropriate ways to share their knowledge, experience and means with other congregations and ministry sites that wish to make facilities and activities more accessible and more inclusive of individuals with all kinds of disabilities; and
- support efforts to ensure accessibility and participation in ministries in their jurisdiction such as campus ministries, outdoor ministries, Lutheran schools, chaplaincies and others.

We also call upon synods, their bishops and assistants to:

- help identify and encourage people with disabilities to attend seminary and enter rostered ministries;
- work closely with candidates with disabilities in order to receive their gifts for ministry and be willing to look carefully at their individual situations;
- work carefully and continuously with synod candidacy and call committees to help educate and sensitize their members to the gifts for ministry of people with disabilities, and the value of calling qualified people with disabilities to rostered leadership positions; and
- deliberately consider appointing people with disabilities, both rostered and lay, to their synod candidacy and call committees.

We commend:

- those synods, synod staffs, call and candidacy committees that already have taken steps in these areas and encourage them to continue to do so.

We urge people with disabilities who wish to attend seminary or who have studied for the ministry to:

- be clear and forthcoming with synodical staff and candidacy committees and congregational call committees about what they can and cannot do in ministry settings; and
- take initiative to develop systems of social support based on their individual needs.²²

The Churchwide Organization and Ministries

In the ELCA people with disabilities and those who accompany them look to the churchwide organization for leadership, resource coordination and collaboration. For this reason, it is important for promises regarding financial resources and staff capacities to be realistic and clearly communicated as the churchwide organization seeks to fulfill its role.

We encourage the churchwide organization to:

- strengthen efforts to publicize and provide existing resources and support to synods, congregations, campus ministries, church-related educational institutions and communities of people with disabilities in the ELCA;

- make a professional accessibility audit of the churchwide organization's Web site and create a plan to implement changes in areas indicated by the audit;
- work with synods and Lutheran social ministry organizations to create, publicize and support online forums and conference call support groups for people with disabilities and their caregivers;
- find ways to connect those congregations and other ministry sites desiring to make physical, technological or communication improvements aimed at increasing universal access to their facilities, programs and activities with relevant practical information and networks;
- encourage the production and distribution of worship, teaching and devotional materials in formats that enable full participation by those with disabilities;
- continue to increase the accessibility of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly and all other churchwide events for people with physical, sensory and other kinds of disabilities;
- continue to recognize and encourage networks and organized groups that support rostered leaders who have disabilities;
- work together with ELCA members, congregations, synods and affiliated organizations to advocate for public policies, programs and adequate funding to benefit the needs of people with disabilities and the common good; and
- make its policies and practices regarding ministry with and advocacy for people with disabilities substantially consistent with, whenever possible, those of its full communion partners and other ecumenical partners, both here and internationally.

We commend:

- the churchwide organization for its work to involve youth with disabilities through the Definitely Able Youth Leadership Event, and in the Definitely Able Advisory Committee (DAC),²³ and urge it to strengthen its work with youth with disabilities;
- the young leaders of DAC, and of Lutheran Youth Organization for their spirited witness in and to this church regarding the involvement of young people with disabilities;
- the churchwide organization's work with the Lutheran Network on Mental Illness/Brain Disorders (LNMI);²⁴ and
- the Project Coordinators for Deaf Ministry and for Blind and Braille Ministry for their work on behalf of hearing-impaired and visually-impaired people in the ELCA and the congregations and ministries which serve them.

Seminaries

ELCA seminaries have a lasting influence in this church insofar as they seek to make their institutions more accessible and increase sensitivity about people with disabilities among their students, faculty and alumni. Their challenges include investing in improving the accessibility of their facilities for people with disabilities and giving attention to curricula and instructional resources that address ministry with people with disabilities. Such actions enhance the training for ministry of people with and without disabilities, equip future leaders and offer signs of hope for this church.

We call upon all the ELCA's seminaries to continue to:

- encourage and train students with disabilities for rostered and lay ministries in the church;
- periodically assess the physical accessibility of their campuses, the accessibility of instruction to students with visual and hearing impairments and hospitality to and support of all students with disabilities;
- deliberately seek people with disabilities for appointments to their boards, faculties and staffs whenever appropriate;
- include attention in general instructional programs that help develop sensitivities to the long-term issues and needs faced by people with disabilities; and
- equip seminary students and congregations to reach out to people with disabilities and to lead congregations in becoming places of full participation.

Social Ministry Organizations

Lutheran social ministry organizations have been in the forefront of this church in addressing the needs of people with disabilities and have a rich history and much experience with supporting people with disabilities, their families and caregivers.²⁵ Because of their distinctive work and experience, these organizations can provide critical initiatives and innovative models for this church.

We call upon Lutheran social ministry organizations to:

- innovate effective ways to support people with disabilities who need their support and services to develop their abilities and to encourage them to participate in community life and society to the fullest extent possible;
- reach out to congregations, synods, Lutheran schools, seminaries, colleges, campus ministries and outdoor ministries in order to involve them in social ministry for people with disabilities and help them better understand the needs of people with disabilities and how to improve their own accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities;
- advocate for public policies, programs and adequate funding to benefit the needs and interests of people with disabilities and the common good; and
- encourage ministries and partnerships within the Lutheran World Federation to share with and learn from efforts across the globe to minister with and to people with disabilities.

We commend social ministry organizations for their attention to:

- finding the most effective means to support people living with disabilities and their families; and
- modeling collaboration with people with disabilities, their families and caregivers by providing carefully structured choice in all matters consistent with their abilities.

V. Society and People Living with Disabilities

Society has a long history of mistreatment of people with disabilities ranging from discriminatory to demeaning to even cruel.²⁶ While there are exceptions, U.S. attitudes, laws and practices unnecessarily and unjustly have restricted the opportunities of many people with disabilities to act on their own behalf and to contribute to society.

This history began to change when people with disabilities and other concerned individuals began to speak out publicly on behalf of people with disabilities. This coincided with social service and social ministry organizations' efforts to improve their situations and care. The greatest progress, however, has occurred when people with disabilities themselves formed the disability rights movement in the latter half of the twentieth century.

This movement and its supporters have worked to change attitudes and behavior by the passage of laws that have secured needed legal and civil rights. The goal has been to provide legal tools for people living with disabilities to exercise their rights. The goal has not been to seek "special" or "extra" rights, but to correct a long-standing history of denial of basic rights to people with differing abilities.²⁷

Given the various social, economic and political challenges facing American society, there are credible reasons to be concerned that these systems of care and these legal gains might be in jeopardy for people with disabilities who need them.

This church is aware that numerous issues need to be addressed in order to foster full inclusion and justice for people with disabilities. Toward that end it reaffirms these basic principles:

- all people have equal moral and legal status in this society, which includes a moral right to ethical treatment and inherent rights of self-determination and independence despite disabilities or impairment;
- all people deserve equal protection under the law. This protection includes equal access to public accommodations, facilities, programs and educational and economic opportunities. It includes protection from discrimination on the basis of ability/disability as well as protection from

- violence, intimidation and neglect at home, at school and in all other settings, public or private; and
- all people have a right to representation and participation in government and the exercise of citizenship even when this requires reasonable forms of assistance for people with disabilities.
- Further, the ELCA in its various ministries, organizations and expressions will:
- be guided by these principles in addressing those issues;
 - call upon its members, in their service in the world, to partner with people with disabilities and other allies in pursuit of these principles; and
 - stand with those who share these commitments and speak on behalf of those who are unable to speak for themselves.

Employment and Poverty

The most typical way for people in our society to participate and contribute is through employment. Employment also provides structure to an individual's life, access to others without disabilities, and a way out of poverty. There are very few people with disabilities who cannot work, even though appropriate supports are necessary sometimes, and most desire to work.²⁸

People with disabilities are much less likely to be employed than the general population, however and are more likely to be under-employed. They are likely to earn less than others, and they and their households are more likely to live in poverty, especially if their disabilities are severe.²⁹

The employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act are necessary but not sufficient alone to counter these problems by increasing employment and economic opportunity.

In light of these realities, this church urges employers to:

- think beyond entry- or low-level jobs for people with disabilities and to encourage appropriate career paths they might follow; and
- go beyond the requirements of the law in creative accommodations for otherwise qualified work, when necessary.

It calls upon federal and state governments to:

- work intentionally with people with disabilities, and especially those with severe disabilities, to develop short and long term strategies to help low-income people with disabilities lift themselves out of poverty; and
- review and revise laws and regulations that may threaten benefits, living arrangements or places on waiting lists.

Education

This church has a long tradition supporting education for all. It has affirmed the importance of education for developing the innate gifts and abilities of people with disabilities by calling for qualified teachers, adaptive technology and other necessary provisions.³⁰ U.S. law has established the policy of educating children with disabilities, regardless of their disability or set of skills, in an individualized program of instruction in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their needs.³¹

Toward the goal of providing education for all, this church calls upon the federal government to:

- maintain and strengthen the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and
- support appropriate funding for people with disabilities to receive higher education or technical training.

It urges all colleges and universities, especially those affiliated with the ELCA, to:

- be mindful of their opportunity and calling to serve the needs of people with disabilities, and to recruit them actively and also provide appropriate services and financial assistance.

Family Caregivers

A minority of people with disabilities need extensive individualized care-giving. Family members, especially women, tend to provide a significant portion of this care. These arrangements provide many benefits, such as maintaining mutually beneficial family relationships, but they also present extra challenges.

Some family members provide care in addition to their employment and other home responsibilities, while others forego employment and income in order to provide it. Caregivers who also are employed outside the home generally face significant challenges fulfilling responsibilities for both job and care-giving.

This church encourages employers to:

- accommodate the needs of employee caregivers with flexibility to the fullest extent possible; and
- refrain from penalizing employee caregivers by stigmatizing them or restricting their career paths.

The trend toward in-home services reflects not only a growing personal preference, but also a more economical means for providing services. This commitment to increasing family support requires significant political will and a comprehensive redesign of service systems.

U.S. society is beginning to face these issues, but they have not been resolved. While the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waiver Program provides a way for states to meet their court-ordered responsibilities, spouses and minor children in this program usually cannot be paid as providers of eligible waiver services.³² This exclusion often forces spouses or other family members to choose between providing care and earning an income.

This church calls upon federal and state governments to:

- increase funding for home and community-based care and eliminate waiting lists for it; and
- eliminate the exclusion of spouses from the Medicaid Home and Community-based Services Waiver Program.

Providing Support and Staffing the Caring Professions

Both secular and faith-based social service agencies provide the support that many people with disabilities need. These agencies deal with immense complexity in providing and administering tailored support services for clients, often participating in a mix of public and private programs.

This church calls upon governments at all levels to:

- adequately fund public programs for health and support services for those people with disabilities who depend on them and to remain current in their payments to social service; and
- simplify complicated eligibility and funding processes that obstruct much-needed service and create unnecessary administrative expenses.

A staffing shortage is looming in the caregiving professions. This shortage can be attributed in part to social attitudes and injustice related to society's care for people with disabilities. It is tied, as well, to the public's low regard for many of these fields and the relatively low pay for such work. Countering this shortage will require concerted and sustained efforts by government, schools, churches, businesses and non-profit organizations.

This church challenges colleges and universities, technical and vocational schools, hospitals and social service agencies, especially its own affiliated institutions, to:

- find and implement effective ways to attract, recruit and train people for service in these fields work to retain them.

We encourage congregations to:

- lift up members who serve in these fields and invite them to share their experience with interested young people and others.

Disabled Veterans

American servicemen and servicewomen who have disabilities resulting from military service deserve excellent care. However, the record of their care demonstrates an uneven quality and exposes a system riddled with problems. Resources available to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for care have been limited. Effective care for post-traumatic stress disorder and mental illness often can be difficult to obtain.

Many believe that the bureaucratic fault lies in the adversarial nature of the current process for qualifying for benefits.³³ In addition, a variety of political, fiscal and budgetary pressures contribute to chronic underfunding. Reforms are needed to address these issues. This church commends all efforts to improve the timeliness, accuracy and consistency of decisions for benefits and the provision of accurate funding.

This church calls upon the appropriate branches or institutions of the federal government to:

- assure that reforms and ongoing veterans' medical care are funded consistently and adequately; and
- assess and implement appropriate recommendations for reform in consultation with the Government Accountability Office and relevant congressional committees.³⁴

Citizenship

American citizens living with disabilities have a moral claim that they should be able to exercise their political and legal rights, despite disparities that may exist in terms of capabilities, resources and knowledge. Forty-two states and three territories, however, bar at least some individuals with intellectual disabilities from voting even when there is no cognitive impairment of a type that would make voting an unrealistic social goal.³⁵

Such prohibitions reflect a false view of citizenship that assumes an idealized rationality; most people with disabilities, however, are quite capable of making reasoned political choices.³⁶ Not only do they understand their own desires and interests, but most also have a sense of the common good.

This church calls upon all governmental jurisdictions to:

- repeal prohibitions on the right to vote for people with disabilities except when there are kinds and degrees of mental impairments that would preclude voting as untenable.

VI. Conclusion

When the word of God is preached and the sacraments administered without the presence of all believers among us as the church, including people who are disabled, we are less than the whole people of God. We are less than we could be in the absence of their experiences, interests, skills and abilities to contribute to God's work of mission and ministry.

The Holy Spirit is calling this church to be mindful that those within it who live with disabilities are full companions in the journey of faith. A faithful response requires renewed efforts by all to live out together with joy and hope the freedom Christians have in Christ to love God and to serve the neighbor in worldly callings.

In both church and society much remains to be done to ensure inclusion and justice for people with disabilities. Social and economic justice are not the sum total of what people with disabilities and their caregivers need, but they need justice as urgently as they need support, friendship and love. This church, through its members and various ministries, partners and organizations is being called to support this quest for justice and inclusion in both society and the church, and to accompany those who seek it.

Glossary of terms

The choice of language used regarding people in relation to their disabilities is both significant in itself, and a highly sensitive matter for many. While it may be generally agreed that terms with

negative and offensive connotation or denotation should be avoided, there is no single set of terms recognized as universally “correct.” The lack of a “standard” lexicon is a consequence of many factors. These factors include the fact that all human language is in constant transition and the preferences of different groups of concerned people from their experiences and insights about the meaning terms have been given. In general, the key terms regarding disability in this message can be read with the following background in mind.

Person or People with Disabilities

The use of the terms *person* and *people with disabilities* represents preferred ways to refer to those who live with disabilities. This form puts emphasis on one’s personhood; it designates a person who happens to live with one or more disabilities. It also helps to avoid categorizations that readily are depersonalized, such as the “Disabled” or “Handicapped.”

Disability

The use of the term *disability* describes a change in, a partial or complete loss of, or interference with one’s ability to perform a function or exercise a capacity that society considers typical of most individuals. People with disabilities seldom lack all ability to carry out most human activities. Rather, they often are differently abled or definitely abled. That is, they usually are able to accomplish the same activities in life as most others, if sometimes differently. Even when that is not the case, they have other abilities and gifts with which they live their lives and have relationships.

Impairment

This term identifies the physical injury or condition that results in a disability. An impairment that results in some level of disability, however, does not mean that a person with this disability cannot do the activities that most people do. People with disabilities often have both capacities and creativity to do things in effective ways not typical for others. This is true even if, sometimes, doing the activity may take longer or require different efforts than it would for a majority of people.

Disabilities

There are a number of broad categories of disabilities, each of which has its own primary characteristics. These characteristics often overlap and individuals may have more than one kind of disability. What people with different kinds of disabilities have in common, however, is twofold. The first is the reality of living with a disability. The second is the experience of being treated differently. This experience often includes paternalism and discrimination—overt and covert—from other individuals and a range of social, economic and even religious practices.

Although the variety of disabilities is broad, this message employs the following categories while recognizing there is considerable overlap and variation:

Physical and Sensory Disabilities

These terms indicate impairment of physical capacities, which limit or destroy one’s ability to act and interact with others, or to receive sensory stimuli from the environment. Sensory disabilities affect a person’s ability to see, hear, taste, touch or smell. Physical disabilities may affect a person’s abilities to, for instance, walk, or handle physical objects and to use certain tools in ways most in society take for granted. They also may affect the capacity, for instance, to communicate with others, eat, or breathe. People are known as visually impaired if they have a partial or total loss of their sight. People are referred to as having a hearing impairment if they have either a significant or total hearing loss.

Intellectual and Mental Disabilities

These disabilities affect the capacity to process, express or interpret one's own or other people's ideas and messages. This may include sensations, emotions or social cues. For example, Dyslexia rearranges written language in the brain and affects a person's abilities to read and write. Clinical depression is a condition of the brain that can negatively affect a person's moods, levels of energy, sense of self worth and behavior.

Developmental Disabilities

These disabilities result from sets of conditions that can adversely affect the development of children and youth, and in some cases mature adults. The disabilities may be physical, intellectual, emotional, social or some combination of these. For example, Down Syndrome causes delays in the ways children develop both physically and mentally. Autism (or Autism Spectrum Disorder) refers to a range of disorders in neurological development that give rise to various disabilities affecting behavior, communication and social interaction.

ENDNOTES

¹ See the ELCA social statements *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1997), *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (2003), and *Our Calling in Education* (2007) along with the document by Dr. Ronald Duty, "Actions Taken by the ELCA and its Predecessor Churches Regarding Persons with Disabilities and Disability Ministry" (2010). Links to all of these can be found from the home page of www.elca.org/disabilitiesmessage.

² Whether *all* mental and intellectual illnesses or conditions should be considered disabilities is a matter of contemporary debate, although some clearly are. This message does not try to settle this matter, but accepts that at least some do give rise to disabilities and recognizes that much here may be taken in general to apply also to anyone with mental illness. A social message on mental health has been authorized by the ELCA Church Council (CC09.11.86c)

³ One indicator of the worldwide concern about these issues is the adoption of Public Statement #13, "Advocacy for People with Disabilities," at the Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation meeting July 20-27, 2010, in Stuttgart, Germany. It recommitted the Federation to cooperation with the World Council of Churches and its Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (www.lwf-assembly.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Assembly_Outcomes/Consolidated_Report-Actions_Taken_by_Eleventh_Assembly.pdf, accessed 9/03/10).

⁴ "Human freedom for God and for the other person and human freedom from the creature in dominion over it constitute the first human beings' likeness to God." Dietrich Bonhoeffer. *Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1–3*, tr. Douglas Stephen Bax, John W. De Grouchy, ed., in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, v. 3, Wayne Whitson Floyd, Jr., Gen. Ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 67. See also where Bonhoeffer argues why the human likeness to God is not an "analogy of being" but an "analogy of relationship." *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵ The most well-known theological or philosophical explanations of the *imago dei* ground human dignity in the capacity for reason or the existence of a "rational soul." See, for instance, Jean Porter, *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 126–127. This raises the question, then, whether some individuals are left out since it seems to require, by definition, having "normal" human intellect, will and memory of events or information. Luther and the Lutheran Confessions do not depend on such views. Luther, in fact, objected to interpreting the image of God in terms of any powers of human beings and

made no strong claims about it. He did insist that whatever it is, the image of God is “a unique work of God” and a work of the entire Trinity. Martin Luther, *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1–5*, Jaroslav Pelikan, ed., (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing Co., 1958), 57–64. Some relevant texts in The Book of Concord include Apostles’ Creed, Article I, of “The Small Catechism,” “The Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration,” I, 9–16; and “The Apology to the Augsburg Confession,” II, 15–22.

⁶ Theologians have recently begun to reflect upon these dimensions of being human vis-à-vis the image of God. Mary McClintock Fulkerson emphasizes bodily interactions of people in relationship with God and in face-to-face recognition and interaction with one another in worship, fellowship and mutual service. *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), see especially pp. 250–251. Hans Reinders stresses the relationship of friendship that God establishes and affirms in the Eucharist. See Hans J. Reinders, *Receiving the Gift of Friendship: Profound Disability, Theological Anthropology, and Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 162, 337–347, 351, 365–366, 369, 374, and 376–377.

⁷ *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, 3; and Luther, *On Christian Liberty*, tr. W. A. Lambert, rev. by Harold J. Grimm (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 47–54.

⁸ In the literature an *impairment* refers to a reduced or missing bodily or mental function, which ordinarily a human being would be expected to have. A *disability* is any change, restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner considered typical for a human being, usually resulting from an impairment. See Martha C. Nussbaum, *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*. The Tanner Lectures on Human Values (Cambridge: Belknap, 2006), 423–424, n. 5.

⁹ At any one time, nearly one-fifth of the population of the United States has a disability. See Bureau of the Census, “Selected Disability Measures by Selected Age Groups: 2005,” www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/sipp/disable05.html (accessed 3/27/2010). A person of age twenty has a 30 percent chance of becoming chronically disabled by age sixty-five. See U.S. Social Security Administration, “Disability Benefits,” *Social Security Online*, www.ssa.gov/pubs/10029.html#part2 (accessed 4/19/2010). The percentage of people with disabilities *rises with age*. Nearly 52 percent of the population over age 65 reports living with a disability; nearly 37 percent of them report that their disability is severe. Bureau of the Census, “Americans with Disabilities,” *Statistical Brief* (January, 1994), 1.

¹⁰ This ambivalence has many sources. It may be the cost or complexity of treatment, for instance. Some in the hearing-impaired community, as another example, have rejected cochlear implants for personal use because of a strong identity with sign language and culture.

¹¹ A review of textual, historical and archaeological evidence about Roman practices of crucifixion in first century Palestine has led medical and biblical scholars to accept that Jesus, like others who were crucified, experienced impairments to his wrists and nervous system that would be considered disabilities if he had survived or had experienced the same injuries in other circumstances. See William D. Edwards, Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 256:11 (March 21, 1986), 1460. Jesus’ disablement during his trial and crucifixion has been identified and emphasized by Nancy L. Eiesland in *The Disabled God Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994). Because she is primarily concerned with physical disability, Eiesland draws certain theological and anthropological implications from the fact of Jesus’ disablement that are not assumed here. For one criticism of Eiesland’s views see Hans J. Reinders, *Receiving the Gift of Friendship*, 166–180. The crucial point is that Jesus shared the risk and the experience of

human vulnerability to suffering, disability and death.

¹² ELCA, *Caring for Health*, 2003, 5.

¹³ Ibid. The ELCA statement on health does not condone this view of the ultimate cause of illness. See page 3, for instance.

¹⁴ Such messages either inappropriately blame the person who is disabled or give disabilities a meaning they do not actually have. Undoubtedly many experience God's blessings in the midst of living with disabilities, but that fact is a completely different matter than justifying disabilities by claiming that God inflicts them *in order to* bless, refine or redeem. See Helen Betenbaugh and Marjorie Proctor-Smith, "Disabling the Lie: Prayers of Truth and Transformation," in *Human Disability and the Service of God: Reassessing Religious Practice*, Nancy L. Eiesland and Don E. Sailiers, eds., (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998); see also "Disability and Meaning," in Arne Fritzon and Samuel Kabue, *Interpreting Disability: A Church of All and for All* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2004), 10–11.

¹⁵ Sharon V. Betcher, *Spirit and the Politics of Disablement*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 3, 5. Betcher also refers to this idolatry as our culture's "hallucination of wholeness."

¹⁶ Gerald P. McKenny, *To Relieve the Human Condition: Bioethics, Technology, and the Body* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 2, 18–19. Philip Hefner also argues that we tend to assume that "(1) Every possible technological advance should be brought to bear in health care . . . , (2) every ailment should be prevented. . . , (3) every ailment should be 'medicalized' . . . , (4) Our bodies are high-performance sophisticated machines that should always function at their optimal level . . . , [and] (5) our bodies are eminently fixable, and getting repairs when needed is a basic human right." Hefner, "Healthcare is about Bodies and Bodyselves," *Dialog*, 48:4 (Winter, December 2009), 309–310.

¹⁷ See Stanley Hauerwas, "The Church and Mentally Handicapped Persons: A Continuing Challenge to the Imagination," in *Religion and Disability*, Bishop, ed., 59.

¹⁸ This would entail, for instance, making available American Sign Language and Braille and large print worship materials; it also may require attention to providing elements of the Eucharist for people with multiple chemical sensitivities.

¹⁹ Instruments to help congregations do these things are available from the Congregational Accessibility Network, PO Box 959, Goshen, Ind. 46527-0959, Ph: 574-535-7053 or 877-214-9838, as well as on its Web site at: www.accessibilitynetwork.net (accessed 8/29/10). Other resources for various kinds of disability are also listed on this Web site.

²⁰ See Betenbaugh and Smith, "Disabling the Lie," 288–289.

²¹ The ELCA Youth Gathering and the Definitely Abled Youth Leadership Event are illustrations.

²² An example at the time of writing is the ELCA Disability Mentor Network.

²³ Information about the Definitely Abled Advisory Committee (DAC) and the Definitely Abled Youth Leadership Event (DAYLE) is available online at www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Youth-Ministry.aspx (accessed 8/27/10).

²⁴ Information about the Lutheran Network on Mental Illness/Brain Disorders appears on the ELCA Web site at: www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Disability-Ministries/Mental-Illness.aspx (accessed 8/30/10). It is a joint effort with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod to assist Lutheran

congregations toward more effective responses to individuals with mental illnesses or brain disorders and their families.

²⁵ Lutheran social ministry organizations support people with disabilities with dedicated and experienced professional staffs and volunteers, innovative management and services, imagination, and spirit in a challenging and changing social and fiscal environment. They also advocate for public policies, programs, and funding that benefit people with disabilities with federal and state governments. At present, 18 social ministry organizations with service locations in 33 states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands are members of the Disability Network of Lutheran Services in America and support individuals with developmental disabilities. Several Lutheran hospital systems and other social ministry organizations also support people with rehabilitation services for physical disabilities, strokes, and brain and spinal cord injuries.

²⁶ Parts of this history are told in Susan M. Schweik, *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public*, (New York: New York University Press, 2009) and also in Eiesland, *The Disabled God*, 49–64.

²⁷ Key federal laws enacted are the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (modified and expanded as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (amended, 2008). Court opinions in recent years also have accorded people with disabilities certain rights because of their differing abilities. In the literature, it has been argued that there is historical correlation between the passage of disability rights legislation and the repeal of municipal laws designed to control the public appearance and public behavior of people with disabilities. The last known such law was repealed by the City of Chicago in 1972. See Schweik, *The Ugly Laws*, 280–281.

²⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, Distribution of Selected Characteristics of Individuals 25 Years and Older by Disability Status: 2005, www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/sipp/disable05.html (accessed 3/22/10). About one-third of working people with disabilities are limited in the kind of work they can do.

²⁹ Ibid. In 2005, for example, the poverty rate for people whose disabilities were not severe was 25 percent higher than for people who were not disabled, and the poverty rate of people with severe disabilities was three times that of people without disabilities.

³⁰ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *Our Calling in Education*, (Chicago: ELCA, 2007), 26.

³¹ Nussbaum, *Frontiers*, 205, 207–208. Nussbaum notes the importance of the court's opinion in deciding the case of *Timothy W. v. Rochester New Hampshire School District* 875 F. 2d 954 (1st Cir. 1989) cert. denied 493 U.S. 983 (1989). See also *Our Calling in Education*, 30, 34, 46–47 for the ELCA's position on these issues.

³² "Medicaid Home and Community-based Services (HCBS) Waivers – Overview," Workworld, Employment Support Institute, School of Business, Virginia Commonwealth University, www.workworld.org/wwwwebhelp/medicaid_home_and_community_based_services_hcbs_waivers_overview.htm, (Accessed May 6, 2010).

³³ In the current system, the burden of proof falls on the veteran to prove the legitimacy of a claim while the defined role of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is to determine that all claims are not fraudulent before those claims are approved. Linda Bilmes, "Soldiers Returning from Iraq and Afghanistan: The Long-term Costs of Providing Veterans Medical Care and Disability Benefits, *Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, RWP07-001, (Cambridge, Mass: Kennedy School of

Government, Harvard University, January, 2007), 7, found at:
<http://web.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/citation.aspx?PubId=4329> , 12 (accessed 4/27/10).

³⁴ Recommendations have been made by a variety of organizations and commissions. One important example comes from the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission of the U.S. Congress (see Eric Christensen et al in *Final Report for the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission: Compensation, Survey Results, and Selected Topics*, prepared for the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission by C.N.A. Corporation, Alexandria, Va., 2007 available at https://www.1888932-2946.ws/vetscommission/e-documentmanager/gallery/Documents/ReferenceMaterials/CNA_FinalReport_August2007.pdf, p. 13 [Accessed, 4/27/10]). A second important example comes from the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors (see "Serve, Support, Simplify: Report of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors," Washington: 2007) www.veteransforamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/presidents-commission-on-care-for-americas-returning-wounded-warriors-report-july-2007.pdf [accessed 4/27/10]);. Other recommendations by the Government Accountability Office are online at the GAO web site at: www.gao.gov/docsearch/featured/disability_benefits.html.

³⁵ Nussbaum, *Frontiers*. 195.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 98. For important research about voter choice and discussions of voter rationality that support this point, see Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: Wiley, 1960; reprint, Chicago: U of Chicago, 1976) and Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, "The Rationality of Political Activity: A Reconsideration," in *Controversies in American Voting Behavior*, Richard G. Niemi and Herbert F. Weisberg, eds., (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1976) 46–47.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL STATEMENTS

(Agenda III.H.2.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Part 1)

Background:

At its March 2010 meeting, the Conference of Bishops raised questions related to the capacity of this church to deal with the list of social documents under development. Similar concerns had been voiced by members of the Church Council.

At its April 2010 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC10.04.15]:

To affirm the current time line for the development of a social statement on genetics for consideration by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and

To request the Church in Society program unit to convene conversations related to the development of future social statement and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

As the Church in Society program unit considered the question of capacity, it identified three statements that provided a summary of concerns that had been raised:

- This church is committed to the practice of moral deliberation and, while not universal, there is increasing appreciation for social documents.
- Some in this church have described feeling burdened by the rapid succession, overlapping time lines and controversial aspects of developing documents.
- Despite a reduction in the number of staff within the churchwide organization responsible for studies, the time line approved prior to the reduction has been maintained.

The Church in Society program unit indicated that there were many guiding concerns to be considered in the development of social policy documents, including social statements:

1. Maintaining the integrity of the established five-year process for the development of social statements with commitments to:
 - a. A task force-driven process that does not pre-conceive an outcome;
 - b. Broad churchwide participation in a way that continues reasonable quantity and quality of involvement of all stakeholders;
 - c. The following processes, with adjustment as appropriate:
 - 1) Multiple opportunities for input and response;
 - 2) Task forces comprised of a diverse range of competencies;
 - 3) A study;
 - 4) A draft;
 - 5) Hearings on the draft;
 - 6) A proposed document; and
 - 7) Formal involvement by elected churchwide leadership, including the unit program committee and the appropriate committees of the Conference of Bishops and Church Council.
2. Scheduling development of social documents so there was only one major document at any one time involving formal input from the elected churchwide leadership. It was critical to distinguish the capacity of the formal churchwide leadership from the capacity of stakeholders, congregations, and other ministry sites, noting that the stakeholders and interest groups vary for each process and often do not overlap.
3. Related assumptions:
 - a. The pending decision of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly related to a proposed triennial Churchwide Assembly cycle would require further adjustment in the schedule.
 - b. Additional staffing reductions would require further adjustment in the schedule.

The following social policy statements currently were in process: message on disabilities (Church Council, November 2010); social statement on genetics (2011 Churchwide Assembly); message on mental health (Church Council, April 2011); social statement on criminal justice (2013 Churchwide Assembly); social statement on justice for women (2015 Churchwide Assembly).

The proposed schedule for consideration by the Church Council was distributed following the meeting of the Program and Services Committee in Exhibit K, Part 1:

	Fall 2010	Winter 2011	Spring 2011	Summer 2011	Fall 2011	Winter 2012	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Winter 2013
Genetics	Hearings	Proposed Statement	Church Council consideration	Churchwide Assembly	Publish				Study Guide	
Criminal Justice		Study	Study	Study	Study		Draft Hearings	Hearings	Hearings	Proposed Statement
Justice for Women									Task Force begins	
Disabilities Message	Proposal; Church Council consideration	Publish								
Mental Health					Consult	Proposal	Church Council consideration; Publish			

Continued from above	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Fall 2013	Winter 2014	Spring 2014	Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Winter 2015	Spring 2015	Summer 2015
Genetics										
Criminal Justice	Church Council consideration	Churchwide Assembly	Publish				Study Guide			
Justice for Women							Study	Study	Study	2017 Churchwide Assembly
Disabilities Message										
Mental Health										

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy made the following motion on behalf of the council’s Program and Services Committee.

Moved:

To request that future social documents be scheduled with sensitivity to the time demands involving elected churchwide leadership, including bishops, Church Council members, and synodical leaders;

To acknowledge the preference that only one major document be in process at any one time;

To adopt the schedule provided in Exhibit K, Part 1; and

To request that at its November 2011 meeting the Program and Services Committee, considering the actions of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, reassess the revised time line and question of capacity.

Pr. Loy pointed out that the chart (above) presented an expanded time line demonstrating the capacity of this church to participate in the development of social documents. He added that contingency plans were being developed should the 2011 Churchwide Assembly approve a three-year cycle for assemblies.

Mr. Mark W. Myers related that, in a recent meeting, the Sierra Pacific Synod Council expressed its opposition to lengthening the time frame for social statements.

Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy, a staff member of the Northern Illinois Synod, stated that social statements require the dedication of synod money, resources, and staff time, which were all in short supply.

The Rev. Gerald L. Mansholt, bishop of the Central States Synod, affirmed the recommendation, based on the difficulty his synod has had scheduling time for hearings on the genetics statement.

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede noted a lack of activity scheduled on the chart for winter–summer 2014, and she asked whether work could begin earlier on the justice for women statement.

The Rev. Roger A. Willer responded that social statements were developed on a five-year cycle, and a task force would begin work on the justice for women statement in fall 2012 in preparation for the Churchwide Assembly either in 2016 or 2017.

The Rev. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson asked whether the biennial or triennial Churchwide Assembly was the only change to the schedule.

Pr. Willer replied that the justice for women statement originally was planned for presentation to the 2015 Churchwide Assembly. He pointed out that the motion would direct a reassessment of the schedule after the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. He also indicated that work on the mental health message would be delayed until fall 2011.

The Rev. Susan Langhauser asked whether the Program and Services Committee had consulted those working on any of the statements regarding the schedule.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson responded that the proposed changes in the schedule were based on the capacity of staff. Delaying the justice for women statement until 2017 was “severe,” she said, but having it ready by summer 2015

would be a challenge for a reduced staff. Should the 2011 Churchwide Assembly approve a three-year cycle for assemblies, the goal would be to have the statement ready by summer 2016.

Secretary David D. Swartling stated that the motion would direct a reassessment of the schedule after the 2011 Churchwide Assembly made its decision about triennial assemblies.

Pr. Loy asked whether the Church Council should prepare another schedule for statements based on a three-year cycle for assemblies.

Secretary Swartling replied that it may be appropriate for the committee to do so.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a vote. After the vote, the chair declared that the motion was approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.61 To request that future social documents be scheduled with sensitivity to the time demands involving elected churchwide leadership, including bishops, Church Council members, and synodical leaders;

To acknowledge the preference that only one major document be in process at any one time;

To adopt the schedule provided in Exhibit K, Part 1; and

To request that at its November 2011 meeting the Program and Services Committee, considering the actions of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, reassess the revised time line and question of capacity.

CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

(Agenda III.H.3.a.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit I, Part 1)

Background:

The Human Resources section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop recommended an addition to the Personnel Policies of the Churchwide Organization. The proposed policy, “ELCA Churchwide Organization Electronic Communications Policy,” had been reviewed by ELCA legal counsel. It included the following sections:

1. Policy Overview
2. Owning and Acquiring Technical Resources
3. Privacy Expectations
4. Prohibited Use
5. Using Personal Computer and Personal E-mail Address
6. Avoiding Harassing Behavior
7. Speaking on Behalf of the Organization and Issues of Confidentiality
8. Posting Recommendations for Colleagues
9. Job Performance
10. Reporting Violations
11. Discipline for Violations

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy made the following motion on behalf of the Program and Services Committee.

Moved: To approve the addition of the “ELCA Churchwide Organization Electronic Communications Policy” to the ELCA Churchwide Personnel Policies as detailed in Exhibit I, Part 1.

The Rev. Michael J. Schmidt asked whether the proposed policies applied to Church Council members, advisors, and liaison bishops and their use of Net Community.

Ms. Else B. Thompson, executive for human resources, replied that the personnel policies apply only to staff. Hearing no further discussion on the motion, Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for the vote. After the vote, he declared the motion approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.62

To approve the addition of the “ELCA Churchwide Organization Electronic Communications Policy” to the ELCA Churchwide Personnel Policies as detailed in Exhibit I, Part 1.

**REPORT OF THE *Ad Hoc* COMMITTEE ON BOARD OF PENSIONS MATTERS
(Agenda III.B.)**

Background:

Since the ELCA came into existence in 1988, the Board of Pensions has been a separately incorporated unit of this church. As a Minnesota not-for-profit corporation with its principal place of business in Minneapolis, Minnesota, its responsibilities include management of the 403(b)(9) defined contribution retirement plan. The Board of Pensions has never had a defined benefit pension plan for its plan members.

In a defined contribution retirement plan, members bear the risk of market fluctuations. In a defined benefit plan, the sponsoring employer bears that risk and, if there was a shortfall in funding, can make contributions to the plan. In a defined contribution retirement plan, the Internal Revenue Code and corresponding Treasury Regulations clearly state that employers and employees can make contributions to member accounts; no other parties are designated as allowed to contribute to a member’s retirement account or annuity fund.

One part of the Board of Pensions’ defined contribution retirement plan has been the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (PABF).

The financial markets experienced an extreme downturn beginning in September 2008, a major factor in the resultant national and international recession. As a result of the financial crisis, the PABF and other Board of Pensions members’ retirement accounts lost substantial value. The losses in the PABF were comparable both to losses in other members’ funds and to the funds of organizations with similar asset allocations.

In response to the financial crisis and loss of value in the PABF, the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions, consistent with its authority, acted to preserve the assets of the PABF by reducing annuity payments to annuitants and by reducing the value of the bridge fund accounts of members.

In 1993, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly created a program to assist retirees who are plan members, including annuitants, who have special needs due to economic distress. The ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund (SNRF) was established, in part, to provide financial assistance to those plan members who were living in poverty and met the eligibility criteria.

After SNRF was created, the Church Council provided \$500,000 in designated funds for it. The Board of Pensions also received undesignated gifts, which had been directed or allocated to SNRF. These potentially could be utilized to address, to some extent, the impact of annuity reductions on those most adversely affected by the reductions. SNRF funds were part of the ELCA pooled trust managed by the Board of Pensions; SNRF oversight was provided by a Managing Committee comprised of executives from the churchwide organization and the Board of Pensions.

In response to the action by the Board of Pensions relating to PABF, nine synods passed resolutions addressed to the Church Council. At its meeting on August 4, 2010, the Church Council adopted the following action [CC10.08.33]:

To receive the resolutions of the Minneapolis Area, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Southwestern Minnesota, South Dakota, Upstate New York, La Crosse Area, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, and Northern Illinois synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding;

To establish an *Ad Hoc* Committee, including the following members:

1. Church Council: David Anderson, Mark Helmke, Ann Niedringhaus, Carlos Peña (convener)
2. Liaison Bishops: Callon Holloway, Jr., Martin Wells
3. Advisory member: Lois O’Rourke, chair, Board of Pensions Board of Trustees

4. Ex-Officio: Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA treasurer and David Swartling, ELCA secretary
5. Board of Pensions staff liaison: Robert Berg
6. Churchwide staff liaison: Ruth Hamilton, Office of the Secretary;
To request that the *Ad Hoc* Committee respond to synodical resolutions related to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, including but not limited to:

1. Consultation with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and
2. Exploration of possible:
 - a. alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized;
 - b. steps to mitigate adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund;To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

In response to the action of the Church Council, Vice President Peña convened the *Ad Hoc* Committee, which met telephonically in 2010 on August 12, August 23, September 7, September 28, October 18, and October 27. The members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee also exchanged information by e-mail. In the course of its meetings, the *Ad Hoc* Committee consulted with Board of Pensions personnel regarding the PABF and decisions that were made with respect to it, and with the chair of the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions and members of the Managing Committee of SNRF. The *Ad Hoc* Committee, with the assistance of the Research and Evaluation section, also prepared a questionnaire that was sent to 1,500 participants in the PABF. Responses continued to be received, and, as responses were evaluated, informed the *Ad Hoc* Committee and the Board of Pensions.

As a result of its evaluation, the *Ad Hoc* Committee concluded that:

1. The Board of Pensions acted reasonably and promptly and consistent with its obligations in the series of actions taken with respect to the PABF beginning in late 2008; and
2. SNRF represents the most reasonable and appropriate mechanism and the only realistic source of funds available within the ELCA to assist those most profoundly impacted by annuity reductions.

The *Ad Hoc* Committee brought the following recommended actions, which addressed both the Church Council and the Board of Pensions.

AD HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Church Council:

1. Authorize one-time payments from SNRF as soon as realistically possible in 2011 to those most adversely affected by the reduction in annuity payments, drawing both from Church Council funds already designated for SNRF and undesignated funds received by the Board of Pensions and allocated to SNRF. Request that, in order to make these payments, the Board of Pensions, in consultation with the Managing Committee of SNRF, develop criteria based on need and a process for distribution of available funds to those most adversely affected by the reduction of annuity payments.
2. Provide for the expansion of the criteria for eligibility to SNRF and make provision for the possibility of more frequent reviews of eligibility, including periodic comprehensive reviews, to address the needs of plan members in light of economic realities.
3. Consider increasing the membership of the SNRF Managing Committee to include representation from the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council.
4. Authorize periodic offerings and appeals designated for SNRF.
5. Provide a process for regular review of SNRF by the Church Council.
6. Authorize the *Ad Hoc* Committee to continue its work, to monitor the implementation of these recommendations and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the April 2011 Church Council meeting.

AD HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Board of Pensions:

1. Enhance communications to and the education of annuitants and prospective annuitants regarding the PABF and any new annuity products. In so doing:
 - a. Consider and develop additional ways to be proactive in such communication and education efforts; and
 - b. Continue and increase emphasis on assisting members in understanding the aspects of a defined contribution retirement plan, including members' responsibilities and role in decision-making.
2. Consider developing a fund, within SNRF or separate from it, to make available payments to plan members in situations of extraordinary economic distress and develop a process to authorize payments in such cases. Make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council.
3. Enhance communications to and the education of members and sponsors regarding SNRF. Work to ensure that synodical bishops and staff are knowledgeable about SNRF. Make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council.
4. Explore possibilities for voluntary regular contributions by sponsors and members to SNRF, in addition to special gifts from members and sponsors. Make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council.
5. Explore other options for providing funds to SNRF. Make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council.
6. Consider amending the name of the Board of Pensions to reflect that it is providing retirement income through annuity payments and investment fund(s) distributions, and not providing pension payments. Additionally, an amended name would reflect more accurately the other services it provides. Make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked the *Ad Hoc* Committee for dealing with a complex issue and for bringing experience, expertise, curiosity, and creativity to the task. He called on Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer of the Board of Pensions, to provide Church Council members with background information on the PABF and on the Rev. Robert D. Berg, assistant to the president of the Board of Pensions for church relations, for a description of the SNRF.

Mr. Kapanke reiterated much of the background information above regarding the PABF, 403(b)(9) defined contribution retirement plans, defined benefit plans, individual decisions and risks, and actions taken by the Board of Pensions in response to the financial crisis that began in September 2008. He reported that a recent meeting of the Board of Pensions' board of trustees decided, because of improvements in the fund, to reduce annuity payments to annuitants by 6 percent in 2011 rather than by the projected 9 percent. Mr. Kapanke acknowledged that any reduction will be "painful" for many recipients. He also announced that the annuity fund will reopen around the middle of 2011, with new methods for payment.

Pr. Berg referred to the background information above about the SNRF and the related recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee. He described the membership of the Managing Committee of the SNRF and distributed printed information about the fund. Pr. Berg said the Managing Committee had expanded the eligibility requirements, effective January 1, 2011, to include those who retired prior to January 1, 2000, and to include those whose total monthly income from all sources was less than \$1,675 if single or \$1,925 if married. He stated that assets were available in the SNRF to accomplish the one-time payments mentioned in the recommendations without jeopardizing the current program payments. Needs criteria would be established for the one-time payments, he remarked.

Vice President Peña drew the council's attention to conclusions of the *Ad Hoc* Committee that "the Board of Pensions acted reasonably and promptly and consistent with its obligations in the series of actions taken with respect to the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund beginning in late 2008" and that the "Special Needs Retirement Fund represents the most reasonable and appropriate mechanism and the only realistic source of funds available within the ELCA to assist those most profoundly impacted by annuity reductions." He also outlined the committee's recommendations for the Church Council and for the Board of Pensions.

Mr. Mark S. Helmke said the *Ad Hoc* Committee's review of the Board of Pensions was beyond routine, and he expressed his gratitude to those present representing the Board of Pensions for their candid and forthcoming responses. He also described a new appreciation for the SNRF and its significance in the lives of many who had served this church.

The Rev. David P. Anderson admitted that after 10 years of ordained ministry, he learned he did not have a pension plan. He urged all his colleagues to educate themselves about available retirement resources.

Hearing no further comments from committee members, Vice President Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling, who introduced the following motion.

Moved:

To receive with gratitude the report and recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee in response to the resolutions of the Minneapolis Area, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Southwestern Minnesota, South Dakota, Upstate New York, La Crosse Area, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, Northern Illinois, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding;

To authorize one-time payments from the Special Needs Retirement Fund (SNRF) as soon as realistically possible in 2011 to those most adversely affected by the reduction in annuity payments, drawing both from Church Council funds already designated for SNRF and undesignated funds received by the Board of Pensions and allocated to SNRF;

To request that, in order to make these payments, the Board of Pensions, in consultation with the Managing Committee of SNRF, develop criteria based on need and a process for distribution of available funds to those most adversely affected by the reduction of annuity payments;

To provide for the expansion of the criteria for eligibility to SNRF and make provision for the possibility of more frequent reviews of eligibility, including periodic comprehensive reviews, to address the needs of plan members in light of economic realities;

To authorize that the membership of the SNRF Managing Committee be increased to include one representative from the Conference of Bishops and one from the Church Council;

To authorize periodic offerings and appeals designated for SNRF;

To anticipate the development of a process for regular review of SNRF by the Church Council;

To authorize the *Ad Hoc* Committee to continue its work, to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the April 2011 Church Council meeting;

To request that the Board of Pensions:

1. Enhance communications to and the education of annuitants and prospective annuitants regarding the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (PABF) and any new annuity products. In so doing:
 - a. Consider and develop additional ways to be proactive in such communication and education efforts; and
 - b. Continue and increase emphasis on assisting members in understanding the aspects of a defined contribution retirement plan, including members' responsibilities and role in decision-making;
2. Consider developing a fund, within SNRF or separate from it, to make available payments to plan members in situations of extraordinary economic distress and develop a process to authorize payments in such cases and to make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;
3. Enhance communications to and the education of members and sponsors regarding SNRF; work to ensure that synodical bishops and staff are knowledgeable about SNRF and make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;
4. Explore possibilities for voluntary regular contributions by sponsors and members to SNRF, in addition to special gifts from members and sponsors; make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;
5. Explore other options for providing funds to SNRF and make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;

6. Consider amending the name of the Board of Pensions to reflect that it is providing retirement income through annuity payments and investment fund(s) distributions, not providing pension payments, and to reflect more accurately the other services it provides; make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council.; and
To request the secretary of this church to inform the synods of the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee and this action.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke asked for an estimate of how many pastors had requested assistance.

Pr. Berg noted that the SNRF is open to all retired workers of this church and their surviving spouses. At one point in 2011 there were 47 units—a unit being either a single person or a married couple—who received benefits. He stressed the need to get information about the fund to those who are eligible to benefit from it.

Pr. Amsalu T. Geleta asked for the rationale for the eligibility requirement of retirement prior to a certain year.

Pr. Berg explained that the original 1993 requirement was the year the fund was established. The requirement was changed to 1997 because the eligibility could be expanded while maintaining the integrity of the fund. The proposed requirement of 2000 would also maintain the integrity of the fund.

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

VOTED:

CC10.11.63

To receive with gratitude the report and recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee in response to the resolutions of the Minneapolis Area, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Southwestern Minnesota, South Dakota, Upstate New York, La Crosse Area, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, Northern Illinois, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding;

To authorize one-time payments from the Special Needs Retirement Fund (SNRF) as soon as realistically possible in 2011 to those most adversely affected by the reduction in annuity payments, drawing both from Church Council funds already designated for SNRF and undesignated funds received by the Board of Pensions and allocated to SNRF;

To request that, in order to make these payments, the Board of Pensions, in consultation with the Managing Committee of SNRF, develop criteria based on need and a process for distribution of available funds to those most adversely affected by the reduction of annuity payments;

To provide for the expansion of the criteria for eligibility to SNRF and make provision for the possibility of more frequent reviews of eligibility, including periodic comprehensive reviews, to address the needs of plan members in light of economic realities;

To authorize that the membership of the SNRF Managing Committee be increased to include one representative from the Conference of Bishops and one from the Church Council;

To authorize periodic offerings and appeals designated for SNRF;

To anticipate the development of a process for regular review of SNRF by the Church Council;

To authorize the *Ad Hoc* Committee to continue its work, to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the April 2011 Church Council meeting;

- To request that the Board of Pensions:**
- 1. Enhance communications to and the education of annuitants and prospective annuitants regarding the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (PABF) and any new annuity products. In so doing:**
 - a. Consider and develop additional ways to be proactive in such communication and education efforts; and**
 - b. Continue and increase emphasis on assisting members in understanding the aspects of a defined contribution retirement plan, including members' responsibilities and role in decision-making;**
 - 2. Consider developing a fund, within SNRF or separate from it, to make available payments to plan members in situations of extraordinary economic distress and develop a process to authorize payments in such cases and to make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;**
 - 3. Enhance communications to and the education of members and sponsors regarding SNRF; work to ensure that synodical bishops and staff are knowledgeable about SNRF and make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;**
 - 4. Explore possibilities for voluntary regular contributions by sponsors and members to SNRF, in addition to special gifts from members and sponsors; make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;**
 - 5. Explore other options for providing funds to SNRF and make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council;**
 - 6. Consider amending the name of the Board of Pensions to reflect that it is providing retirement income through annuity payments and investment fund(s) distributions, not providing pension payments, and to reflect more accurately the other services it provides; make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council.; and**
- To request the secretary of this church to inform the synods of the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee and this action.**

Vice President Peña declared the motion was approved.

Mr. Kapanke thanked the *Ad Hoc* Committee for its work. He expressed the opinion that the council's actions and requests will help to restore trust in the funds and annuities of the Board of Pensions. Mr. Kapanke said that Pr. Berg and he had met with about 2,000 retirees, and he looked forward to discussing the council's action and recommendations in their future meetings.

Secretary Swartling reviewed the process that led up to the action from a governance perspective, and he thanked synod bishops for helping to frame concerns in the facts of the situation, diffusing anger, and providing proactive leadership. He also praised the Church Council for appointing an *ad hoc* committee, which was able to explore some creative solutions.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited the Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, to reflect on "Dwelling in the Word." Bp. Burk expressed his appreciation for this church's commitment to gather weekly around the means of grace as central to all else that it does.

UPDATE ON KALOS—THE ELCA LEGACY SOCIETY

(Agenda VI.F.)

Background:

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA09.06.39b]:

To refer Motion E to the Development Services unit with a report to be brought to the Church Council.

Motion E: Wills and Living Trusts

RESOLVED, that this assembly request that the ELCA develop a focused, long-term churchwide program to include publicity, education, survey response forms, and any such other means to encourage all members to prepare an updated will, along with updated beneficiary designations, and furthermore to encourage all members to consider including one or more ELCA-affiliated ministries in their estate plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that each member of this and subsequent assemblies, all rostered pastors, staff members, and leaders of the ELCA be encouraged to undertake such planning and be leaders by example in this effort.

At its April 2010 meeting, the Church Council received an introduction to Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society and voted [CC10.04.17]:

To receive with gratitude the response of the ELCA Foundation and Development Services unit to the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly motion related to wills and living trusts;

To anticipate the launching of Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society in 2010 and a wills and bequests campaign in 2011;

To encourage strongly members of the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, synodical officers and other leaders of this church to become charter members of the ELCA Legacy Society—Kalos; and

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

Church Council Information:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, president of the ELCA Foundation and executive of the Development Services unit, to bring an update on the Kalos Society wills campaign.

Ms. Halverson reported that the ELCA Foundation and Development Services unit had launched Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society in 2010, the first step in a comprehensive churchwide initiative, to provide donors with a stewardship vehicle, to encourage others to prepare wills, and to increase annual giving to this church. Those who name ministries of the churchwide organization in their estate plans were eligible members for Kalos. The campaign for charter members of the society had been put on hold during the redesign of the churchwide organization and would resume in January 2011, she announced, and 12,000 prospective members had been identified. She said that 2,500 invitations to be charter members of Kalos were sent in October 2010 in a three-step process: an invitation letter from Ms. Halverson, a formal invitation by mail, and a phone call. She told the council that 17 of the 2,500 guests completed membership applications over the phone, 90 pledged to complete their forms by Easter 2011, 77 completed forms were returned prior to receiving a phone call, and 116 who received a phone call requested a visit from an ELCA estate planner. Another 3,000 prospective charter members will be contacted once the campaign resumes in January 2011, she stated. Educational materials had been budgeted for 2011, including an online wills and bequests manual that congregations and synods could use to help members identify ministries of this church in their wills.

Mr. Mark E. Johnson asked whether there was a means by which Church Council members could indicate their intentions to include the ELCA in their estate plans.

Ms. Halverson replied that all Church Council members would receive invitations to become charter members of Kalos by the end of January 2011, and the invitations will include a response mechanism to indicate estate plans.

Vice President Peña noted that he had received an invitation, and he expressed the hope that all Church Council members would become charter members of Kalos.

Ms. Lynette M. Reitz urged this church to address youth and young adult members of the ELCA about setting up wills.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY CONSULTATIONS PLANNING TEAM

(Agenda IV.F.3.)

Background:

In January 2007 a consultation on the ministries of deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry was convened by the Vocation and Education unit with funding from the ELCA Deaconess Community. From that gathering grew a Public Ministry Consultations planning team that worked for three years, fostered similar gatherings in eight regions of the ELCA, and developed a DVD resource. The team submitted a report early in 2010 to the executive director of Vocation and Education, the secretary of the ELCA, the regional coordinators, and the leadership teams of the diaconal ministry community and the Deaconess Community. The report included the nine recommendations detailed below.

The first six recommendations were specifically related to the rosters for deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry:

1. Address the ELCA Constitution and other governing documents to remove the word “lay” to describe all three of these rosters in public ministry.
2. Articulate a common theological foundation for ministry, reclaiming “*diakonia*” as the foundation for all three rosters.
3. While recognizing and valuing the differences in tradition and history of these three rosters, we recommend that they become one roster with three expressions.
4. Require basic theological preparation for all three rosters while maintaining flexibility toward goals of effective and diverse mission and ministry.
5. For the sake of good order, examine the titles, symbols and visible signs of each of the three rosters.
6. Vigorously encourage synods, bishops, and churchwide staff to communicate more effectively the value of and variety of gifts of these three rosters (e.g., advocate with congregations and agencies as they consider staffing).

The final recommendations related to *all four* of the current rosters, including those ordained to Word and Sacrament ministry:

7. Develop standards that are fair and consistent for procedures for call, salary guidelines and related issues.
8. Develop unified ongoing formation and discernment tools and events.
9. Continue the momentum of the work of this consultation so that dialogue may continue among rosters. The next step in this dialogue needs to include all four rosters.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Secretary David D. Swartling whether any resolutions had been removed from *en bloc* consideration.

Secretary Swartling replied that, other than those containing constitutional amendments already considered, a resolution regarding the recommendations of the Public Ministry Consultations planning team was the only one removed from the *en bloc* resolution. He made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To express the appreciation for the work of the Public Ministry Consultations planning team, acknowledging that their work has assisted the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to deepen its understanding both of the diaconal work shared by all members and of the public ministries of Word and service;

To call upon this church to name these Word and service ministries, to affirm their vital roles, to recruit individuals to explore these callings, and to assist people in preparing for and being called to specific ministries in the ELCA and in the world we serve;

To request that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, with the appropriate committee of the Conference of Bishops, constitute a small task force on ministries of service (*diakonia*), including at least one teaching theologian, one bishop, and one member from each of the four rosters, with this mandate:

1. To suggest ways that the leaders and expressions of the ELCA can continue to undergird the ministries of members of the three Word and service rosters and their communities and to facilitate the use of their gifts and called service in ELCA congregations and other ministries, including non-profit, government and public entities;
2. To articulate for the ELCA a fuller theology of Word and service ministry that builds upon:
 - a. This church's diaconal tradition and its complementarity to the theology of word and sacrament ministry, grounding both in the baptismal call to all God's people to serve within the institutional church and in the world;
 - b. The ELCA's "Together for Ministry" report (1993), the Lutheran World Federation report "Diakonia in Context" (2009), the report and recommendations of Public Ministry Consultations planning team (2010) and other Lutheran and ecumenical studies;
3. To consider whether this Word and service ministry would be better expressed and the present ELCA mission and ecumenical mission better served by the formation of one new ELCA Word and service roster that incorporates the members and heritage of the three present rosters into a diversified whole with a common entrance rite; and
To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2012 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson explained that the 1993 Churchwide Assembly had established a roster for diaconal ministry in addition to the rosters for deaconesses and associates in ministry, and this church has continued to study the implications of those three rosters for the ELCA. In 2007, at the request of many members of those rosters, a consultation was convened and subsequently replicated in regional consultations, which formed an *ad hoc* committee to draft recommendations. He outlined the committee's recommendations, stressing the request for a theological study of public ministry of Word and service.

The Rev. Ralph E. Jones, bishop of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, noted that he served as the Conference of Bishops liaison to this church's Diaconal Ministry Community. He related concern within the community that the third mandate of the task force named in the motion directed the task force to reach a preconceived conclusion of creating one roster from the three rosters. He said that he felt that another concern of the community regarding representation on the task force was addressed in the direction that half of the members served on Word and service rosters. He also indicated his willingness to serve on the task force.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for a vote. After the vote, he declared the motion had been approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.64

To express the appreciation for the work of the Public Ministry Consultations planning team, acknowledging that their work has assisted the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to deepen its understanding both of the diaconal work shared by all members and of the public ministries of Word and service;

To call upon this church to name these Word and service ministries, to affirm their vital roles, to recruit individuals to explore these callings, and to assist people in preparing for and being called to specific ministries in the ELCA and in the world we serve;

To request that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, with the appropriate committee of the Conference of Bishops, constitute a small task force on ministries of service (*diakonia*), including at least one teaching theologian, one bishop, and one member from each of the four rosters, with this mandate:

- 1. To suggest ways that the leaders and expressions of the ELCA can continue to undergird the ministries of members of the three Word and service rosters and**

- their communities and to facilitate the use of their gifts and called service in ELCA congregations and other ministries, including non-profit, government, and public entities;
2. To articulate for the ELCA a fuller theology of Word and service ministry that builds upon:
 - a. This church's diaconal tradition and its complementarity to the theology of Word and Sacrament ministry, grounding both in the baptismal call to all God's people to serve within the institutional church and in the world;
 - b. The ELCA's "Together for Ministry" report (1993), the Lutheran World Federation report "Diakonia in Context" (2009), the report and recommendations of Public Ministry Consultations planning team (2010) and other Lutheran and ecumenical studies;
 3. To consider whether this Word and service ministry would be better expressed and the present ELCA mission and ecumenical mission better served by the formation of one new ELCA Word and service roster that incorporates the members and heritage of the three present rosters into a diversified whole with a common entrance rite; and
To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2012 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

UPDATE ON ELCA CONSTITUENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (Agenda VI.C.)

Background:

The purpose statement for the new ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS) was that it "exists to serve the needs of ELCA constituents to have a single, accurate contact record with the ELCA, and to help the ELCA manage that member's or organization's data in a responsible way, honoring the needs and preferences of the constituent, synods, users of ECIS, and the constitutional mandates of the ELCA." The first phase of the project was completed in September 2010.

Church Council Information:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Mr. Patrick Nagaro, project manager for ECIS, to provide an update on the integrated database project.

Mr. Nagaro reviewed the history and objectives of the project. He described various points in the management of this church's database that were beginning to show signs of coordination and cooperation. There were 316,000 constituent records in ECIS, and the second phase of the project would incorporate records from Raiser's Edge, he said. Mr. Nagaro reported that a demonstration for synod administrators resulted in a pilot plan for early 2011 to include synodical access to ECIS. The pilot will focus on making the system secure. He outlined next steps as cleaning up data, converting Raiser's Edge data, updating the nominations database, exploring other churchwide organization lists, and utilizing the data in ECIS.

Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy remarked that the Northern Illinois Synod office was eager to use ECIS, and she asked whether congregational administrators would be able to use the system.

Mr. Nagaro replied that the more users there were, the harder it would be to keep the data in the system accurate. He said that working with the synods could be the first step toward including congregations as users.

The Rev. Murray D. Finck, bishop of the Pacifica Synod, inquired into the target date for having access for all synods.

Mr. Nagaro responded that all synods have been offered demonstrations of the system, and they would be approached in the order that they have shown interest in using ECIS.

Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton pointed out that ECIS is part of the constituent support function of the new Mission Advancement unit.

Hearing no further discussion, Vice President Peña thanked Mr. Nagaro for the update.

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 these items in the *en bloc* action reflects a judgment that these items are relatively non-controversial in nature and may not require plenary discussion and a separate vote. Each of the items was noted as being in the *en bloc* action in the agenda. On the first day of the council meeting, the chair provided an opportunity for members to indicate whether they wished to discuss separately any of the items listed in the *en bloc* resolution; any such item was removed from the *en bloc* resolution and discussed at the appropriate point in the agenda.

Church Council Action:

At the request of the chair, Secretary David D. Swartling moved the recommended action, noting that the recommendations of the Public Ministry Consultations planning team had already been addressed separately. The motion was seconded. Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a vote. After the vote, the chair declared the *en bloc* resolution approved.

VOTED:

CC10.11.65 **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: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.66 Responses to Synodical Resolutions Directed to the Church Council, p. 100;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.67 Responses to Churchwide Assembly Referrals Directed to Church Council, p. 122;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.68 Receipt of Congregational Petition Addressed to Church Council, p. 135;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.69 Designation of Funds for Youth and Young Adult Ministries, p. 140;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.70 Endorsement of Recommendation Related to Endowments that Benefit Waldorf College, p. 140;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.71 Endorsement of Recommendation Related to Endowments that Benefit Dana College, p. 141;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.72 Approval of the Report of the Audit Committee to the Church Council, p. 142;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.73 Approval of a Revision of the Audit Committee Charter, p. 142;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.74 Approval of Certain Policies and Policy Statements, p. 145;

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC10.11.75 Appointment of Church Council Liaison to Unit Program Committee, p. 146;

VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.76	Approval of Amendments to Certain Synod Constitutions, p. 146;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.77	Approval of Revisions to the Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters, p. 148;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.78	Approval of Amendments to the Deaconess Community Bylaws, p. 148;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.79	Adoption of Eligibility Amendment to ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Plans, p. 149;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.80	Approval of Amendments to ELCA Retirement Plan, p. 149;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.81	Approval of Corporate Social Responsibility Issue Paper Amendments, p. 149;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.82	Approval of Amendments to the Candidacy Manual: Transfer of Candidacy, p. 150;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.83	Authorization to Revise “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns,” p. 151;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.84	Election to the Board of a Social Ministry Organization, p. 152;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.85	Election to the Board of an ELCA Seminary, p. 152;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.86	Appointment to the Board of ELCA Risk Management, p. 152;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.87	Election to the Board of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Incorporated, p. 153;	
VOTED:		<i>EN BLOC</i>
CC10.11.88	Election to the Board of Augsburg Fortress Publishers, p. 153;	

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

Background:

Synodical resolutions directed to the Church Council received since the council’s April 2010 meeting were provided in Exhibit B, Part 1a. Exhibit B, Part 1b contained proposed responses to synodical resolutions that were referred to churchwide units at previous Church Council or Executive Committee meetings.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC10.11.66 **To approve *en bloc* the following responses to synodical resolutions.**

A1. Resolution Concerning Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination **Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)**

WHEREAS, “Social statements establish policy for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s (ELCA) work in the areas of advocacy and corporate social responsibility, enabling, limiting, and directing these activities” (Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns, p.12); and

WHEREAS, in 1999 the ELCA adopted a social statement entitled, “Economic Life: Sufficient Sustainable Livelihood for All,” which states, “God is at work in economic life. Economic life is intended to be a means through which God’s purposes for humankind and creation are to be served. When this does not occur, as a church we cannot remain silent because of who and whose we are”; and

WHEREAS, that statement further says, “We commit ourselves as a church to: . . . provide adequate pension and health benefits, safe and healthy work conditions, sufficient periods of rest, vacation, and sabbatical, and family-friendly work schedules”; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, a unit of this church, has terminated its defined-benefit pension plan thereby eliminating the lifetime annuity payments promised through the plan; and

WHEREAS, the action of Augsburg Fortress places 175 retired persons in diminished financial positions and an additional 325 past and present employees, many of whom have worked for 20, 25, or 30 years for the ELCA publishing ministry, with the prospect of spending their end-of-life years with incomes below the established poverty lines; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that in keeping with stated policy to provide “adequate pension and health benefits,” the ELCA Church Council seek means of funding the pension accounts of the faithful servants—retirees and past and present employees who were promised annuity benefits through the recently terminated Augsburg Fortress defined-benefit pension plan.

A2. Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination

Southeastern Minnesota Synod (3I)

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement “Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” promotes economic justice; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers (AFP), is a separately incorporated program unit of this church; and

WHEREAS, AFP has terminated its defined benefit pension plan, reducing the pension benefits some current and retired employees expected through this plan; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod in assembly direct its synod council to memorialize the ELCA Church Council to:

1. Investigate means to restore any lost pension benefits for current and retired employees of AFP; and
2. Initiate an independent investigation to determine how the AFP pension program came to be underfunded.

A3. Termination of Defined Benefit Pension Plan by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers

Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, a separately incorporated program unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, terminated its defined benefit pension plan by action of its Board of Trustees in December 2009; and

WHEREAS, the termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit pension plan has adversely affected approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, individuals have asked about the background and reasons for the actions of the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees, and it is important to provide accurate and complete information regarding the termination; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly expresses its concern and prayers for these 500 present, former, and retired employees of Augsburg Fortress whose annuity payments have been eliminated and whose financial situations have been diminished through the termination of Augsburg Fortress’ defined benefit pension plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the ELCA Church Council and the Board of Trustees of Augsburg Fortress, the ministry of publishing of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

A4. Augsburg Fortress Employees and Retirees

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)

WHEREAS, the ELCA’s 1999 social statement Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All contains this provision on page 10:

“We commit ourselves as a church to: . . . compensate all people we call or employ at an amount sufficient for them to live in dignity; provide adequate pension and health benefits, safe and healthy work conditions, sufficient periods of rest, vacation and sabbatical, and family-friendly work schedules”; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress Publishers is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress Publishers has terminated its defined benefits pension plan which was promised to approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA claims to have no responsibility for this unjust act; and

WHEREAS, this action will render many Augsburg Fortress retirees destitute; and

WHEREAS, this church seeks to be an advocate for the hungry and for justice; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Scriptures call upon us, as we have opportunity, to do good to all and especially to the household of faith (Galatians 6:10), and Jesus sent out disciples saying that “the worker is worth his keep” (Matthew 10:7–10); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has not taken action to restore the incomes of these plan members in spite of its commitment in the social statement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly urges the Church Council to take all necessary actions to fulfill the commitments in the social statement on economic life for Augsburg Fortress employees and retirees who are suffering significantly reduced income.

A5. Resolution Concerning the Termination of the Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan

South Dakota Synod (3C)

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, a separately incorporated program unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, terminated its defined benefit pension plan by action of its Board of Trustees in December 2009; and

WHEREAS, the termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit pension plan has adversely affected approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, individuals have asked about the background and reasons for the actions of the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees, and it is important to provide accurate and complete information regarding the termination; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly ask its Synod Council and Synod Bishop to express deep concern to the Church Council and Presiding Bishop about the burdens that have been placed upon the past and present faithful servants of our church’s publishing house; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly direct the Synod Council to ask the Church Council to seek means of restoring pension funds for the past and present faithful servants who were promised annuity benefits through the Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly direct the Synod Council to ask the Church Council to conduct a review of the actions of the management and trustees of Augsburg Fortress Publishers regarding the background, reasons for, and implications of the termination of its defined benefits plan, and to report on the results of the review at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

A6. Termination of Defined Benefit Pension Plan by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers

Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, a separately incorporated program unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, terminated its defined benefit pension plan by action of its Board of Trustees in January 2010; and

WHEREAS, the termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit pension plan has adversely affected approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, individuals have asked about the background and reasons for the actions of the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees, and it is important to provide accurate and complete information regarding the termination; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Council expresses its concern and prayers for these 500 present and former employees of Augsburg Fortress who have been adversely affected by the termination of the defined benefit pension plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Council forward this resolution to the Church Council and to the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees to convey this synod’s concern.

A7. Board of Pensions and Augsburg Fortress Pension Issues

Upstate New York Synod (7D)

WHEREAS, the people of the Upstate New York Synod are a resurrection people who pray first, walk together, and change lives, we hold special concern for all those who are suffering in these difficult financial times; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod hold in prayer those who are negatively affected by the changes in the pension plans of the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod also pray for the hungry, the homeless, the jobless, and all who are experiencing fear, frustration, depression and devastation due to the current economic climate; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod memorialize the ELCA, its Synods and congregations, its various organizations, small groups, and individuals to pray for the recovery of this nation's economy and the alleviation of those conditions that are so devastating to so many of God's children locally, nationally, and globally; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod Assembly affirm the actions taken by the Synod Council at its April 2010 meeting (SC10.04.32).

A8. Augsburg Fortress, Publishing

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, is the result of the merger of publishing houses of the predecessor bodies of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, many of the retirees of Augsburg Fortress were of important service to the predecessor bodies of the ELCA, and, many of the retirees of Augsburg Fortress remained employed after the institution of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the predecessor bodies and the ELCA have continually maintained a relationship with Augsburg Fortress (or its predecessor companies) which both Augsburg Fortress and the ELCA has recognized as adjunct to, supportive of, and driven by the ministry of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, and still today, the ELCA commits itself to causes of social justice and fairness; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly request the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to recognize that, even though the ELCA has no legal or fiduciary obligations to Augsburg Fortress retirees whose retirement benefits were terminated, it does have responsibility to seek justice and fairness and to investigate ways that the ELCA can act justly (not simply legally) toward these retirees; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly direct the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Background from the Office of the Secretary:

On December 31, 2009, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers (AFP), the publishing house of the ELCA, announced that it would terminate its defined benefit retirement plan effective March 5, 2010. The action, approved by the board of trustees of AFP, affected 500 plan participants. In announcing the termination, AFP explained that the action was necessitated primarily by financial losses attributable to decreasing sales and the dramatic downturn in the financial markets.

During 2005, AFP had taken action to freeze the defined benefit plan and began offering a separate defined contribution plan to its employees. According to AFP, if it had done nothing more, the plan would have run out of money in approximately five years and left about 60 percent of those in the plan with no retirement benefits. The trustees of the AFP plan amended the plan to provide a more equitable allocation of plan assets among plan participants. As a result, most participants in the defined benefit plan received a lump-sum payment after the plan was terminated. The publishing company has maintained and continues to maintain retirement benefits for its staff.

AFP is a separately incorporated entity apart from the ELCA churchwide organization. The churchwide organization has never had authority or control over AFP's pension plans. The ELCA had no role in the creation, management, funding, or termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit retirement plan that was closed. The individual members of that plan were not employed by the churchwide organization.

On April 21, 2010, a group of those AFP employees who had been covered by the terminated pension plan filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court of Minnesota, naming as defendants the publishing house and the ELCA, as well as a number of individuals. That lawsuit seeks to recover losses suffered by the plaintiffs and all other members of the plan. The ELCA denied the allegations made against it and has filed a motion seeking a complete dismissal from the case.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66a

To receive with gratitude the resolutions of the Metropolitan Chicago, Upstate New York, Minneapolis Area, Southeastern Minnesota, Southwestern Texas, Northeastern Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods related to the termination of the defined benefit plan of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers (AFP);

To join with those synods in expressing deep concern and offering prayers for all persons adversely affected by the termination of the AFP defined benefit retirement plan, and to encourage this church to remember in prayer those current and former employees of AFP, as well as those serving in other church-related institutions impacted by the current economic crisis;

To acknowledge with regret that this entire matter is now the subject of litigation in federal court in Minnesota and to recognize that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must now defend itself against the claims for substantial monetary damages that are being alleged in that lawsuit; therefore, to decline at this time to undertake any further investigation or review of this matter during the pendency of the lawsuit;

To refer these resolutions to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer to explore possible ways that those seeking to assist the affected AFP retirees financially might be provided an opportunity to do so through means of a voluntary appeal or special fund for that purpose, and report their findings and possible recommendations to this council upon conclusion of the pending lawsuit; and

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

B. Resolution Commending the ELCA’s Church Council for its Leadership and Urging it to “Stay the Course” in Regard to 2009 Churchwide Assembly Actions Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E)

WHEREAS, the Synod Council of the Florida-Bahamas Synod shares with the Church Council of the ELCA the responsibility for legislative and policy direction and implementation between our respective Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, this Synod Council has strong appreciation and support for the wise, faithful, and courageous leadership consistent with this church’s foundational and governing documents that has been the hallmark of the Church Council’s history; and

WHEREAS, it falls to all of us with Council responsibilities at the Churchwide, Synod, and Congregation levels in this church to demonstrate the finest in such leadership traits in our sometimes arduous and demanding positions; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council has the responsibility to implement the ministry policy recommendations adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly in the midst of disagreement; and

WHEREAS, in the midst of these internal and external challenges faced by the Church, the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council wishes to convey its appreciation, thanks, and support to the Church Council for its faithful leadership; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council gives thanks to Almighty God for the gifts and discipleship of all engaged in the ministry of our Church Council and for the Council’s exemplary guidance and leadership in these trying times; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge you, with our full support and appreciation, as well as our commitment to a constructive and positive partnership with you, to “stay the course” in moving in the positive directions toward which we have been called by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly actions, however difficult and demanding that may be; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commit to continue to lift up Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and the entire Church Council in prayer at every meeting of our Synod Council, asking that each of you be given the necessary vision, courage, strength, and wisdom to continue your ministry as you are called to do.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66b

To receive with gratitude the resolution of the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council commending the ELCA Church Council for its leadership in preparation for the actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly;

To acknowledge the commitment to “constructive and positive partnership” expressed by the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council and to join with them and with

**leaders throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in prayer,
partnership, and continuing work together;
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

**C. Accessibility in the ELCA and South-Central Synod of Wisconsin
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)**

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the ELCA seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when it discovers bias in its words or actions; and

WHEREAS, liturgical and scriptural literacy is highly valued among the people of the ELCA and the ELCA has chosen the NRSV translation of the Scriptures as its accepted translation and embarked on a churchwide biblical literacy program—the Book of Faith Initiative; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress is the designated publishing house of the ELCA that provides pastors, educators, worship planners, and other members of the ELCA with products and services that communicate the Gospel, enhance faith, and enrich the life of the Christian community from a Lutheran perspective; and

WHEREAS, printed resources produced by the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress are rarely published in accessible formats, i.e., formats other than small-size print; and further, it is understood that the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress have no plans to expand the selection; and

WHEREAS, people with most kinds of vision impairment, people with certain learning disabilities, and people with other disabilities affecting the activity of reading are not able to use most of the ELCA or Augsburg Fortress materials in the available format; and

WHEREAS, individuals and congregations must spend large amounts of money and time to create or re-create materials so that people with disabilities affecting the activity of reading are able to participate fully in worship, spiritual development, and educational activities at home, school, or church; and

WHEREAS, people who are blind or otherwise visually impaired are currently involved in a struggle for basic civil rights like access to education, employment, and voting, and the ELCA ignores this struggle by promoting worship and educational materials that are available only in small-size print and by allowing inaccessible features on their Web sites thus further marginalizing many children and adults with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, in spite of these barriers, people with vision impairments and other disabilities, through their commitment to the Gospel, are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations, schools, colleges, and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of accessible format materials easier than ever, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive ministry to provide accessible format materials to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin memorialize the Church Council to direct Augsburg Fortress to report to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly a plan to implement in its own publishing, partnership publishing, or other contracted manufacturing a way to make available at reasonable cost its printed materials (books and other forms) upon request in an appropriate accessible format that maintains the structural integrity of the original material; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin requests the Church Council at its November 2010 meeting to direct all churchwide units and encourage auxiliary organizations to design their Web sites in ways that respect the accessibility needs of people with vision impairment by using high-contrast, following W3C standards, and incorporating feedback from users with disabilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin requests the Church Council to direct all churchwide units of the ELCA to include information on plans to implement the accessibility to the April 2011 Church Council meeting; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2010 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin requests the Synod Council to examine synodically created materials and policies on accessibility for those with disabilities and order changes to said materials and policies in the spirit of this resolution and as the Synod Council directs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2010 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin encourages all congregations within this synod to review their internal policies and materials and to make changes as needed in the spirit of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Bishop of this Synod shall report to the 2011 Synod Assembly any actions taken on this subject by the Church Council and the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin Synod Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2010 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin directs the Synod Secretary to forward this resolution to the Church Council and the ELCA Secretary, for consideration and possible action, and to each congregation within this synod.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66c To receive the resolution of the South Central Synod of Wisconsin related to accessibility in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the South Central Synod of Wisconsin;

To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, especially as a Message on Disabilities is drafted as requested by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council; and

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

D. Social Statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*

South Carolina Synod (9C)

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accordance with ELCA bylaw 12.12.01, adopted a social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, by exactly a two-thirds vote; and

WHEREAS, the social statement has generated substantial disagreement and debate among faithful members of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has in assembly expressed disagreement with the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (275 opposed, 125 in favor, 89 abstain 2009 SC Synod Bulletin of Reports); and

WHEREAS, *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns* expressly provides for reconsideration of a social statement by the Churchwide Assembly following its adoption, and its removal or revision; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod Assembly direct the South Carolina Synod Council to request the Church Council to request the Churchwide Assembly to reconsider the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* in accordance with *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns*.

Background:

The document guiding the reconsideration of social statements is “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concern.” The section called “Social Statement Reconsideration” (page 17) described the process for reconsideration:

Churchwide Assemblies may reconsider previously adopted social statements. Such reconsideration may involve either a revision or removal of the statement. This may be done in two ways:

1. A Churchwide Assembly, by a two-thirds vote, may call for the reconsideration of a social statement at the next assembly. Subsequent to such a vote, the social statement shall be referred to the Church in Society unit for re-study. The proposed change and the reasons for it shall be made available to this church with an official notice of such proposed action to be sent to the synods by the secretary of this church at least

- three months prior to the Churchwide Assembly at which it will be considered. A two-thirds vote of the assembly shall be required to revise or remove the social statement.
2. The Church Council by a two-thirds vote of its voting members may ask the Churchwide Assembly to reconsider a social statement. Such Church Council action must be taken no later than at the Church Council meeting in the autumn prior to the assembly. The proposed change and the reasons for it shall then be made available to this church with an official notice of such proposed action to be sent to the synods by the secretary of this church at least three months prior to the Churchwide Assembly. A two-thirds vote of the assembly shall be required to reconsider the statement and also to revise or remove it. Both actions may occur at the same assembly.

In addition to the resolution of the South Carolina Synod, four synods passed memorials addressing the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*. The memorial of the South Dakota Synod requested that the 2011 Churchwide Assembly “reconsider and remove the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* in accordance with ‘Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns.’” The memorials of the Metropolitan Chicago, Metropolitan New York, and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. synods, all similarly worded, requested the 2011 Churchwide Assembly “to encourage the full implementation of the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and its implementing resolutions.” Additional memorials on this topic may be approved by the 2011 synod assemblies.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

- CC10.11.66d To receive the resolution of the South Carolina Synod requesting the reconsideration of the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*;**
To acknowledge that four synod assemblies in 2010 passed memorials addressing the 2011 Churchwide Assembly on this topic, one requesting reconsideration of the social statement and three requesting “full implementation” of the social statement and its implementing resolutions and to anticipate that synod assemblies in 2011 may pass additional memorials on this topic;
To decline to request reconsideration of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* by the Churchwide Assembly, but to request that the resolution of the South Carolina Synod and this response be reported as information to the Memorials Committee; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

**E. The Decade of Women—Gender Equality: Theological Reflections and Congregational Action Strategies
Southwest California Synod (2B)**

WHEREAS, we celebrate this church’s ordination of women as a clear public witness of the equality of women and men intended by Jesus and the early Christian community; and

WHEREAS, we globally profess to love our wives, mothers, sisters and daughters, yet leave millions of women and children displaced in the wilderness, or homeless on highways and streets, ignoring their cries for help, and remaining blind to their bruises and wounds from the violence they suffer; and

WHEREAS, a global study on the discrimination and disempowerment women face throughout their lives and how that impacts children’s lives entitled the UNICEF 2007 Report on the State of the World’s Children concluded the following:

- Gender equality is not only morally right, it is pivotal to human progress and sustainable development;
- Gender equality furthers the cause of child survival and development;
- Gender equality will not only empower women to overcome poverty and live full and productive lives, but will better the lives of children, families and countries as well;
- Women’s equal rights and influence in the key decisions that shape their lives and those of children must be enhanced in three distinct arenas: the household, the workplace and the political sphere; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly approved the creation of a Social Statement on Justice for Women (which was memorialized by this Synod); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA's implementation of "The Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence" and the "Stand With Africa" formats successfully highlighted ministry opportunities and can be readily adapted to focus directly on the obstacles and challenges faced by women around the world; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for timely consideration and possible action to adopt 2011–2020 as "The Decade of Women" within our denomination by incorporating those successful strategies as exhibited in "The Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence," and "Stand With Africa" and other gender-equality action strategies for congregations, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod lend its voice and efforts in promoting gender equality which contributes to achieving the goals of reducing poverty and hunger, saving children's lives, improving maternal health, ensuring universal education, combating HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, and ensuring environmental sustainability, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly commend and enhance the efforts of this church's Global Mission unit, the ELCA World Hunger Program, Lutheran World Relief, Women of the ELCA, and other ecumenical and interfaith advocacy efforts by raising awareness and funds for their important work in honoring women by faithfully addressing issues critical to their survival, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, through its staff, conferences, congregations and members, exercise intentional efforts to labor for real change on women's issues, especially in the areas of sexual violence, domestic violence, healthcare, human rights, displaced refugees, reproductive rights, poverty, economic and property rights, among others.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66e To receive the resolution of the Southwest California Synod requesting consideration of a "The Decade of Women" (2011–2020) within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Presiding Bishop in consultation with the Administrative Team with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council; and

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

F. Hearing the Various Voices of this Church on the Matter of Sexuality

Allegheny Synod Assembly (8C)

WHEREAS, the decision by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to allow for the rostering of pastors who are in same-gender, publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous relationships has had a major effect on our church and has left many wondering how to respond faithfully to this decision; and

WHEREAS, this church can run the risk of losing the voices of that large majority of people who out of their conviction and faith in Christ find themselves somewhere in the middle of this issue and as space needs to be created for continued, respectful dialogue so that these voices are not silenced; and

WHEREAS, we believe that no one comes to their beliefs and positions lightly, that people with opposing views hold them out of their conviction of what it means to be faithful to the Gospel of Christ, and that committed Christians can come to opposing beliefs on how they are to be faithful; and

WHEREAS, we understand that the debate over this issue runs the risk of becoming so polarized that we could lose the ability to talk to and hear each other; and

WHEREAS, the Church has always faced times of tension and testing, and it has gotten through these challenges and controversies through dialogue, attention to each other, and listening to the guidance of the Holy Spirit who speaks through the Body of Christ as well as Scripture. A few examples of these challenges can be found in the controversy between Peter and Paul over circumcision (Acts 15:5–21, Galatians 2:11–21); the early Church's learning how to be God's people in this world (1 Corinthians); the Church's struggle to define its beliefs (Council of Nicaea and Arian Controversy); the Reformation to call the entire church back to the Gospel of Christ; and the struggles in the last century regarding the ordination of women; and

WHEREAS, we are called to work out our differences within the Body of Christ as part of the witness to the evidence of Jesus living in our midst, and the work of the Holy Spirit among us. By doing so we humbly offer to our communities and the world a new way, rather than retreating to the ways of the world around us. We do this remembering that, “if [we] have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if [we] have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, [we are] nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:2); and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly reflects the complexity of the issue. The statement includes different understandings and practices within the life of this church as it seeks to live out its mission and ministry in the world. This church recognizes with conviction and integrity all four positions as put forth in Section IV of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; and

WHEREAS, trusting God’s Spirit to lead, we are faced with the challenging work of discerning how we are to live in this time, finding the way together, as this church. We acknowledge that there is room for discussion and group discernment and that there is time for the process of God’s work leading us to find the way through the present reality; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Allegheny Synod continue in these discussions with intentional prayer for guidance of the Holy Spirit as it maps out a faithful path. Let us intentionally pray for Christ’s unity amidst our differing understandings of faithful response to this issue on the first and fifteenth of each month. ~ Let us pray with each other; and be it further

RESOLVED, we commit ourselves in Christ to strive together with a spirit of compassion for the other, humility before God; love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, and respect for where other faithful Christians may be on this issue. We acknowledge that the Holy Spirit continues to be actively at work in this process, inviting us to hear each other and discern where God is leading us. ~ Let us walk with each other; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Allegheny Synod commit itself to the challenge of working out how we live under this reality, unified as the Allegheny Synod of the ELCA in this prayerful process, working together, and listening to each other. We do this believing it is a witness to the Body of Christ which serves and furthers the mission and ministry of the one holy catholic and apostolic church for which our Lord prayed on the night of his arrest in the Gospel of John (John 17:20–23). ~ Let us work with each other; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Conference of Bishops be commended for its faithful work in recent deliberation on policies related to this topic. This is a witness to the living Christ within the Church, embracing the unity Christ offers while recognizing with conviction and integrity the various positions held on this topic. These efforts enable us to continue to work through the present situation. ~ Let us encourage one another; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, for the sake of the Gospel and the unity of the Church, the Allegheny Synod Assembly strongly urge the Church Council, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, and the Conference of Bishops as they continue to form and shape policies for the church regarding this issue to be about the deliberate, committed, and challenging work of: hearing the various voices of the church on this subject; praying deliberately for the Spirit’s guidance on this issue; and seeking to be shaped and led by the Living Word! ~ Let us move together into the future for the sake of Christ’s mission and ministry to which we are called.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66f To receive with gratitude the resolution of the Allegheny Synod related to “hearing the various voices of this church on the matter of sexuality” and to acknowledge the commitment of the ELCA Church Council to be attentive to this church as we

- **Pray with each other**
- **Walk with each other**
- **Work with each other**
- **Encourage each other**
- **Move together into the future for the sake of Christ’s mission and ministry to which we are called;**

To invite the congregations and members of this church to respond to the call of the Allegheny Synod by hearing the various voices of the church, praying deliberately for the Spirit’s guidance and seeking to be shaped and led by the Living Word on those issues that challenge us, including sexuality; and

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

**G. The Time line of the Draft Social Statement on Genetics
West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)**

WHEREAS, the Conference of Bishops expressed concern about the time line of the draft social statement on genetics during their meetings March 5-9, 2010; and

WHEREAS, some bishops expressed concern that the social statement and its potentially controversial topics are being presented to the church at a time when some parts of the ELCA are still immersed in controversy over decisions from the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has continued with the time line of its Task Force on Genetics by issuing the draft social statement for study and response despite the expressed concerns of the Conference of Bishops; and

WHEREAS, responses to the draft social statement need to be submitted prior to October 15, 2010; and

WHEREAS, this short time line provided only seven months for the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod to coordinate efforts and to respond to a social statement with potentially controversial implications; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod ask the Church Council not to submit the social statement on genetics to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly for approval; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod ask the Church Council to instead submit the social statement on genetics to the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly for approval.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

**CC10.11.66g To receive the resolution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod related to the time line for the social statement on genetics;
To acknowledge the action of the ELCA Church Council at its November 2010 to establish a time line for the development of social statements as the response of this council to the resolution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

**H1. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund ("the Fund") experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities, and puts the burden on those individuals only; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses (including congregational, synodical, or church-wide contributions, or temporary increases in payment contributions by individuals to the Fund until the Fund is brought to a "fully funded" position), and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**H2. The Board of Pensions and the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Metropolitan New York Synod (7C)**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly request that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America retain an external agency to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the external agency-consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly request the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund, and that the results of that exploration be reported to all congregation, agencies and institutions of the ELCA and to all participants in the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund and/or the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be requested by the Metropolitan New York Synod in Assembly to insure that reconsideration of the drastic actions taken by the Board of Pensions be undertaken, with a view to alleviating the hardships imposed upon retirees, their spouses, surviving spouses, and their families, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**H3. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Board of Pensions has informed pensioners in the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund that their monthly annuity payments may be decreased by 9% in each of the years 2010, 2011, and 2012 (an accumulated decrease of 25% from the 2009 level) based on “future investment returns in the Fund of 7.6% per annum”; and

WHEREAS, this reduction has the potential of working a severe hardship on those with fixed responsibilities, especially those “who have served so faithfully and generously—with passion for the Gospel and compassion for God’s people” (the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop) in congregations with reduced means; and

WHEREAS, the theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America proclaims that we are one church in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12: 14–26); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement Economic Life: Sufficient and Sustainable Livelihood for All states, “We commit ourselves as a church to . . . provide adequate pension and health benefits”; and

WHEREAS, the plan of the Board of Pensions to correct the current under-funding puts the burden of that correction on the pensioners only; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council request the ELCA Church Council to consult with the Board of Pensions in order to explore a variety of ways, including congregational or churchwide contributions, so that the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund can be brought to a “fully funded” position or carry a reasonable “unfunded liability,” in order that the reductions in payment to pensioners can be reversed or ameliorated as quickly as possible; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that a thorough review of policy regarding investments be conducted so that the effects of sharp market volatility might be mitigated in view of hardship imposed upon retirees, their spouses, surviving spouses, and their families.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66h To receive the resolutions of the Southwestern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan New York, and Northeastern Iowa synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding;

To acknowledge the action of the Church Council in August 2010 to establish an *Ad Hoc* Committee with the following members: Church Council: the Rev. David P. Anderson, Mr. Mark S. Helmke, Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, Mr. Carlos E. Peña (convener); liaison bishops: the Rev. Callon Holloway Jr., the Rev. Martin Wells; advisory member: Ms. Lois O'Rourke, chair, Board of Pensions Board of Trustees; ex-officio: Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA treasurer, and Mr. David D. Swartling, ELCA secretary; Board of Pensions staff liaison: the Rev. Robert Berg; churchwide staff liaison: the Rev. Ruth Hamilton, Office of the Secretary;

To anticipate a report and recommendations from the *Ad Hoc* Committee at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council related to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, including but not limited to:

1. Consultation with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and
2. Exploration of possible:
 - a. alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized;
 - b. steps to mitigate adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund;

To acknowledge the action of the ELCA Church Council related to possible recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee as the response of the Church Council to all synodical resolutions on this issue; and

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

II. Resolution Concerning ELCA Board of Pensions Decisions Pertaining to a Shortfall in Board of Pension Annuity Commitments

Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, the theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) includes the understanding that we are all one in the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:14–26); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA “Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All”, adopted by the sixth Churchwide Assembly on August 20, 1999, in Denver, Colorado, states in part, “We commit ourselves as a church to . . . provide adequate pension and health benefits . . .”; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Pensions of the ELCA (the Board) has a fiduciary responsibility to manage the pension funds so that they will adequately fund the annuity obligations owed to pensioners; and

WHEREAS, the Board’s plan to correct an underfunding of pension obligations to former employees puts much of the burden on the pensioners (with some experiencing greater hardship because of the cuts) and does not share the burden with the entire Body of Christ; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly urge the ELCA Church Council to request that the Board reevaluate both the bases of loss in the Board’s formula that measures the gap to an average high over the past 10 years and thereby re-determine the gap that the Board needs to cut annuities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly urge the ELCA Church Council to request that the Board reconsider those who have experienced this cut as a major hardship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly urge the ELCA Church Council to request that the executive staff of the Board look for additional ways to re-fund the under-funding in the Annuity Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council urge the Board of Pensions to separate the Annuity and Bridge Fund into two separate funds and manage the Annuity Fund in a more conservative and less risky way, so that in the future it will not experience the loss experienced in this last recession.

12. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

13. Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)

RESOLVED, that Southwestern Minnesota Synod at its 2010 Assembly request the Church Council to explore and implement, in partnership with the ELCA Board of Pensions, strategies to restore the reduction and cancel any future reductions to the recipients of the ELCA Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

I4. Underfunding of ELCA Board of Pensions

South Dakota Synod (3C)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Assembly request that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

I5. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

Upstate New York Synod Council (7D)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod Council requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons, for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund.

I6. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

La Crosse Area Synod (5L)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing

payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the La Crosse Area Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the La Crosse Area Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

17. ELCA Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)

WHEREAS, the theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is that it is one church in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:14–26); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran church bodies which are the predecessor church bodies of the ELCA have a 250-year history of being concerned that its retired clergy and rostered lay workers have adequate pensions; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement on economic life, Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All, adopted by the sixth Churchwide Assembly on August 20, 1999, in Denver, Colorado, states in part, “We commit ourselves as a church to . . . provide adequate pension and health benefits;” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Board of Pensions has a fiduciary responsibility to manage the pension funds; and

WHEREAS, the plan of the ELCA Board of Pensions to correct the underfunding puts the burden of that correction on the faithful pensioners that participated in the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod at its 2010 Assembly request the Church Council to explore and implement, in partnership with the Board of Pensions, strategies to restore the reduction and cancel any future reductions to the recipients of the ELCA Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to explore steps with the Board of Pensions to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansions and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

18. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund New Jersey Synod (7A)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing

payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly ask the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod take leadership in supporting the Special Needs Retirement Fund of the Board of Pensions to assist those who are in or on the edge of poverty.

19. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund Northern Illinois Synod (5B)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly request the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council, and to those members who experienced a reduction in their pensions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

[Please note: The resolutions from the Northeastern Iowa, Metropolitan New York and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding were provided above.]

Church Council Action [CC10.08.33a]:

To receive the resolutions of the Minneapolis Area, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Southwestern Minnesota, South Dakota, Upstate New York, La Crosse Area, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, and Northern Illinois synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding;

- To establish an *Ad Hoc* Committee, including the following members:
1. Church Council: David Anderson, Mark Helmke, Ann Niedringhaus, Carlos Peña (convener)
 2. Board of Pensions: Lois O'Rourke, chair, Board of Trustees
 3. Liaison Bishops: Callon Holloway, Jr., Martin Wells
 4. *Ex-Officio*: Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA treasurer and David Swartling, ELCA secretary
 5. Board of Pensions staff liaison: Robert Berg
 6. Churchwide staff liaison: Ruth Hamilton, Office of the Secretary;
- To request that the *Ad Hoc* Committee respond to synodical resolutions related to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, including but not limited to:
1. Consultation with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and
 2. Exploration of possible:
 - a. alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized;
 - b. steps to mitigate adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund;
- To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and
- To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

Response from Ad Hoc Committee:

The report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee was presented above in this meeting on page 89.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66i To receive the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee created to respond to the resolutions of the following synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding: South Dakota, Southwestern Minnesota, Minneapolis Area, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Northern Illinois, Northeastern Iowa, Greater Milwaukee, La Crosse Area, New Jersey, Metropolitan New York, Upstate New York, and Southwestern Pennsylvania;

To acknowledge the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee as the response of the Church Council to the synods' resolutions as well as any future resolutions received on this topic; and

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

J. Support and Encouragement for Waldorf College

Western Iowa Synod (5E)

WHEREAS, Waldorf College was founded in 1903 by Lutherans as an expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and has been a valued leader in Lutheran higher education since that time; and

WHEREAS, Waldorf College has been an active partner in ministry to and with the Western Iowa Synod since the founding of this synod; and

WHEREAS, Waldorf College is now owned by Mayes Education, Inc., a subsidiary of Columbia Southern University; and

WHEREAS, Mayes Education is open to and welcoming of a continued Lutheran presence on the Waldorf campus; and

WHEREAS, the Waldorf Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity, has been established as a separate entity from Waldorf College to provide scholarships to Lutheran and non-Lutheran students who attend Waldorf College, and to support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf campus; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA continues to explore the possibility of an on-going relationship between the ELCA and Waldorf College and/or the Waldorf Foundation, and

WHEREAS, Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City, Iowa, is open and willing to partner with the Waldorf Foundation to build and support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf campus; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the congregations of the Western Iowa Synod give prayerful, spiritual support to Waldorf College, the Waldorf Foundation, Immanuel Lutheran Church, and Mayes Education, Inc., during this time of exploration, discovery, and transition; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Western Iowa Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to encourage the Office of Bishop to seek ways to assist and encourage congregations of the synod to financially support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf College campus through the Waldorf Foundation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Western Iowa Synod Assembly supports and encourages the Vocation and Education program unit of the ELCA to continue to recognize Waldorf College as a historically Lutheran college and to work to maintain a spiritual and ecclesiastical relationship with the college into the future.

Executive Committee Action [EC10.08.13a]:

To receive the resolution of the Western Iowa Synod related to support and encouragement for Waldorf College;

To refer the resolution to the Vocation and Education program unit, in consultation with Development Services and the Western Iowa Synod, and to request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from the Vocation and Education unit:

For several years through 2009, Waldorf College faced severe challenges to its financial viability. This situation, common to many small colleges, had many causes, including lower than optimal enrollment and a very small endowment. Waldorf's board and administration worked very hard to find a way to continue its existence as a non-profit, ELCA-related college. In addition to the active involvement of Bishop Michael A. Last of the Western Iowa Synod as a member of the board, the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit had been active as the churchwide organization's liaison to the board for two years. The board was comprised primarily of ELCA members, both from Iowa and across the church.

At the point when the possibility of sustaining the college as a private college with its existing revenue sources seemed unlikely, the Waldorf administration and board began to explore other options, including sale to a for-profit entity. During these years the college also established the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation, a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity. Both these actions have born fruit.

After extensive negotiations, including work with bond holders and accrediting agencies, Waldorf College was sold in January 2010 to Mayes Education, Inc., a family corporation with many years of experience in online education, which was seeking a way to expand its offerings with a residential campus and a liberal arts curriculum. The college accepted this sale as the best way to preserve the college and its mission of educating young people for service in the world. Vocation and Education staff members believe the principles of this church's social statement *Our Calling in Education* undergird the conviction that those engaged in a for-profit educational endeavor legitimately can approach that work through a Lutheran understanding of vocation. Given that their vocation includes preparing young people for their own vocations, this church can share a vision for appropriate mission with such a school. How this church might relate directly to a for-profit school is largely unexplored territory. Vocation and Education staff members have indicated their willingness to engage in such exploration.

At no time in the conversations and negotiations between Waldorf College and Mayes Education or after the sale did Mayes Education indicate to churchwide staff that it had any desire to find a way to maintain the former relationship with the ELCA. Nor did they suggest any desire to develop new ways to relate formally. There were direct and cordial conversations among Vocation and Education staff members and the principals of Mayes Education, but because the college did not care to pursue this, there was never any exploration by the ELCA as to whether it would be legally and ecclesially possible and wise to seek a new formal relationship. During a final consultation this spring, college officials

indicated that any future connections should be through the Waldorf College Foundation. The ELCA's relationship with college officials continues to be amicable. We anticipate the possibility of future conversations, but we have pursued instead a connection to the foundation.

The Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation is now operating with a small endowment and with staffing provided by Waldorf College. In 2009, the final grant through the churchwide organization was directed to the foundation rather than to the college itself to facilitate transition in the work this church has supported there. Publicity from the foundation indicates its intent to focus on scholarships, alumni relations, and campus ministry. Vocation and Education staff members have been in ongoing conversation with the foundation's board and staff. The foundation's leaders are open to exploring a formal relationship with the ELCA. Our suggestion has been that the foundation explore applying to be acknowledged by the Church Council as an Independent Lutheran Organization. The foundation board was to discuss this at its September 2010 meeting. Preparing for that application would require some clarifying of its governing documents and/or purpose statement.

The Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation is now working with Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City to provide part-time campus ministry to Waldorf students. A program has been established that includes many of the elements of ministry that were available under the college's ELCA-related status. Vocation and Education staff are in conversation with Immanuel's pastor, offering counsel on the ministry and offering to explore with them a formal connection with ELCA campus ministry. The intern who is staffing the campus ministry has been invited to the ELCA Campus Ministry new staff orientation this fall.

Because of the present financial realities, we anticipate the rapid phase-out of the program of grants to ELCA-related colleges. However, even if the program were to continue, a grant could not be given to a for-profit school, nor is there any provision for regular grants to foundations, even Lutheran ones. It is possible that the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation and/or Immanuel Lutheran Church could seek churchwide and synod support for the new campus ministry. No such requests have been received, nor is it clear that funds would be available, but a request would be in order and would be considered carefully.

The staff of the Western Iowa Synod does not anticipate that the synod will be able to offer any significant financial support. However, the synod does stand ready to use its communication resources to tell the story of the foundation as an opportunity to perpetuate the important Lutheran presence that has and could continue to be a part of the fabric of the Waldorf community.

The ELCA Foundation worked in conjunction with the Advancement Department of Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation with regard to donors who had named Waldorf College as the charitable beneficiary of a deferred gift. Donors whose gifts were generated by the ELCA Foundation were contacted by our staff regarding beneficiary changes. The vast majority of gifts were generated by Waldorf College, and these donors were contacted directly by the Advancement Department of Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation. The ELCA Foundation currently administers 34 deferred gift contracts that now benefit the Waldorf Foundation.

The ELCA Foundation manages only one endowment that named Waldorf College as a beneficiary. The endowment agreement allows for the ELCA, through the Church Council, to name a "similar or complimentary ministry" to receive the annual distributions from this endowment. In consultation with the Vocation and Education unit and the Office of the Treasurer, the ELCA Foundation will develop a recommendation for redirecting the distributions from this endowment for consideration and action by the Church Council.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66j

To receive with gratitude the response of the Vocation and Education unit to the resolution of the Western Iowa Synod related to Waldorf College;

To encourage the appropriate churchwide units and the Western Iowa Synod to continue exploring opportunities for shared mission with the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation, particularly in the area of campus ministry;

To anticipate a recommendation from the ELCA Foundation to name a "similar or complimentary ministry" to receive the annual distributions from the endowment managed by the Foundation on behalf of Waldorf College; and

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

K. Lay Rostered Leaders

South Carolina Synod (9C)

WHEREAS, in February 2007, this church's Vocation and Education unit convened a consultation of representatives of the three lay rosters (Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers), synodical bishops, churchwide staff, seminary and college faculty, and agency leaders to articulate ways in which the theology and experience of vocation and service should define the role of lay rostered persons as publicly called leaders in the ELCA in the twenty-first century; and

WHEREAS, as a follow-up to this churchwide consultation, regional consultations are convening throughout the ELCA to continue discussions of these issues; and

WHEREAS, in March 2009, ordained and lay rostered persons came together with the bishops of each synod in Region 9 for a follow-up consultation to consider the ministry of Word and Service in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, members of the regional consultation affirmed that a sense of call is central to the vocation of all people of God through baptism and assumes particular expressions for rostered persons; and

WHEREAS, members of the regional consultation agreed that the existing lay rosters share much in common with ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, while acknowledging that a need exists among all four rosters of this church for better relationships that recognize partnership in ministry and enhance mutual understanding; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently lacks sufficient language to convey with theological clarity an accurate description of the functions that honor the vocation of all the baptized while recognizing the significant and distinctive roles of the four rosters of this church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod encourage continued conversation among the four rosters around the issues of partnership in ministry and mutual understanding raised at the churchwide and regional consultations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod ask the Vocation and Education unit of the ELCA to work toward developing theologically coherent language for use among the rosters of this church which honors the commonality of the rosters while respecting their differences; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Executive Committee Action [EC10.08.13b]:

To receive the resolution of the South Carolina Synod related to lay rostered leaders;

To refer the resolution to the Vocation and Education program unit with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the ELCA Church Council;
and

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

Response from Vocation and Education unit:

In response to the March 2010 report and recommendations from the two-year ad hoc Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team, the Vocation and Education unit has prepared a report and recommendation on these matters. The South Carolina Synod Assembly's resolution is understood as implicitly supportive of the *ad hoc* team's work and also of the recommendation below. The background and recommendation are on page 96 of these minutes under the title, "Recommendations of the Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team."

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.66k To receive the response of the Vocation and Education unit in response to the resolution of the South Carolina Synod related to lay rostered leaders;

To acknowledge the action of the Church Council in response to the "Recommendations of the Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team" as the

**Church Council’s response to the resolution from the South Carolina Synod assembly;
and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

L. Rostered Leader Profiles

Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E)

WHEREAS, the pastoral call is an intimate relationship between the pastor and the congregation; and

WHEREAS, a knowledgeable evaluation from many perspectives of a pastor’s current situation and style is most appropriate for the call process; and

WHEREAS, the current Rostered Leader Profile (RLP) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) requires a current member of the pastor’s congregation to provide a personal reference for a pastor seeking a call in another congregation; and

WHEREAS, this requirement is sometimes not practical and may threaten the pastor/congregation relationship; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request that the ELCA program unit for Vocation and Education modify the current clergy RLP to remove the requirement for a recommendation by a current congregational member; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request that the ELCA program unit for Vocation and Education modify the current RLP to replace the requirement for a recommendation by a current congregational member with a requirement for a recommendation by “a non-rostered person who knows the pastor’s current situation and pastoral style” or words to that effect.

Executive Committee Action [EC10.08.13c]:

To receive the resolution of the Upper Susquehanna Synod related to lay rostered leaders;

To refer the resolution to the Vocation and Education program unit with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the ELCA Church Council;
and

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

Response from Vocation and Education unit:

The online “Rostered Leader Profile” system was tested first for members of the three Word and service rosters. With the learnings from that experience, a team convened by the Vocation and Education unit made extensive revisions to the forms and in the processes so that the system could be used for all four rosters. Both process and forms were developed and modified in consultation with the Conference of Bishops over a period of two years. The system was put into operation in June 2009 and has been well received.

The resolution from the Upper Susquehanna Synod asks for a change to page 6 of the Rostered Leader Profile (RLP). That page asks for names and contact information for five people: the synodical bishop, an ELCA pastor, *a lay person in the current or most recent ministry setting* [emphasis added], a lay person who is not a member of the current ministry setting and a supervisor or colleague who knows the rostered leader well. In addition, the page requests “the name of a lay person who is able to observe you in your current ministry and is willing to offer a brief recommendation. Your reference will be asked to complete a questionnaire and offer comments on your ministry.”

The resolution refers to the request italicized above, a lay person in the current or most recent ministry setting. The expressed concern is that this may not be practical and may “threaten the pastor/congregation relationship.” Although it is not stated explicitly, the point seems to be that a rostered leader’s current ministry might be undermined if members knew that he or she is open to another call.

While recognizing the validity of the underlying concern, it is suggested that there is a strong reason not to change the form, since there are several other ways for an individual to deal with the concern. First, a reference from a member of the current ministry provides a different kind of information than is provided by one who is outside that ministry. A non-member reference also is requested. The two are complementary; an important perspective could be lost if no member reference were included. Second, it is the rostered leader who completes this form. The rostered leader has several options to address the stated concern. For example, he or she normally would be able to find one member who

could be trusted with a confidential conversation about the reasons the rostered leader wants to be available for call. In addition, the rostered leader could indicate to each synod receiving the form that the current member named should be contacted only after the rostered person has given advance notice. Finally, the rostered person could decline to enter a name in the blank, indicating that the name would be supplied at the appropriate time and explaining the reasons to his or her bishop and the bishop of each synod receiving the form.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

- CC10.11.661** **To receive the response of the Vocation and Education unit to the Upper Susquehanna Synod requesting a revision to the Rostered Leader Profile;**
To express gratitude to the synod for the request, but to decline to make the requested change in the Rostered Leader Profile as detailed in the background information provided; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

RESPONSES TO CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY REFERRALS DIRECTED TO CHURCH COUNCIL

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

Background:

Exhibit B, Part 2b contained proposed responses to referrals from the Church Council to churchwide units in response to actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

- CC10.11.67** **To approve the following responses to Churchwide Assembly actions:**

A. Worship and Educational Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio
[Memorial Category B7] [CA09.03.12]

A1. Upstate New York Synod (7D)

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA should support this struggle as part of its commitment to promoting justice for all God's children; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille, large-print, and audio resources would encourage growth in our church membership; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print, audio, and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials, and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA included an organization called the ELCA Braille & Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille & Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, since 2004 the ELCA has promoted worship and education resources (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Book of Faith resources, social statements, Christian education materials, etc.) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print and use audio resources; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print and audio resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille, large print, and audio form.

A2. Publication of Evangelical Lutheran Worship in Braille

Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, hymns are a wonderful tool for members of a congregation to use for inspiration as well as bringing joy, faith-building, and healing for their lives as a community as well as individually; and

WHEREAS, blind people are members of congregations and have the same spiritual needs as the sighted; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) produced a Braille version of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, and many blind people are accustomed to its use; and

WHEREAS, Braille printers are expensive for most people to purchase; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to commit sufficient funding for the publication of a Braille version of the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

A3. Additional Formats for Worship and Educational Materials

Southern Ohio Synod (6F)

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA ignores this struggle by continuing to promote worship and educational resources (such as *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, the NRSV Bible, social statements, and Christian education materials) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille and large-print resources would encourage growth in membership of this church; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials, and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA in 1988 included an organization called the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille and Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod call on the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

A4. Availability of Resources in Braille and Large Print

New England Synod (7B)

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

A5. Additional Formats for Worship and Educational Materials

Virginia Synod (9A)

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA should support this struggle as part of its commitment to promoting justice for all of God's children; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille and large-print resources would encourage growth in the membership of this church; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials, and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA in 1988 included an organization called the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille and Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, since 2004 the ELCA has promoted worship and educational resources (such as *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Book of Faith resources, social statements, and Christian education materials) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the bishop of the Virginia Synod be directed to present to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly this resolution calling the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA09.03.12]:

To receive the memorials of the Minneapolis Area, Southern Ohio, New England, Upstate New York, and Virginia synods calling for additional worship and educational materials in Braille, large print, and audio formats, and other forms of technology as may be available;

To affirm and celebrate the many ways individuals, networks, congregations, synods, the churchwide worship staff, Augsburg Fortress, and the Vocation and Education unit already are engaged in ministry with and providing resources for people with impaired vision;

To encourage appropriate churchwide staff to give continued attention to the needs articulated in these memorials and to continue collaboration with the network of people advocating for and facilitating these ministries;

To acknowledge with regret the funding challenges and the resulting limitations on this work;

To encourage the network and others to give particular attention to inviting contributions to appropriate endowments held by the ELCA Foundation; and

To direct the Vocation and Education unit to bring a progress report on these ministries and their funding to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

Response from the Vocation and Education unit:

In response to synod memorials, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution titled "Worship and Educational Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio" [CA09.03.12]. The resolution calls for a progress report to this Church Council meeting from the Vocation and Education (VE) unit in consultation with Augsburg Fortress, churchwide worship staff, and the ELCA Foundation. We are happy to provide this update.

Work continues on issuing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)* as a Braille resource. This is a cooperative effort of Augsburg Fortress (AF) and the Worship and Liturgical Resources (WP) section of the churchwide organization. A contract has been signed to convert text files (RTF format) of 650 hymns from *ELW* into electronic Braille files (BRF format). The first third of these hymns in BRF format are due at AF on October 1, 2010. Beginning in November 2010, these Braille hymn files will be posted on the *Sundaysandseasons.com* Web site for downloading as they are completed. In addition, over the next year large print files (RTF format) will be added to that Web site for the hymns in *ELW*. The next step in the process is the conversion of liturgical texts to BRF and large print format. Extensive portions of *ELW* already are available in audio form, including all ten settings of the liturgy.

AF also has published the *Lutheran Study Bible* and *ELW* in “enlarged print” editions (not large print). Approximately 1200 book titles are now available from AF for digital download via Kindle and other-e readers. Print size can then be adjusted according to the reader’s preference. AF has several Web-based resources that allow users to enlarge print as needed for both worship and faith formation resources (i.e., *Sundaysandseasons.com*, *Herewestandconfirmation.org*, and *Sparksundayschool.com* in particular). AF also tries, upon request, to provide permission and electronic files when possible for adapting AF intellectual property into alternate formats through third-party organizations such as Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic and Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

In the restructuring of 2005, the VE unit was given responsibility for oversight of the churchwide organization’s work with disability ministries. Because of reductions in the general budget these past years, all programming work and much of the limited staff support now are funded through restricted endowments and a small accumulated reserve rather than the general budget. The endowments, which aggregate various gifts and bequests received over many years, generate about \$24,000 annually for disability ministries in general and an additional \$6,000 for Braille and tape ministries. No large additions have been made to the principle amount of the endowments in recent years, but there are occasional smaller donations. Within these funding limits, VE focuses its ongoing efforts on being part of the various networks that engage the ministries. VE’s payroll includes part-time staff consultants in Braille, audio, and large-print ministries and in deaf ministries. The director for ministry leadership’s portfolio includes oversight of these responsibilities. The various networks are grateful for this partnership, but continue to push for more staff time dedicated to disability ministries. At present, such expansion of staff work is financially impossible.

We anticipate that endowment income can continue to give limited assistance with the production and distribution of Braille, large-print, and audio *ELW* hymns and worship settings. In related work, VE has supported the network’s expressed desire to be engaged in the production of the forthcoming Message on Disabilities, to be considered by the Church Council in November 2010, and is ready to provide funds so that drafts, process resources, and the message itself can be available in Braille, large-print, and/or audio (MP3) formats to enhance participation in the completion of the message and its use.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.67a

To receive with gratitude the response of the Vocation and Education unit with Worship and Liturgical Resources, Augsburg Fortress and the ELCA Foundation in response to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action related to worship and educational materials in Braille, large-print, and audio formats; and

To acknowledge the report provided above and the ongoing commitment to this work through the newly formed Congregational and Synodical Mission unit as well as the approval of a social message, “People Living with Disabilities,” as the response of the Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly action.

**B. Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness
[Memorial Category E1] [CA.09.03.09i]**

Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, the Lutheran church has a tradition of opposing discrimination codified in law, even during times of social dislocation; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has written social statements to guide efforts to advocate for the protection of legal rights and has developed an advocacy arm to carry out the pragmatic efforts at legislative change; and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality notes that “laws have a direct impact on patterns of social trust within households and networks of kinship” and that “victims of sexual violation must be able to rely on public institutions for intervention”; and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality notes that “certain laws and economic realities . . . may create extreme economic hardship for some, including older adults, who desire to be legally married” and asks that the ELCA advocate for “altering laws and the factors that create a significant impediment for such people to be married”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to call on bishops, ministries, and members of this church to advocate for laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and for laws that define violence on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity as a hate crime; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to direct appropriate churchwide units and to encourage synods, congregations, and members of this church to advocate for laws and regulations that permit widows and widowers to marry without losing retirement benefits.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA.09.03.09i]:

To thank the Minneapolis Area Synod for connecting faith to issues in public life;

To acknowledge the importance of the issues raised and to note background information provided related to the current and recent work done on hate-crime sentencing and employment non-discrimination;

To affirm the historical concern of ELCA social policy for advocacy related to human and civil rights and equal protection under the law and to encourage the members of this church to advocate in keeping with this tradition;

To request that, as financial and staff resources permit, the Church in Society unit study the issue of the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry; and

To acknowledge that the Church in Society unit advocates on these issues based on this church’s social policy statements related to human and civil rights.

April 2010 Response from the Church in Society unit:

The Church in Society unit has not been able to date to “study the issue of the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry” as requested in the 2009 Churchwide Assembly recommendation to the Minneapolis Area Synod memorial (Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness [CA.09.03.09i]) due to limited staff resources.

Church Council Action [CC.10.04.22b]:

To authorize a delay in the response of the Church in Society unit to the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod related to legal protection and fairness regarding the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA 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 advocacy department of the Church in Society program unit affirms the importance of the issues raised by the Minneapolis Area Synod. The background information included in the report of the Memorials Committee provides helpful context:

The ELCA works in the tradition of predecessor church bodies to oppose discrimination in all forms and does so through various offices. This includes advocating for the equal protection of civil rights under the law. The ELCA also advocates for changes in laws in order to end discriminatory practices that have been codified into law. These efforts are based upon the social statements and social policy actions of this church and rely both on a broad movement of members of this church and organized advocacy efforts in New York at the United Nations, in Washington, D.C., and in state capitals.

This church's social statements and messages express deep concern for legal protection and human rights grounded in the dignity of all people.¹ Over many years, the ELCA has gone on record in opposition to civil and human rights violations due to sexuality and sexual orientation. The 1989 Churchwide Assembly said that the ELCA would not tolerate any forms of sexual abuse or harassment (CA89.04.18). The 1991 Churchwide Assembly reaffirmed the 1989 Churchwide Assembly action (CA91.07.52). In 1993, the ELCA Church Council reaffirmed (CC93.03.37) the historical position of the ELCA:

1. Strong opposition to all forms of verbal or physical harassment or assault of persons because of their sexual orientation; and
2. Support for legislation, referendums, and policies to protect the civil rights of all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation, and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public service and accommodations....

The 1993 Churchwide Assembly commended this action by the Church Council (CA93.03.4). On the basis of these precedents, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly acted to support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirm advocacy by synods and the Church in Society unit "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation" (CA97.6.29).

This church is also on record in support of equal protection under the law for all people including areas related to property and inheritance rights, home ownership, and health and retirement benefits. Through its advocacy ministry, this church has supported adding sexual orientation as a class actionable under "hate crimes" sentencing. More recently, the ELCA supported adding sexual orientation as a protected class in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). Both actions seek to uphold the thematic concern of this church's language addressing civil rights and legal protections, including opposition to discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Human dignity is common to all by virtue of creation by God in the image of God. Christians are called to support and defend basic human rights for others. While equal protection under the law in the United States extends to several specific classes of protection, the current social policy language of this church does not address specifically the situation of older adults and the legal effect of a decision to marry on their existing retirement and related benefits.

The resolution from the Minneapolis Area Synod makes reference to language in the draft of the social statement on human sexuality coming before the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. We note that, as such, this language is pending and cannot be construed as a basis for action by the ELCA or its various offices. However, regardless of pending social statement language, the focus in this area of work remains compelling, as described above and as derived from existing social policy language.

¹ For example, see the social statements *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* (1991); *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (1993); *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999); and the message *Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (2001).

The fourth “whereas” clause and the second “resolved” clause seem to address the situation of older heterosexual couples, typically widows and widowers, who desire to be married but are inhibited in this decision by laws that might, in effect, negate one or the other’s retirement benefits.

The connection being drawn between the two issues stated in the two “resolved” clauses is the importance of altering laws when the force and effect of those laws perpetuate discrimination related to certain benefits and rights, especially those in danger of being forfeited by virtue of becoming a couple or entering into marriage.

The advocacy ministries of the ELCA will continue both to support civil and legal rights and to oppose laws that deny these rights and protections.

The advocacy department confirms the Church Council’s requested action (above) and will continue to find opportunities to advocate on this issue in its broader context of human and civil rights and equal protection.

With regard to studying the issue of marriage and potential loss of benefits for older adults, the advocacy department finds the following:

TAX TREATMENT

A so-called “marriage penalty” refers to certain features of the tax code that require higher taxes from some married couples when filing one tax return (“married filing jointly”) than for the same two people filing two separate tax returns if they were unmarried (i.e., filing as “single,” not “married filing separately”). Couples with a wider gap between their incomes more often escape the marriage penalty, but couples with similar incomes usually pay a penalty. Legislation in 2001 remedied the marriage penalty for many couples. The 2001 law had three marriage penalty provisions, two of which could relate to older adults.

- **Standard Deduction:** The legislation in 2001 reduced the application of the marriage penalty by equalizing the standard deduction rate for singles and married couples. For example, in 1999 the standard deduction for single filers was \$4,300, while the deduction for married couples was only \$7,200. The 2001 legislation increased the standard deduction for couples to be two times the standard deduction for individuals.
- **Payment Bracket:** The legislation eliminated some of the marriage penalty tax by increasing the 15 percent tax bracket for married couples filing jointly. In 1999, single taxpayers paid a 15 percent tax on income of \$25,750 or less. Married couples, however, only qualified for the 15 percent tax bracket if the income on a joint return was \$43,050 or less. The elimination of the marriage penalty has equalized the 15 percent tax bracket for single filers and married couples filing jointly. Thus, married couples filing jointly now will qualify for the 15 percent bracket on income of up to \$51,500 (exactly double the single-filer amount). The marriage penalty tax, however, may still apply when a married couple’s income exceeds the 15 percent tax bracket, which today means married joint filers whose taxable income (i.e., income after deductions and personal exemptions) exceeds \$67,900.

The improvements made in 2001 expire in 2010. Currently, they are part of the much larger middle class tax package that is stalled in Congress. The marriage provisions are not controversial, but because they are included in a much larger tax bill that contains contentious provisions, the fate of the marriage penalty remains to be seen. Congress is expected to convene for a “lame duck” session in November 2010 after the midterm elections, during which time it is expected to take up expiring tax issues.

For more information on tax issues facing older taxpayers, see IRS Publication 554, Older Americans Tax Guide, available at www.irs.gov.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

Another area of common concern related to benefits for older adults is Social Security. According to the Social Security Administration, in most situations, there is no marriage penalty in Social Security. A married couple’s lifetime earnings are calculated independently to determine their benefit amounts. Therefore, each spouse receives a monthly benefit amount based on his or her own earnings. However, if one member of the couple earned low wages or did not earn enough Social Security credits to be insured for retirement benefits, she or he may be eligible to receive benefits as a spouse.

Widows and widowers who remarry after age 60 can keep their own (higher) benefit, rather than switching to a lower spousal benefit. This has been the case since 1977. When one reaches age 62 or older, s/he may get retirement benefits on the record of his/her new spouse if it is higher. Also, remarriage would have no effect on the benefits being paid to children.

For more information on social security and related federal benefits, see www.ssa.gov or www.socialsecurity.gov.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.67b To receive the response of the Church in Society program unit to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly memorial on “Legal Protection and Fairness” related to older adults;

To approve the background information provided as the response of the Church Council to the assembly’s action; and

To request that the ELCA advocacy staff continue to find opportunities to advocate on these issues within the broader context of human and civil rights and equal protection for all people.

C. Environmental Stewardship

[Memorial Category B5] [CA09.03.09f]

Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, we in the industrialized world are consuming energy and the earth’s resources in a way that is both unsustainable in the future and unfair to those in the developing world; and

WHEREAS, we hear disturbing scientific reports of environmental pollution, global climate change, a record rate of species extinction, and a depletion of nonrenewable resources that should give us pause; and

WHEREAS, human activity, especially over-consumption of energy and resources in the pursuit of material wealth, appears to be a critical driver in this change in climate and environmental distress; and

WHEREAS, Genesis 2:15 directs us to be stewards of creation, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), recognizing the gravity of these threats, has committed to addressing them in a constructive way, as evidenced by the 1993 social statement “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly call on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the Genesis Covenant (*see below for more information*) to reduce by a minimum of 50 percent the emission of greenhouse gases from all facilities, houses of worship, camps, offices, and conference centers of this church within 10 years; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the bishop and Synod Council appoint a Creation Care Task Force to develop a roadmap to sustainability, which gives congregations and other institutions an actionable plan on user-friendly terms for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by maximizing energy efficiency, reducing unnecessary consumption of energy and resources, and witnessing to creation as God’s gift for which we are responsible as disciples of Christ; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly calls on its congregations and the ELCA to work together with all religious institutions regionally, nationally, and globally and with leaders of science, government, and business to adopt the same goals of the Genesis Covenant.

The Genesis Covenant

The Challenge

The Genesis Covenant is an invitation to every community of faith to take action to reverse global warming.

The Genesis Covenant is a pledge to be made publicly by the national religious bodies that endorse it as their witness to the holiness of creation and their commitment to protect the Earth as a sacred trust.

The Genesis Covenant is an expression of the unity of the world’s religious communities in the face of a shared crisis.

The Genesis Covenant is a challenge to all other sectors of society to join people of faith in a global effort to change history by changing behavior.

The Covenant

We will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from every facility that we maintain by 50 percent in 10 years.

The Commitment

The Genesis Covenant must be endorsed by the appropriate representative governing body of the community. Once that body has adopted the covenant, every facility that it maintains will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from their levels at the time of ratification by 50 percent within ten years. This includes places of worship, offices, schools, camps, retreat centers, and other facilities.

The Community

The Genesis Covenant will maintain an interactive online presence to support and network local communities who are part of the Covenant. This resource will empower every faith community to meet its goals in fulfilling the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It will welcome people of all faiths into a working partnership with their neighbors to achieve an historic change for the sake of our children.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA09.03.09f]:

- To thank the Sierra Pacific Synod for connecting Christian faith to public issues;
- To acknowledge that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its social statement, “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice,” its resources, and its action has sought to bring the importance of climate change to the attention of congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and related agencies and institutions, as well as to public and private sectors of society;
- To thank the congregations, synods, and related agencies and institutions of the ELCA that are practicing environmental stewardship and seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
- To request that, as financial and staff resources permit, the Church in Society program unit bring a proposal that includes a time line, detailed budget, proposed funding sources, and identified partners to the ELCA Church Council for the development of a strategy for this church to address climate change.

Response from the Church in Society unit:

The Church in Society unit has not been able to date to “bring a proposal that includes a time line, detailed budget, proposed funding sources, and identified partners to the ELCA Church Council for the development of a strategy for this church to address climate change” as requested in the 2009 Churchwide Assembly recommendation (CA.09.03.09f) due to limited staff resources. Steps, however, have been taken with other units to create and begin to implement a plan in which the churchwide organization, together with synods, can address climate change.

A review of memorials approved by synod assemblies in 2010, however, indicates that ten synods approved memorials addressing comparable issues under the theme of “energy stewardship.” In light of the restructuring of the churchwide organization and the significance of the pending response of the 2011 Memorials Committee, it is recommended that the action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly be reported as information to the 2011 Memorials Committee as it prepares recommendations for consideration by the next Churchwide Assembly.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.67c To receive the response of the Church in Society program unit and recognize that current financial, staffing and restructuring challenges limit the capacity of the churchwide organization to respond to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action related to environmental stewardship;

To acknowledge that steps have been taken with other units to create and begin to implement a plan in which the churchwide organization, together with synods, can address climate change;

To anticipate that the issue of energy stewardship will be brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly through memorials from at least ten synods; and

To decline to respond to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action regarding environmental stewardship at this time, but to request that the 2011 Memorials Committee receive the 2009 action and this response as information to inform their work.

D. Message on Human Disability
[Memorial Category B1] [CA.09.06.37]

D1. Alaska Synod (1A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Alaska Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

D2. Nebraska Synod (4A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Nebraska Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Nebraska Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the task force charged with the formation of this social statement to pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

D3. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, there are persons who live with a disability who are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and that development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

D4. New Jersey Synod (7A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

D5. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

D6. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

D7. New England Synod (7B)

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face people with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

D8. Pacifica Synod (2C)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA09.06.37]:

To thank the Alaska, Pacifica, Nebraska, Metropolitan Chicago, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, New England, and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods for their call for strengthened awareness within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the particular challenges faced by people living with disability as well as this church’s responsibility to address issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome;

To acknowledge with gratitude the many resources available through the churchwide organization, synods, social ministry organizations, and congregations and urge their use throughout this church in its ongoing commitment to address both the challenges of stigmatization and discrimination within church and society and the issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

To decline to authorize the development of a social statement on human disability, but to request the Church in Society unit to consider development of a message on human disability, as financial and staff resources permit, that would aid awareness, deliberation, and action within this church, giving special attention to the unique issues (e.g., physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual) of the different types of disability.

Church Council Action:

The proposed social message titled “People Living with Disabilities” was provided to members of the Church Council for input on October 15, 2010, with responses requested by November 5, 2010. Following the final review of the Program and Services Committee on November 12, 2010, the message was considered and approved by the Church Council (CC10.11.60). See page 68 of these minutes.

RECEIPT OF CONGREGATIONAL PETITION ADDRESSED TO CHURCH COUNCIL
(Agenda IV.A.3.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit B, Part 3)

St. John's Lutheran Church, Cylinder, Iowa
Petition to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Preface

In the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, we the people and congregations of the Church are given a great right and a great privilege. In Section 9.53.07, the aforementioned Constitution states: "Congregations shall have the right to petition this church." The following is a petition we respectfully make in accordance with the governing documents of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

We are informed in the same section, "Petitions shall be addressed to the synod to which the congregation relates for response by the synod, or, at the discretion of the synod, for forwarding to the Churchwide Assembly."

We therefore submit the following petition, with its reasons, to you; and through you, to the proper division of the churchwide dimension of the Church.

Background: A Review of the Churchwide Resolutions

At the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, meeting this August past in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Assembly voted to adopt the social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," along with a series of implementing resolutions with amendments.

In addition, as Presiding Bishop of our Church, The Rev. Mark S. Hanson wrote following this action, "Our assembly also adopted resolutions proposed by the Church Council based on those contained in a 'Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies.' The actions direct that changes be made to churchwide policy documents to make it possible for those in committed same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA."¹

The resolutions involved, among other matters, congregational recognition [for those who wish to do so] of same-sex relationships, described as "life-long" and "monogamous;" the rostering of such as ordained Pastors in the Gospel ministry of the Church; the drafting of "amendments to ministry policy documents;" and respect for the bound consciences of members of the Church and constituent congregations.²

Reasons for this Petition

Therefore, out of love for the orthodox, apostolic, Biblical Christian Faith; therefore, out of love for the Truth; for the holiness and unity of Christ's Church; and out of love for people, their human good and their eternal salvation; we submit the following petition, and our reason for this petition, to our Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, directing it for action, first to our Western Iowa Synod to which we are related, and beyond our Synod to the proper body of the churchwide dimension which has responsibility for handling and responding to such.

Our Concerns

There is great concern throughout the Church regarding the wisdom, the truthfulness, the faithfulness to Scripture [and therefore also to the Church's own governing documents³], and the Christian theological and ethical orthodoxy of that decision.

We share that concern and that conviction.

¹ 2009 Churchwide Assembly Letter from Presiding Bishop Hanson. Date: Saturday, August 22, 2009, at 12:02 p.m., 2.

² Ibid.

³ *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, "Confession of Faith," 2.03: "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."

We believe the Church has made a bad and erroneous decision.

It has committed itself to a theological and ethical and hermeneutical [Scriptural interpretative] position that is at variance with “the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude 3 NRSV), one that is at variance with the Christian orthodoxy of two thousand years.

A Brief Review: The Position We Contend Against

The contemporary debate in support of same-sex acceptance has supported the contention that the Biblical passages on homosexuality do not have relevance for contemporary life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships for reasons such as the following:

- homosexual practice in Scripture is related to pagan religious worship and practice, which is not an issue among us today;
- that the sin at Sodom that brought God’s judgment was the aspect of gang-rape, the breach of hospitality, and the attempt to have sexual relationships with angels, and not same-sex relations;
- that the issue in Scripture involving homosexuality is in regard to adults taking advantage of the young, children, minors; and forcing sexual relations on them; violent, rapistic behavior, instead of the of-age, loving, consensual same-sex relationships that we have at present;
- that most of the Scriptural passages involve morally unrestrained behavior, promiscuity, orgiastic behavior, immoral behavior, lustful and not loving; but not specifically identifying same-sex behavior as such, but immoral activity carried out by heterosexual or homosexual both;
- that in Scripture the current same-sex practice [i.e. loving, consensual, life-long, publicly-accountable, monogamous] was not anticipated by the Biblical writers, is not dealt with, and does not speak to it or about it.⁴

The Position We Hold

The written Word of God, the Scripture, speaks about homosexual acts.

In its various verses relating to the matter, it covers the broad spectrum of all kinds of same-sex acts.

Male with male, and female with female, is universally and uniformly proscribed.

The main, central, core reason, as set forth in Romans 1:18-32, is that such acts are unnatural. They contravene the male-female plan for human sexual relationships that God set forth from the beginning, and which is the only legitimate form of sexual expression, and which is to be reserved for marriage.

This is the apostolic, Scriptural, orthodox Christian Faith held by the Church from the beginning and through the centuries since.⁵

The Biblical documents and the orthodox Christian Faith do not support such a doctrinal, theological, ethical position as that adopted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its August last Churchwide Assembly.

To adopt that position is to say ... “with virtuoso hermeneutic derring-do, that we have all been wrong for the entire thirty-five hundred years since Sinai, and that what the Bible really teaches is that homosexuals, for example, may enjoy fully expressed and active sexual lives.”⁶

No Church within the stream of Christian orthodoxy can ever say that, has no right to say that.

May our God preserve us from that!

⁴ Some of the arguments are succinctly stated in the article entitled “Jesus, Samaritans and Homosexuals,” by Don Williams, *ETERNITY*, May 1978, reprinted in *The Christian Reader*, September/October 1978, 22-29. The article is a review of the book *Is The Homosexual My Neighbor?* by Letha Scanzoni and Virginia Mollenkott.

⁵ Consider the Fathers of the Church. St. Athanasius [A.D. 297-373], quoting Romans 1:26f, calls same-sex acts “crimes contrary to nature.” On the Incarnation, *The Treatise De Incarnatione Verbi Dei*, by St. Athanasius, translated and edited by Sister Penelope Lawson, C.S.M.V. [New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1946], Chapter One, “Creation and Fall,” 10.

⁶ Thomas Howard, *Lead, Kindly Light, My Journey to Rome*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004) 38-39.

Word and Spirit Together

We have heard that we must be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we work through these issues; and that is always true.

But the context of the statements often suggests the Holy Spirit operates apart from, aside from, even in contradiction to the written Word of Scripture that He has inspired.

Lutheran Christians have never so separated the Spirit of God from the Word of God.

To set the Holy Spirit of God apart from the Word of Scripture in this manner is to subscribe to what Dr. Martin Luther and the Church call “enthusiasm,” which has always been rejected by the Church: when personal, individual, subjective feelings, leadings, experiences become the basis for doctrine and theology rather than the objective Faith of the Church given by our Lord Jesus Christ and set forth in written Scripture.

The Danger for the Church and for Christian Theology

Our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, has already committed heresy, or is in very great and near danger of doing so.

The acceptance of the validity of homosexuality, of homosexual ordination, and of homosexual unions, has broad implications and poses grave dangers for the truth of the Christian Faith and for the broad spectrum of Christian theology.

This one issue has implications, for example, for:

- the doctrine of God [God is not therefore as Scriptural revelation and as the Church in its teaching has always understood, said, and taught];⁷
- the doctrine of sin;
- the nature of holiness;
- the meaning and purpose of human sexuality;
- the nature and purpose of the family;
- the purpose of male and female;
- ecclesiology, the doctrine of the Church, for God has never described His relationship with His people in same-sex terms;
- the authority of God’s Scriptural Word;
- for Truth as absolute and not relative;⁸
- the possession of a sound hermeneutic, or interpretation, of the written Word of God.

The Effect of the Churchwide Decisions on the Church

We who are Lutherans have a specific understanding of the nature of the Church: where the Gospel is proclaimed in its purity, and the sacraments are administered in accordance with it.

The Church of Jesus Christ is also constituted by four other words:

A. One. But this action of our Church is divisive among its own people and in its own congregations and among its own synods. Moreover, these actions are divisive in terms of the true ecumenism that all Christians are to eagerly seek in accordance with our Lord’s desire “that all of them may be one,” just as God the Father is in the Son and God the Son is in the Father (John 17:21 NRSV). These decisions drive a further wedge between our part of the Church and the majority of Christ’s Church on earth, our brothers and sisters in Christ who subscribe to the Bishop of Rome, and to those in the community of the Eastern Orthodox, as well as large portions of the Protestant community who do not, cannot, will not go against Scriptural authority for the sake of fellowship.

⁷ A related aspect: “... the union of our sexual polarities ...alone expresses the reality of God’s image seen in male and female together.” Op. Cit., Williams, 29.

⁸ For example: “Long ago I learned from Your decrees that You have established them forever.” [Psalm 119:152 NRSV]; “The sum of Your word is truth; and everyone of Your righteous ordinances endures forever.” (Psalm 119:160 NRSV)

B. Holy. But to laud, accept, and approve what the Holy God calls sin is to contravene and go against holiness. “Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.” (Jude 7 NRSV)⁹

C. Catholic. Universal. But the position accepted by our Church at its most recent Churchwide Assembly is not one which the Church of Jesus Christ always, everywhere, and at all times has held to, believed, and confessed. We have departed from the catholicity of the Church.

D. Apostolic. What our Church has accepted in its Churchwide Assembly resolutions is not, and never was, the teaching of the Apostles, the teaching received by those our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church, chose, called, and designated to be His spokesmen and the teachers of His Church.

Love Compels Us ...

Out of love for people, and out of love for our brothers and sisters who struggle with same-sex attraction, and who beyond that have entered into same-sex relationships and unions, we must also ultimately ask our Church to rescind and reverse its recent Churchwide Assembly decisions. God has created us human beings male and female; and He has created us only for each other; and to attempt to contravene that divinely created pattern is to go against our very nature, never find true fulfillment, and end up disillusioned and with a sense of hopelessness. Father Roger J. Landry writes, “While two men may genuinely love each other, the mutual utilitarianism involved in homosexual activity, rather than ‘making love,’ actually corrodes the love that may exist between them. Statistics in fact show that the more sexual a same-sex relationship, the more quickly it leads to a break-up. In same-sex activity, men, rather than taking responsibility for the other’s good, spiritually, psychologically, and medically, actually become consensual consumers of the other.”¹⁰

Love Further Compels Us ...

We also do grave injustice to approve actions and encourage relationships that the Holy God says are sin. The Church should never be in the position of encouraging people in what will only take people away from the God Who desires to save them. The Church is not to encourage people to damnation, but to salvation. Our Lord has said stern and horrible words about those who “put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in Me” (Matthew 18:6 NRSV).¹¹ The Prophet Isaiah states, “Ah [NIV: Woe], you who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (Isaiah 5:20 NRSV) Oh, Lord, preserve us all from causing anyone of Your believing children to stumble! And preserve Your Church from calling evil good, gracious Lord!

God’s Call to Repentance

The responsible and sane path to follow when one has embarked on a wrong road or in a wrong direction is to turn around and again travel in the correct direction. The Scripture calls this repentance, and Churches as well as individual people can be called by God to this course of action.

The Petition We Therefore Present

Having stated our reasons, we therefore petition the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to and through our Western Iowa Synod, to which we as believers in Christ and as a Christian congregation are related, to put a hold on any

⁹ Cf. NIV: “In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.”

¹⁰ *Becoming a Real Man of God*, by Father Roger J. Landry (New Haven, Connecticut: Catholic Information Service, Knights of Columbus Supreme Council, 2007; The Veritas Series) 24. The frustration and lack of fulfillment found in same-sex relationships is set forth very well, clearly, and concisely in another booklet in the aforementioned Veritas Series: *Same Sex Attraction: Catholic Teaching and Pastoral Practice*, by Father John F. Harvey, D.S.F.S. Cf. pp. 18-19. This A.D. 2007 publication is a well written, brief, informative primer for anyone wanting to read further on same-sex issues.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Father John F. Harvey. A sensitive and compassionate program of pastoral care for those struggling with same-sex attraction.

policy development and implementation in regard to the aforementioned resolutions adopted by our Church in Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis, Minnesota, of August last.

We petition the Church that no “changes be made to churchwide policy documents to make it possible for those in committed same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA.”¹²

We petition the Church to not act upon the resolutions recently enacted to enter people in same-sex relationships into the rostered leadership of the Church. [Resolution Two] We ask that a hold be put on this action.

We petition the Church not to draft and approve amendments to ministry policy documents. [Resolution Four]

We petition the Church to not develop ways, or to put a hold on any development in process, “to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.”¹³ [Resolution One]

We petition the Church to place a hold on any and all forms and types of implementation, or any action towards such implementation, of the aforementioned resolutions. Our desire would be for permanency, but our petition is that this hold and non-implementation be carried out at least until after the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to be convened in 2011.

Concluding Statement

It is our conviction that the Church needs to revisit and reverse the theological and ethical positions adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in August. At the very least, the Church needs to be given the opportunity to do this.

There is and will be, it is our conviction, a great voicing of concern that our Church do this very thing at its next Churchwide Assembly in the Year of Our Lord two-thousand-eleven. This has become very clear in the response by many individual believers and by many congregations of this Church.

For the good of the Church, for the good of people, and so that there may be practical recognition of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s orthodox Christian statement of faith, we respectfully and in Christian love, place this petition before the Church, in the Name of the One by Whose grace we live, Jesus Christ, God’s only Son., our Savior.

Adopted by: The St. John Lutheran Church, by action of its Annual Congregational Meeting.

Voting method: secret ballot. Balloting results: YES – 31, NO 3

Date: Sunday, January 17, A.D. 2010

Attesting Signatures:

Todd Mathis
Chairman of Church Council
Monte Thompson
Vice-Chairman of Church Council
Deborah Hite
Secretary of Church Council
Pastor David K. Moore
Pastor

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.68 To receive the petition of St. John’s Lutheran Church, Cylinder, Iowa, as printed in Exhibit B, Part 3;

To acknowledge the actions of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly and the subsequent revision of the Ministry Policies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the Church Council in November 2009;

¹² Op. Cit., Presiding Bishop Hanson, 2.

¹³ Ibid., 2.

To further acknowledge that the 2011 Churchwide Assembly is the authorizing body for any action to reconsider the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, or the revisions to the ministry policies;

To decline to consider a motion to request reconsideration of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* or the ministry policies at this meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

DESIGNATION OF FUNDS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

(Agenda IV.B.1.a.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Parts 4a–4f)

Background:

The established method for funding the mission plans of the churchwide organization is through the operating budget. The operating budget, developed after review of potential income sources, is used to establish expense guidelines for the various units of the churchwide organization as they provide programs or support outlined in the ELCA governing documents.

The Church Council is asked occasionally to establish designated funds for support of certain specific programs or events that may not be included in the “normal” yearly operations of the churchwide organization. Approved requests may be managed in one of two ways. The first way designated funds are managed is through investment in the ELCA Foundation as Church Council designated funds “functioning as endowment.” They are reported to the Church Council annually in April. The second way designated funds are managed is through the ELCA treasury as a designated fund to be used for a specific activity within a given time frame.

The three-year budget for the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering contained estimates both for registrations and for program and operating expenses. At the close of the Gathering and after payment of all obligations, the budget was favorable in both income and expense variances. After making the necessary allocations for the upcoming Gathering, there were sufficient balances to establish a special Church Council designated fund for additional youth and young adult ministries.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.69

To place \$400,000 from the Youth Gathering account into a Church Council designated fund for youth and young adult ministries;

To make income from the funds available for churchwide youth and young adult ministry ventures that are not covered in the general operating budget;

To request that guidelines for distribution be developed by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with the treasurer and the executive for administration and that the guidelines focus on youth and young adult leadership development and intentionally include multicultural youth and young adult leadership development; and

To authorize that specific distributions be made according to recommendations by churchwide youth and young adult program staff with the approval of the executive director of Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

ENDORSEMENT OF RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO ENDOWMENTS THAT BENEFIT WALDORF COLLEGE (Agenda IV.B.2.)

Background:

The Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation took the following action at its October 2010 meeting:

WHEREAS, the ELCA holds the Ivan F. and Deloris M. Hunter Endowment Fund that benefits Waldorf College as a seven percent beneficiary of that endowment; and

WHEREAS, Waldorf College was founded in 1903 by Lutherans as an expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and has been a valued leader in Lutheran higher education since that time; and

WHEREAS, Waldorf College is now owned by Mayes Education, Inc., a subsidiary of Columbia Southern University, and is therefore no longer an eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofit recipient of an ELCA endowment fund; and

WHEREAS, the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation has been established as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to securing and stewarding private gifts to support student scholarships, campus ministry, and alumni/community relations; and

WHEREAS, the Ivan F. and Deloris M. Hunter Endowment Fund Agreement stipulates that if a recipient of the fund ceases to be an eligible or operative beneficiary of the Fund, the Church Council of the ELCA shall have the authority to name a similar or complementary ministry to be the beneficiary of that portion of the Fund; and

WHEREAS, Waldorf College has been an active partner in ministry to and with the Western Iowa Synod since the founding of that synod; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Foundation, in consultation with the Vocation and Education Unit, recommends that this occasion afford an opportunity to encourage the Western Iowa Synod to maintain connections with Waldorf College;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the ELCA Church Council names the Western Iowa Synod as the beneficiary of that portion of the Ivan F. and Deloris M. Hunter Endowment Fund that currently benefits Waldorf College.

FURTHER, be it resolved that endowment distributions from that Fund to the Western Iowa Synod be restricted for the support of campus ministry, with preference through the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.70

To receive and endorse the recommendation of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation related to ELCA endowments that benefit Waldorf College;

To name the Western Iowa Synod as the beneficiary of that portion of the Ivan F. and Deloris M. Hunter Endowment Fund that currently benefits Waldorf College; and

To restrict endowment distributions from that Fund to the Western Iowa Synod for the support of campus ministry, with preference through the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation.

ENDORSEMENT OF RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO ENDOWMENTS THAT BENEFIT DANA COLLEGE

(Agenda IV.B.3.)

The Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation took the following action at its October 2010 meeting:

WHEREAS, the ELCA holds the Arnold and Olive Wallander Memorial Endowment Fund that benefits Dana College as a fourteen percent beneficiary of that endowment; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA holds the Rev. Raymond L. & Nellie Faye Hagberg Endowment Fund that benefits Dana College as an approximately seventeen percent beneficiary of that endowment; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA holds the Vita M. Jensen Endowment Fund that benefits Dana College as the sole beneficiary of that endowment; and

WHEREAS, Dana College was founded more than 125 years ago by Danish pioneers and has been affiliated with Lutheran church bodies since its beginning; and

WHEREAS, the Dana College Board of Regents announced on June 30 that it will commence the closing of the college and it will not reopen for the 2010-11 academic year; and

WHEREAS, the Arnold and Olive Wallander Memorial Endowment Fund Agreement and the Rev. Raymond L. & Nellie Faye Hagberg Endowment Fund Agreement stipulate that if a recipient of the fund ceases to be an operative beneficiary of the Fund, the ELCA shall have the authority to name a similar or complementary ministry to be the beneficiary of those portions of the Funds; and

WHEREAS, the Vita M. Jensen Endowment Fund Agreement stipulates that if the recipient ceases to be an operative beneficiary of the Fund, the Board of Trustees of the Endowment Fund of the ELCA shall have the authority to name a similar or complementary ministry to be the beneficiary; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Foundation, in consultation with the Vocation and Education Unit, recommends that this occasion affords the opportunity for the ELCA to continue support of Lutheran higher education in Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, Midland Lutheran University made a commitment to accept all students from Dana College and maintain their academic credits and financial aid;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the ELCA and the Board of Trustees of the Endowment Fund of the ELCA designate the applicable portions of these Funds that currently benefit Dana College to benefit the ministry of Lutheran higher education, with preference for Midland Lutheran University.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

**CC10.11.71 To receive and endorse the recommendation of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation related to ELCA endowments that benefit Dana College;
To designate the applicable portions of these Funds that currently benefit Dana College to benefit the ministry of Lutheran higher education, with preference for Midland Lutheran University.**

APPROVAL OF THE REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL

(Agenda IV.B.4.b.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Part 6a)

Background:

The Audit Committee consists of six members. A minimum of two members are Church Council Budget and Finance Committee members. Members of the Audit Committee 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 up to the end of their Church Council terms.

Non-Church Council members are appointed for two-year terms, renewable for two additional terms. Terms are to be staggered in recognition of the need for continuity of committee membership from year to year.

The terms end in August 2011 for the current members of the Audit Committee: Mr. Philip W. Bertram, Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth, chair, Ms. Louise A. Hemstead, Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, Mr. Timothy L. Stephan, and Mr. John F. Timmer.

At its June 2010 meeting, the Audit Committee reviewed the audited financial statements for the year ending January 31, 2010. The report was printed in Exhibit F, Part 6a.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.72 To receive and approve the report of the Church Council Audit Committee describing their review of the audited financial statements, management letter and response of management for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2010.

APPROVAL OF REVISION OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER

(Agenda IV.B.5.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Part 6b)

Background:

Revisions to the Church Council Audit Committee Charter were printed in Exhibit F, Part 6b.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.73 To approve the revised Church Council Audit Committee charter:

ELCA AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Audit Committee is to assist the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the churchwide organization's accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems and audit functions.

Authority

Subject to the approval of the ELCA Budget and Finance Committee, the Audit Committee shall have the authority to retain special legal, accounting or other consultants to advise the committee. The Audit Committee shall have the authority to request any officer or employee of the churchwide organization, its outside counsel or independent auditor to attend a meeting of the committee, or to meet with members of the committee.

Responsibility

Church management is responsible for preparing financial statements in accordance with GAAP, maintaining a system of internal controls and complying with appropriate laws and regulations. The director of internal audit is responsible for evaluating the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal controls. The independent auditor is responsible for performing an independent audit as a basis for providing an opinion that the Church's financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with GAAP.

The Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing significant accounting and reporting issues and judgments made in connection with the preparation of the financial statements, including analyses of the effects of alternative GAAP methods on the financial statements.

The Board of Pensions, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF), Lutheran Men in Mission and the Women of the ELCA (W/ELCA) are separately incorporated units and, as such, have independent financial statement audits. The ELCA Audit Committee has no responsibilities with respect to the Board of Pensions, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, the MIF, LMM or W/ELCA.

Membership

The Audit Committee shall consist of six members. A minimum of 2 members should be Church Council Budget and Finance Committee members. Members of the committee shall be appointed by the Budget and Finance Committee and forwarded to the Church Council for approval. Budget and Finance Committee members should be appointed for a 2-year term with the possibility of reappointment up to their Church Council term. Non-Church Council members should be appointed for a 2-year term, renewable for 2 additional terms. Terms need to be staggered in recognition of the need for continuity of committee membership from year to year.

The chair of the committee shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee and shall be appointed by the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. Members of the committee will have no relationship to the church that may interfere with the exercise of the member's independence and must be financially literate. At least one member shall have accounting or related financial management experience.

In order to provide for an effective committee, attendance at the Audit Committee meeting is required of all members. Upon two successive absences that have not been approved by the committee, the member's position shall be declared vacant by the chair.

Meetings

The Audit Committee will meet at least two times per year or more frequently as circumstances require. Meeting agendas will be cleared by the committee chair in advance of the meeting. Minutes

will be prepared by one of the churchwide staff, approved by the committee and maintained in the permanent records of the church.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Audit Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities with respect to:

Financial Statements

Inquire of the independent auditors and churchwide organization management as to the acceptability and appropriateness of financial accounting practices and disclosures used or proposed.

Review the church's audited financial statements and related footnote disclosures and consider whether they are complete and consistent based on information known to committee members.

Discuss with the independent auditors, the effect of regulatory and accounting initiatives on the ELCA's financial statements.

Review with the independent auditors any matters related to the conduct of the audit which are required to be communicated to the committee under generally accepted auditing standards, including, but not limited to, any significant changes required in the original audit plan or any serious difficulties or disputes with management during the course of the audit.

External Audit

Recommend to the Budget and Finance Committee the engagement, retention or discharge of the independent auditors and consider the appropriateness of rotating independent auditors on a regular basis.

Evaluate the performance of the independent auditors.

Review and approve the independent auditors' audit fees and the proposed audit plan.

Review and confirm the independence of the external auditors by monitoring fees paid to the auditor for consulting or other non-audit services and reviewing any relationships that may impact the objectivity or independence of the auditor.

Internal Audit

Review and approve the appointment or dismissal of the director of internal audit in consultation with the Executive for Administration.

Review with the director of internal audit the charter, staffing and organizational structure of the internal audit function.

Review the effectiveness of the internal audit function by obtaining assurance there are no restriction that would limit the director of internal audit's ability to carry out his audit responsibilities.

Review and approve the annual internal audit plan and schedule based on a mutually acceptable risk assessment. As part of this responsibility, review the fraud risk assessment with management and internal audit, providing guidance and input as appropriate.

Internal Control

Review any internal control comments and recommendations in the independent auditor's management letter that are classified as material weaknesses or reportable conditions as well as management's response to these comments and recommendations.

Review internal audit's report to the committee, including significant comments and recommendations to management and management's responses to these comments and recommendations.

Review, on an annual basis, the code of ethics policy.

Communication and Reporting

Meet, in separate executive sessions, as necessary, with the independent auditor, the director of internal audit or churchwide staff to discuss any matters that the Audit Committee believes should be discussed privately.

Provide for an open avenue of communications between the independent auditor or director of internal audit and the committee chair.

Review and assess the adequacy of this Charter annually and submit proposed changes to the Budget and Finance Committee for their review and submission to the Church Council for approval.

Report the committee's performance of the duties and responsibilities defined in this charter, including any recommendations the Committee deems appropriate, to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council.

Review any whistle-blower complaints that have been brought to the attention of the Director for Internal Audit.

Develop a calendar of anticipated work for the biennium at the Committee's first meeting following each Churchwide Assembly.

Other Tasks

The Audit Committee shall accomplish other tasks that may be assigned by the Church Council.

The effective date of this Charter is November 8, 2002.

Last Revised: November 12, 2010

Last Reviewed by Audit Committee: November 12, 2010

APPROVAL OF CERTAIN POLICIES AND POLICY STATEMENTS (Agenda IV.B.6.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibits F, Parts 7a–7c)

Background:

In the fall of 2009, the Budget and Finance Committee began a review of various investment and cash management policies of funds under the supervision and management of the ELCA Foundation. Previously, these policies had operated under the investment guidelines of the fixed income and equity portfolio managers, Board of Pensions and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, respectively, and had not been reviewed and approved by the Church Council. The first of the policies approved was centered in the Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) program.

After review by the staff of the ELCA Foundation and the Office of the Treasurer, four documents were presented to the Church Council for approval at this meeting. The documents covered the Deferred Gift Operating Cash Management and Investments and the Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund Investments. The policy and guideline documents were printed in Exhibits F, Parts 7a–7c.

The Investment Philosophy and Policy Statement had been developed by Foundation staff in consultation with the applicable investment managers and the Office of the Treasurer.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC10.11.74 **To approve the Investment Policy Statement for the Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund Programs; and
To approve the Deferred Gifts Operating Cash Management and Investment Policy.**

APPOINTMENT OF CHURCH COUNCIL LIAISON TO UNIT PROGRAM COMMITTEE
(Agenda IV.C.3)

Background:

At its meetings following the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, the Executive Committee reviewed indications from the Church Council members for service in a variety of committees, including as liaisons from the Church Council to the five unit program committees: Church in Society (CS); Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM); Global Mission (GM); Multicultural Ministries (MM); and Vocation and Education (VE). Based on recommendations from the Executive Committee, the Church Council ratified the following appointments at its November 2009 meeting: Mr. David Truland (CS), Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus (EOCM), Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger (GM), Pr. J. Pablo Obregon (MM), and Pr. David P. Anderson (VE).

The redesign of the churchwide organization approved by the Church Council at its October 2010 meeting provided for three units: Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM); Global Mission (GM); and Mission Advancement. The Church Council will consider an action to elect members to the program committees for CSM and GM. Since the GM unit would continue, the Executive Committee recommended that one of the following members serve as liaison to the CSM program committee: Mr. David Truland (CS), Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus (EOCM), Pr. J. Pablo Obregon (MM), and Pr. David P. Anderson (VE). No program committee for the Mission Advancement unit was anticipated prior to final action by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC10.11.75 **To appoint the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon to serve as the Church Council liaison to the program committee for Congregational and Synodical Mission for the remainder of the 2009-2011 biennium; and
To thank the following Church Council members for their serve as liaisons to the following unit program and advisory committees: Mr. David Truland, Advisory Committee for Corporate Social Responsibility; Mr. David Truland, Church in Society; Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission; the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, Global Mission; the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, Multicultural Ministries; and the Rev. David P. Anderson, Vocation and Education.**

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO CERTAIN SYNOD CONSTITUTIONS
(Agenda IV.D.2.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 4)

Background:

Provision 10.12. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* stipulates: “Each synod shall have a constitution, which shall become effective upon ratification by the Church Council. Amendments thereto shall be subject to like ratification” The amendments to the synod constitutions were printed in Exhibit G, Part 4.

VOTED: EN BLOC
CC10.11.76 **To ratify amendments to the constitutions of the following synods: Southwestern Minnesota (3F), Oregon (1E), and Pacifica (2C), as detailed below.**

1. Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)

RESOLVED, that S11.50. of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Constitution be changed to Serving in God's World Board.

To amend S11.50. by deletion and insertion:

S11.50. Serving in ~~Christ's Mission~~ God's World Board

2. Oregon Synod (1E)

Approved by two-thirds votes at the 2009 Oregon Synod Assembly and the 2010 Oregon Synod Assembly

S15.40. Oregon Synod Endowment Fund

S15.41. The Oregon Synod Endowment Fund shall be maintained as a ~~restricted~~ clearly segregated fund of the Oregon Synod. *(The remainder is unchanged.)*

S15.42. An Endowment Fund ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees shall direct the activities of the Fund and shall have fiduciary responsibility for the Fund. The ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees will consist of 9 members elected by the Synod Assembly to three-year, staggered terms. Members may be once reelected. The bishop and the treasurer of this synod will be members ex-officio.

S15.43. The Endowment Fund ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees shall focus on ministry through major gifts and estate planning, working to enhance the practice of Christian stewardship, to educate persons in the ministry needs of the Church, and to provide the opportunity to participate in the work and vision of the Church both now and for years to come. Further, the Endowment Fund ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees shall:

(a.-b. are unchanged.)

- c. submit a budget annually to the ~~treasurer, Synod Council~~ for inclusion ~~without change and clearly segregated from other synod activities,~~ in this synod's annual budget pursuant to S15.12. ~~Expenditure authorizations are subject to revision in light of changing conditions by the Endowment Fund Committee,~~
- d. designate a Custodian and other persons, as necessary, to execute the instructions of the ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees, and
- e. propose such constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolution changes to the Synod Council ~~for adoption by the Assembly~~ and enact such operating guidelines, investment directions and other procedures as may be required for the preservation and orderly management of the Fund.

3. Pacifica Synod (2C)

Chapter 9.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of seven members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for ~~one year effective January 1~~ two years from the time of the appointment, including each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly at which elections requiring nominations from the Nominating Committee are to be held. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which

nominations are made by the Nominating Committee, provided that the nominees meet the inclusivity qualifications, if any, established by the Synod Council. (See S9.04.01)

APPROVAL OF THE MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ROSTERS
(Agenda IV.D.3.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Parts 3a–b)

Background:

The Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters is a collection of the policies related to rostered ministry categories and procedures that have been adopted over the years by the Church Council, as required by Chapter 7 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The manual is an especially crucial document for synodical bishops and staff members dealing with the call process, rostering matters, and responsibilities for oversight.

An index to the manual was printed in Exhibit G, Part 3a. The full document, with revisions indicated, was provided in Exhibit G, Part 3b, in Net Community. Paper copies were available upon request.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.77

To approve the updated Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and authorize its distribution for use by synodical bishops, synodical staff members, and others who hold responsibilities for such matters in this church;

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial changes to the manual related to the redesign of the churchwide organization; and

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide periodic updates reflecting new or revised policies subsequently adopted by the Church Council.

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO THE DEACONESS COMMUNITY BYLAWS

(Agenda IV.D.4.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit O, Parts 4a–b)

Background:

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, had requested that amendments to bylaws for the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be approved. The revised bylaws, with amendments indicated, were printed in Exhibit O, Part 4b. Subsequent to the action of the Deaconess Community to revise its bylaws, it had been noted that the redesign of the churchwide organization will require additional minor revisions. Upon request by the Deaconess Community, the Office of the Secretary will make the revisions following this meeting of the Church Council.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.78

To approve the Bylaws of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as amended and printed in Exhibit O, Part 4b; and

To authorize the secretary of this church to make editorial changes to the bylaws related to the redesign of the churchwide organization.

ADOPTION OF ELIGIBILITY AMENDMENT TO ELCA PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS PLANS

(Agenda IV.D.5.)

Background:

The Board of Trustees of the Board of Pensions met August 5–7, 2010, and November 5–7, 2010, in Minneapolis, Minn. The following plan amendments, approved by the Board of Trustees at that time, were recommended for adoption by the Church Council at this meeting:

1. *Amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan*
 - a. Eligibility - Definitions: Section 2.19 (*Eligible Employer*) was amended to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the North American Lutheran Church (NALC), to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.
2. *Amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan*
 - a. Eligibility - Definitions: Section 2.01 (*Eligible Employer*) was amended to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the NALC, to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.
3. *Amendment to the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan*
 - a. Eligibility - Definitions: Section 2.01 (*Eligible Employer*) was amended to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the NALC, to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.
4. *Amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan*
 - a. Eligibility - Definitions: Section 2.01 (*Eligible Employer*) was amended to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the NALC, to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.79 To adopt the eligibility amendment to Section 2.19 of Article II of the ELCA Retirement Plan; Section 2.01 of Article II of the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan; Section 2.01 of Article II of the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan and Section 2.01 of Article II of the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan.

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO ELCA RETIREMENT PLAN

(Agenda IV.D.6.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit P, Part 2)

Background:

At its November 2010 meeting, the Board of Trustees of the Board of Pensions approved amendments to the ELCA Retirement Plan that authorized the reopening of the redesigned ELCA Participating Annuity Fund without the bridge fund component. The amendments ensured that all joint annuities will contain a 15-year minimum payout feature.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.80 To approve the amendments to the ELCA Retirement Plan as detailed in Exhibit P, Part 2.

APPROVAL OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ISSUE PAPER AMENDMENTS

(Agenda IV.F.1.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Parts 3a–e)

Background:

The ELCA has a long history of working for justice through corporate social responsibility. The Corporate Social Responsibility Program (CSR) of this church is mandated by the ELCA Constitution:

- 14.21.14. The Church Council, acting through the designated churchwide unit, shall have responsibility for the corporate social responsibility of this church and shall have the authority to file shareholder resolutions and cast proxy ballots thereon on stocks held by the churchwide units that are not separately incorporated. In addition, the Church Council may make recommendations to the churchwide units that are separately incorporated concerning the filing of shareholder resolutions and the casting of ballots on stocks held by those units.**

At its November 2003 meeting, the Church Council voted (CC03.11.68):

To approve the revised governance process for Corporate Social Responsibility in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with the request that:

1. The ELCA Church Council, upon recommendation of the board for the Division for Church in Society:
 - a. review and recommend prioritized focus issues for the attention of this church in Corporate Social Responsibility; and
 - b. recommend a policy framework for each focus issue that will identify and delimit the scope within which resolutions may be filed;
2. The executive director of the Division for Church in Society, within the policy framework, approve individual Corporate Social Responsibility resolutions for filing; and
3. Regular reports be made to the board of the Division for Church in Society, the Conference of Bishops, the ELCA Church Council, and the trustees of the Board of Pensions regarding resolutions that have been filed ; and

To . . . anticipate additional issue papers as they are developed

The executive director of the Church in Society program unit, the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, presented the annual report on Corporate Social Responsibility, which was printed in Exhibit K, Part 3a. In addition, four revised issue papers as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility were presented. The revised papers were printed in Exhibit K, Parts 3b–3e.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.81 To approve the amendments to the following Corporate Social Responsibility issue papers, but to request that the wording of the original issue papers be archived for historical and research purposes:

- **Caring for Creation: Global Warming and Climate Change**
- **Caring for Health: International Access to Pharmaceuticals**
- **Caring for Creation: Environmental Topics**
- **Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All: Domestic Access to Capital**

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO THE CANDIDACY MANUAL: TRANSFER OF CANDIDACY

(Agenda IV.F.2.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 3b)

Background:

At three points, the Candidacy Manual approved by the Church Council in April 2010 refers to the role of Candidacy Committees or committee chairpersons in the transfer of candidacy from one synod to another. The three relevant sections are not in agreement regarding whether authorization comes from the bishops and the two chairpersons or the bishops and the committees. Please note the current wording of these sections as detailed below [*emphasis added*]:

Under Management of Candidacy Files, page 14

6. A candidacy file transferred from another synod requires a new congregation registration. Transfer of candidacy is made only when there is *agreement by the bishops and Candidacy Committees of both synods*.

Under Guidelines for Transfer of Candidacy, page 17

To assure full awareness and the sharing of relevant information, *the bishops of both synods and the Candidacy Committee chairpersons of both synods will give written authorization for the transfer.*
Under Guidelines for Reinstatement to the Rosters..., page 21

- C. With the approval of the ELCA secretary, the reinstatement process may be transferred from the synod of previous roster to the synod of current residence, upon the *written concurrence of both Candidacy Committees and both synodical bishops.*

NOTE: According to these policies, transfer normally can be to any other synod. Transfer of a reinstatement process, however, is only to the synod of the candidate's current residence. This special restriction seems appropriate, so no change is recommended. (See Exhibit G, Part 3b.)

The entire section "Guidelines for Transfer" in the Candidacy Manual (pages 16–17), including the language of the second quotation, was carefully developed by staff and the Conference of Bishops between January and March 2010. The second quote above thus represented the bishops' most recent decision related to this complex question and apparently reflected a consensus that transfer is a serious matter, but is not normally one of the points at which a candidacy would be terminated or prevented. The Vocation and Education Liaison Committee of the Conference of Bishops and the Vocation and Education unit staff concurred that the following changes should be made to bring the entire Candidacy Manual into conformity with the language developed subsequent to the last revision.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.82

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial changes to the manual related to the redesign of the churchwide organization; and

To amend the language on page 14 of the Candidacy Manual as follows:

A candidacy file transferred from another synod requires a new congregation registration. ~~Transfer of candidacy is made only when there is agreement by the bishops and Candidacy Committees of both synods.~~ (See "Guidelines for Transfer of Candidacy" p. 16ff).

AUTHORIZATION TO REVISE "POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE ELCA FOR ADDRESSING SOCIAL CONCERNS"

(Agenda IV.F.4.)

Background:

The Program and Services Committee of the Church Council, in consultation with the Church in Society program unit, guided a comprehensive review and revision of "Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns" in 2005–2006. The revised document was approved by the Church Council in November 2006 [CC06.11.51].

The document needs to be revised to reflect the restructuring of the churchwide organization in October 2010.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.83

To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to review and update "Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns" to reflect the restructuring of the churchwide organization in October 2010; and

To make the revised document available no later than April 1, 2011.

ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF A SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATION

(Agenda IV.G.1.)

Background:

The ELCA serves as a corporate member of certain inter-Lutheran organizations and affiliated social ministry organizations. The role of corporate members include 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 has been 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. The Church in Society program unit forwarded to the Church Council the following nomination for a position on the Mosaic board of directors.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.84 To elect Mr. James Zils as a member of the board of directors of Mosaic, Omaha, Neb., for a three-year term expiring in 2013.

ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF AN ELCA SEMINARY

(Agenda IV.G.2.)

Background:

Bylaw 8.31.02. outlines basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries. Subsection 8.31.02.a. provides for churchwide representation: "At least one-fifth nominated, in consultation with the seminaries, by the appropriate churchwide unit and elected by the Church Council." The following name was submitted for election based on a protocol between the seminary and the Vocation and Education program unit.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.11.85 To elect Mr. David Russell as a member of the board of directors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, for a four-year term expiring in 2014.

APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF ELCA RISK MANAGEMENT

(Agenda IV.G.3.)

Background:

ELCA Risk Management (ELCARM) is a corporation related to the Vocation and Education unit that provides insurance services to ELCA colleges, universities, and seminaries. ELCARM is governed by a nine-member board of directors. Under the bylaws of the corporation, four directors were elected by colleges, universities, and seminaries that were members of the corporation. The Church Council appoints five directors, with two nominated by the Vocation and Education unit, one by the Office of the Secretary, one by the Council of College and University Presidents, and one by the Council of Seminary Presidents.

David Hardy, who served as a director nominated by the Vocation and Education unit, will resign effective at the end of the February 2011 winter meeting of the ELCARM Board of Directors.

After consultation with the presiding bishop and others, the Vocation and Education unit nominated Mr. Bruce Nicholson to fill the vacancy on the ELCARM board. Nicholson retired in 2010 as chairman, president, and CEO of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. He is an active member of an ELCA congregation in the Twin Cities.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC10.11.86 **To appoint Mr. Bruce Nicholson to the ELCA Risk Management Board of Directors effective at the end of the February 2011 winter meeting of the ELCARM Board.**

ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF NATIONAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY, INCORPORATED
(Agenda IV.G.4.)

Background:

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

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC10.11.87 **To elect to the Board of Directors of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc., Mr. Chuck Frederiksen for a four-year term ending in 2015, in accordance with Article III, Section 3.2 of NLCM’s amended bylaws, “The directors shall be nominated by a nominating committee (consisting of the ELCA Director for Campus Ministry or his or her designee, and two members of the Board of Directors) and elected by the ELCA Church Council.”**

ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF AUGSBURG FORTRESS, PUBLISHERS
(Agenda IV.G.5.)

Background:

Between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on churchwide boards, boards of some separately incorporated ministries, and certain advisory committees.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC10.11.88 **To elect Mr. Robert T. Flynn to the board of trustees of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, to fill a three-year term expiring in 2013.**

JOYS AND CONCERNS

At the invitation of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, joys and concerns were offered by the Rev. Raymond A. Miller, Secretary David D. Swartling, and Vice President Peña. Secretary Swartling added that the \$3,937 receiving during morning worship would be divided between Vision for Mission and World Hunger.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling, who announced details regarding lunch.

RECESS

The Church Council recessed at 10:54 A.M. for the purpose of preparing for an executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: PERSONNEL MATTERS, LEGAL UPDATE

The Church Council entered into executive session at 11:00 A.M. to discuss personnel matters and to receive a legal update.

The Church Council concluded its executive session at 12:09 P.M.

OPEN SESSION

Vice President Carlos E. Peña announced that the Church Council had taken two actions in executive session.

VOTED:

CC10.11.89 **To elect the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman to a four-year term as executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit beginning February 1, 2011.**

VOTED:

CC10.11.90 **To approve the revisions to the compensation policy of the ELCA Churchwide Personnel Policies as detailed in Exhibit I, Part 2.**

TABLE GRACE

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson, who led the council members in prayer.

RECESS

The November 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 12:10 P.M.

Sunday, November 14, 2010
Plenary Session VI

The Church Council assembled at 1:00 P.M. in the Augsburg Room of the Lutheran Center at Chicago, Illinois, for a video conference with the Rev. Cheryl M. Peterson, assistant professor of systematic theology, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.

PRIMER ON ECCLESIOLOGY AND POLITY

(Agenda V.A.2.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit B, Parts 7a–7b)

Background:

The Board Development Committee of the Church Council regularly schedules “primers” on various topics “to assist the presiding bishop and the Church Council in developing and implementing efforts to help members of the Church Council to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the council’s role and fiduciary responsibility as the board of directors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” (ELCA 14.41.F07).

Building on the Church Council’s “mini-retreat” in April 2010 on the topic, “The ELCA: Converted to Mission,” the primer at the November 2010 meeting focused on ecclesiology and polity—the subject of the initial primer in April 2004, which was led by former Presiding Bishop H. George Anderson.

The presenter for the November 2010 primer was Pr. Peterson, who had earned an undergraduate degree from Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio, a master of divinity degree from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and a doctorate from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She served as pastor of ELCA congregations in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin prior to joining the faculty at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in 2005.

Two papers by Pr. Peterson were provided in the meeting exhibits: “What Does it Mean to be the Church? The ELCA and ELCIC in the 21st Century” and “The One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in the North American Context.” Presiding Bishop Anderson’s 2004 paper, “Ecclesiology, Mission, and Structure,” had been provided on Net Community.

Church Council Information:

The Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, co-chair of the Board Development Committee, introduced Pr. Peterson and guided the conversation.

Pr. Peterson outlined points she had made in the papers that had been provided to the council as primer resources. She discussed church as community gathered around Word and Sacrament, and sent into the world.

An exchange followed on topics including:

- the church as a social club,
- active participants who do not “join” the church,
- baptism as a sign of membership,
- participation in all three expressions of this church,
- living with decisions regarding human sexuality,
- the “roots” of the church in Jesus’ words,
- a shared narrative to distinguish the church from other narratives,
- an understanding of how the Holy Spirit works, and
- inspiring and equipping the laity to share their faith.

Pr. Peterson stressed:

- basing the business of the church on its biblical mission,
- redefining “belonging” and “membership” in the church,
- recalling the confessional heritage of the Lutheran church,
- forming relationships in and beyond the congregation,
- exploring the various implications and meanings of “full communion,”
- focusing the narrative of the church on Christ’s resurrection and sharing of the Holy Spirit,

- embodying that narrative,
- returning to the Lutheran Confessions for a sense of how God works today,
- and the importance of clergy learning to testify as a way to ease the fear of the laity to testify.

Pr. Connelly thanked Pr. Peterson. The video conference concluded at 1:55 P.M.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (CLOSED SESSION)

Church Council members and liaison bishops remained for the purpose of forming a committee of the whole in closed session.

At 1:57 P.M., Vice President Carlos E. Peña reviewed the remainder of the meeting's agenda and the protocol of a closed session. He called on Secretary David D. Swartling to make the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded: To go into a committee of the whole for a period of 45 minutes to discuss issues that were addressed in the Café Conversations and two questions:

- What practical steps could we take to accomplish our work in the future?
- What do you need, as you leave here, to interpret the decisions we made and how we made them?

Hearing no discussion on the motion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC10.11.91 To go into a committee of the whole for a period of 45 minutes to discuss issues that were addressed in the Café Conversations and two questions:

- What practical steps could we take to accomplish our work in the future?
- What do you need, as you leave here, to interpret the decisions we made and how we made them?

The chair declared the motion had been approved. He proposed the members discuss the first question for 15 minutes and the second question for another 15 minutes and then use the remaining time to wrap up and discuss what next steps to take.

The committee of the whole adjourned at 2:37 P.M., and the Church Council reconvened in open session.

OPEN SESSION

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, who made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded: RESOLVED that in the actions it took at its November 12–14, 2010, meeting, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaffirms the commitment of this church to the representational principles expressed in the ELCA's constitutions. It expresses confidence that this commitment will be continued as the redesign plan for the churchwide organization and the anticipated recommendations of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force are implemented.

Pr. Hunsinger stated that he trusted the organization's commitment to this church's representational principles. He expressed the concern that the actions of the Church Council may be perceived differently than they were intended.

After a brief discussion of editorial aspects of the motion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC10.11.92

RESOLVED that in the actions it took at its November 12–14, 2010, meeting, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaffirms the commitment of this church to the representational principles expressed in the ELCA’s constitutions. It expresses confidence that this commitment will be continued as the redesign plan for the churchwide organization and the anticipated recommendations of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA task force are implemented.

The chair declared that the motion was approved.

The Rev. Steven P. Loy requested that the minutes record that the vote was unanimous.

MEETING EVALUATIONS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked members of the Church Council to complete evaluations of the meeting online after the meeting.

RACIAL JUSTICE PROCESS OBSERVATION

(Agenda V.A.1.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for process observations of the meeting.

Ms. Lynette M. Reitz announced that three resources mentioned during a racial justice process observation training session the evening of Saturday, November 13, 2010, and process observations of the meeting were available on Net Community under the “Racial Justice Working Group” link.

Ms. Reitz said that the Church Council’s discussion of “People Living with Disabilities” was the first time she recalled the council discussing the inclusion of people with disabilities in this church and society.

Ms. Reitz noted that the council’s decisions regarding the Special Needs Retirement Fund took class into account, an element that she said she felt was often overlooked in this church.

Ms. Reitz told the council of a comment she heard that those who speak at Church Council meetings feel they have the right to speak. She added a challenge to invite those who feel they do not have the right to speak.

Ms. Reitz also raised the point that more discussion and more “no” votes during the meeting were positive from a process perspective.

Vice President Peña thanked Ms. Reitz for her observations.

CLOSING REMARKS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Church Council members whether there was any other business to bring before the council. Hearing none, he thanked the members for their work during the meeting and for their service to this church. He also expressed his gratitude to the advisors, officers, and the staff of the churchwide organization.

CLOSING PRAYER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. John R. Emery, who led the council in a closing prayer.

ADJOURNMENT

The sixty-seventh meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adjourned on November 14, 2010, at 2:49 P.M.