

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS OF THE 2025 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MATERIALS

Prepared by the Office of the Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
August 2025

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SUMMARY OF ACTIONS OF THE 2025 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

Adoption of resolutions establishing procedural matters

ASSEMBLY

ACTIONS

CA25.01.01–04 *Resolutions establishing rules of organization and procedure for the assembly.*

En bloc action archiving social policy resolutions

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-773; NO-13

CA25.02.05 To archive the social policy resolutions identified in the “2025 Archiving of Certain Social Policy Resolutions” document, in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018).

Responses to Synod Memorials approved en bloc

The text of responses to synod memorials approved *en bloc* are included as an Appendix to this document, beginning on p. 15.

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-729; NO-49

CA25.02.06 To approve *en bloc*, with the exception of those memorials considered separately, the following responses to 2023, 2024, and 2025 synod memorials printed in the Report of the Memorials Committee (2025 *Bulletin of Reports*, Section VII, pages as listed).

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A3: Indian Boarding School Remembrance

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-779; NO-7

CA25.02.07 To receive with gratitude the memorials on “Indian Boarding School Remembrance” from Alaska Synod, Montana Synod, Sierra Pacific Synod, Southwest California Synod, Pacifica Synod, Western North Dakota Synod, Northeastern Minnesota Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, Metropolitan Chicago Synod, Northern Illinois Synod, Central-Southern Illinois Synod, Western Iowa Synod, Northeastern Iowa Synod, Northern Great Lakes Synod, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee Synod, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Southeast Michigan Synod, North/West Lower Michigan Synod, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, and the Florida-Bahamas Synod;

To address the legacies of this church’s role in Indian boarding schools through the following actions:

1. Encourage and equip all congregations, synods, and ministries affiliated with or related to the ELCA to observe the National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools annually on or near September 30th;
2. Urge Augsburg Fortress and the Service and Justice unit, in consultation with other appropriate churchwide organization home areas, to create adult and children/youth educational programs and materials concerning Christian and Lutheran roles in Indian boarding schools to broaden and deepen awareness

- in congregations, synods, and ministries affiliated with or related to the ELCA; and to consistently publish articles in all of this church's publications;
3. Provide on-going recognition of and support for the growing network of lay people and rostered ministers volunteering their time in the work of the ELCA Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative on Indian Boarding Schools (see www.elca.org/IndianBoardingSchools) to locate all known records related to the ELCA's predecessor bodies' involvement with Indian boarding and day schools and to educate others about Indian boarding schools;
 4. Encourage ministries affiliated with or related to the ELCA to commit to learning the truth of their involvement with Indian boarding schools, in partnership with the ELCA Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative and to responsibly create paths to healing and repair;
 5. Organize and care for all information in the ELCA's possession that was recorded about Indian boarding and day schools and the students who attended them, forcibly or otherwise; carry out this work in partnership with the ELCA Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative and the ELCA Archives; recognize that this information belongs to and is a source of healing for student survivors, their descendants, communities, and Tribal Nations; and ensure that the records and research are made accessible to Indian boarding school survivors and their families in a responsible manner; and
 6. Direct the churchwide organization to identify the revenue source(s) to sufficiently support research and organizing efforts, and to sufficiently support digitization and labeling of all Indian boarding school records in the ELCA Archives.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B14: Consideration of Recommendation 1 of the CRLC

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-646; NO-144

CA25.02.08

To receive with gratitude the memorials on "Consideration of Recommendation 1 of the CRLC" from the Pacifica Synod, Metropolitan New York Synod, Delaware-Maryland Synod, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod;

To acknowledge the importance of accountability in addressing racism within all structures of the ELCA;

To affirm the work of the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity Advisory Team and request that the Church Council continue to work with the team to clarify the nature of mutual accountability as referenced in Recommendation 1 of the CRLC Report;

To direct the Church Council to add a timeline to its actions taken in response to CRLC Recommendation 1 and to provide progress updates to this church with a final report by Fall 2027, including possible constitutional changes, and

To recommend that if this work is not accomplished by Fall 2027, the Church Council consider calling a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly to enact necessary revisions to the governing documents of this church.

Adoption of resolutions suspending the rules of the assembly

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

VOICE VOTE

CA25.03.09

To suspend the rules of the assembly:
To extend the deadline for completion of the First Common Ballot until 6:30 p.m.
on July 30, 2025.

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-678; NO-120

CA25.03.10

To suspend the rules of the assembly:
Following the results of the fourth ballot [for presiding bishop], if there is no election, to ask the two remaining nominees to share a scripture story or verse or an aspect of Christ Jesus which shapes and sustains them—with a two-minute limit per speaker.

Election of the presiding bishop

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

CA25.03.11

To elect the Rev. Yehiel Curry to a six-year term, commencing on the first day of the third month after election, as presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Adoption of the 2026–2028 budget

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-774; NO-10

CA25.03.12

2026 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2026 current fund spending authorization of \$61,500,000;
To approve a 2026 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,550,000;
and
To authorize the Church Council to revise the spending authorizations after periodic review of revised income estimates.

2027 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2027 current fund income proposal of \$56,915,000;
To approve a 2027 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$21,300,000; and
To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

2028 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2028 current fund income proposal of \$56,320,000;
To approve a 2028 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$21,050,000; and
To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category D4: Stand for Palestinian Rights and End to Occupation of Palestine

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-742; NO-38

CA25.03.13

To receive with gratitude the memorials on “Stand for Palestinian Rights and End to Occupation of Palestine” from the Northwest Washington Synod, Oregon Synod, Rocky Mountain Synod, Nebraska Synod, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod, Metropolitan Chicago Synod, Southeast Michigan Synod, New England Synod, Delaware-Maryland Synod, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, and Southeastern Synod;

To encourage ELCA members, congregations, synods, and appropriate churchwide units to advocate for human rights, justice, and peace for all Palestinians and Israelis and support policies that bring an end to the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, while maintaining the right and sovereignty of the State of Israel to exist, and promote a just and peaceful resolution of the conflict;

To recognize the rights of the State of Israel and a sovereign State of Palestine to exist side by side, as per the ELCA’s historic stated position, and per existing UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397, 1515, 2334;

To reaffirm our deep commitment to justice, peace, and the sanctity of every human life, and join the call of the World Council of Churches for an immediate end to the mass killing in Gaza. With grief and moral urgency, we recognize the profound human toll of the violence and displacement against Palestinian civilians, which constitutes a crisis of international conscience. As we lament this unfolding tragedy, we acknowledge a distinction between our Jewish siblings and the policies of the present government of Israel. We reaffirm our unwavering opposition to antisemitism and Islamophobia in all their forms;

To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Witness in Society Advocacy Team, to write to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the majority and minority leaders of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives calling on the U.S. government:

- to recognize and work to end the genocide against the Palestinian people, to halt military assistance to Israel used to devastate Gaza, and to investigate the use of U.S. military aid to Israel to ensure compliance with U.S. and international human rights law;
- to redouble its efforts to end human rights violations in Gaza and the West Bank, focusing on the most egregious and ongoing violations, including: indiscriminate and disproportionate bombing of Gaza resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands of children, women and men; deprivation of adequate access to drinking water, food, medical care, and electricity; destruction of buildings—including hospitals, places of worship, homes, and schools—and the destruction of electricity, sewage and water infrastructure essential for survival; and, the detention of hostages and political prisoners;
- to recognize Palestine as a sovereign state, and support Palestine’s full membership in the United Nations, and
- to reject proposals to remove Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank, to address the catastrophic living conditions that could force Palestinians to leave, and to work to end the rampant settler violence and vandalism against Palestinians in the West Bank;

To encourage prayerful response to the ongoing devastation in Gaza and the West Bank and encourage individuals, congregations, and synods of the ELCA to pray for Palestinians and Israelis, Jews, Christians and Muslims, who work to create a future

of justice, equality, reconciliation, and peace for all, including our siblings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), Augusta Victoria Hospital operated by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and the World Council of Churches/Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (WCC/EAPPI) who offer comfort, support, accountability, and relief, and

To reaffirm the ELCA's commitment to amplifying the voices of ELCA partners in Palestine and Israel and their language of justice for their own people; and the urgency and importance of the advocacy, awareness building, and accompaniment work of the ELCA through the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) Desk, the Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries Desk, the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage (ALAMEH), the ELCA initiative "Sumud: For Justice in Palestine and Israel," and the Witness in Society (WiS) public policy team.

Proposed amendments to the Constitutions of the ELCA considered en bloc

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-753; NO-16

CA25.04.14

To adopt, *en bloc*, with the exception of such amendments as may be considered separately, certain amendments recommended by the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church to the Articles of Incorporation and *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, and other amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and

To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make appropriate changes in the *Constitution for Synods* and the *Model Constitution for Congregations* congruent with the ELCA Constitution as amended.

Motion A: Proposed amendments to constitutional provision 5.01.e.

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-637; NO-141

CA25.04.15

To refer Motion A to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council, the proposal to amend 5.01.e. in the *ELCA Constitution* and all constitutions of this church.

Motion B: Proposed amendments to constitutional provision 5.01.e. and a portion of bylaw 12.41.11.e.3.

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-492; NO-279

CA25.04.16

To refer Motion B to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council, proposed amendments for both 5.01.e. and 12.41.11.e.3.

Reception of "Common Statement on the Filioque"

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-748; NO-15

CA25.04.17

WHEREAS, 2025 is the 1700th anniversary of the first ecumenical Council of Nicaea, and a year in which we will celebrate a common date for Easter, which presents a unique opportunity for reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christianity; and

WHEREAS, the end result of the Council of Nicaea—later expanded in 381—was the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, which has served as a common confession of faith for Christians around the world ever since; and

WHEREAS, the addition to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of the *filioque*—meaning “and the son”—by the Latin Church in an attempt to resolve a dispute, resulted in the division between the Eastern and Western churches in the year 1054; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, talks between the ELCA and the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas arrived at “A Lutheran-Orthodox Common Statement on Faith in the Holy Trinity,” coming to a shared understanding of history and the emphases of each tradition with regard to the creed; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, the ELCA Church Council adopted “A Lutheran-Orthodox Common Statement on Faith in the Holy Trinity,” and *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* was published with a footnote to the Nicene Creed that says it is appropriate to confess the creed without the phrase; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is a member church of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and the LWF has been in dialogue with the Orthodox Church for more than forty years; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, at the Eighth LWF Assembly in Curitiba, the LWF approved omitting the *filioque* clause in ecumenical services when the Orthodox Church is present, setting a precedent later adopted by other world communions; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Joint International Commission on Theological Dialogue between the LWF and the Orthodox Church affirmed a “Common Statement on the *Filioque*,” affirming that the *filioque* is not a church-dividing issue and encouraging renewed theological reflection on the Trinity and the role of the Holy Spirit, which was adopted by the LWF Council that June; and

WHEREAS, this Common Statement presents a ground-breaking opportunity to understand our history in light of our dialogue with the Orthodox, and to begin to heal millennium-old divisions in the body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the ELCA prayerfully engage in commemorating the 1,700th anniversary of the first ecumenical council at Nicaea, and the common date of Easter, as an opportunity for continued theological reflection on the Trinity and the role of the Holy Spirit and reconciliation between the Western and Eastern churches; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2025 Churchwide Assembly prayerfully receive the 2024 Lutheran-Orthodox “Common Statement on the *Filioque*,” understanding such reception to be an intention to lean into a fuller understanding of this issue and the promise of greater unity in the Body of Christ.

First common ballot results

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

CA25.04.18 To declare elected all those who received a majority of votes cast on the first ballot.

Church Council

Ms. Deborah Maria Nyquist, 1A

The Rev. Barbara R. Rossing, 1D

The Rev. Moses Paul Peter Penumaka, 2A

Ms. Terri Lynn Robertson, 2C

Mr. Timothy Hiller, 3D

Mr. Matthew Allan Schur, 4A

The Rev. Alvaro Nova, 4C

Ms. Deidre D. Hayes, 4F

The Rev. Ryan Howard Anderson, 5C

Mr. Andrew William Stevens, 5K
Ms. Jessi Grieser, 6A
The Rev. Chad Michael Huebner, 6F
Mr. Moses Kavishe, 8D
The Rev. Daniel Collins, 8H
Ms. Jillian Colleen Stierwalt, 9A
Ms. Patricia P. Harper, 5A
Ms. Spencer Sanders, 2B
Ms. Emma Lynn Witt, 3C
Mr. Benjamin James Caseley, 1C

Committee on Appeals

The Rev. Sara J Anderson, 7B
Deacon Rebekah L. Forst, 9B
The Rev. Henry Wesley Burt, 3I
The Rev. Shelley Rae Wickstrom, 1A
Ms. Alice R Senechal, 3B
Ms. Deborah Banks Williams, 5A
Mr. Paul G Dodds, 1C
Mr. Ralston Henry Deffenbaugh, 2E
Ms. Lacy Elizabeth Tooker-Kirkevold, 3G

Committee on Discipline

The Rev. Sara Funkhouser, 1B
The Rev. Michael Vance Johnson, 6A
The Rev. Mardy Ringer, 9D
The Rev. Brittany Megan Barkus, 5G
The Rev. Hannah Claire Norem, 9B
The Rev. Adam Christian Schultz, 9A
The Rev. Chryll D. Crews, 2B
The Rev. Ariel Otterstad, 4F
Mr. Charles Edward Lifford, 9B
Mr. Anthony Ormsbee-Hale, 4D
Mr. Josh S. Tatum, 6C
Ms. Catherine Olivia McKenna, 5A
Ms. Sara Jo Larson, 2E
Ms. Ashley N Procanyn, 7E
Ms. Joy R. Grace, 7F
Ms. Kylie Oversen, 3B
Mr. John Sander Christensen, 1A

Nominating Committee

The Rev. Susan Marie Halvor, 1A
The Rev. Moses Paul Peter Penumaka, 2A
The Rev. Anthony F. Acompanado, 5J
Ms. Kasey Miranda Schultz, 1B
Ms. Karen Michele McClain, 2B
Ms. Kristine Kay Bjorke, 3G
Ms. Elizabeth Ann Dieringer, 4E
Ms. Jillian Marie Russell, 6D
Mr. Kevin D. Anderson, 8G

Board of Pensions (Portico Benefits Services)

The Rev. Hans Eric Becklin, 7E

The Rev. Kathie Bender Schwich, 5A

The Rev. Thomas Paul Schlotterback, 1F

Deacon Kayla Elizabeth Smrt, 5A

Ms. Carla Jean Borchardt, 3C

Ms. Angela Dejene, 3G

Ms. Marjorie B. Ellis, 6F

Ms. Amy Johnson, 3G

Ms. Elizabeth Baran Wagner, 7A

Mr. Vincent Paul Brown, 2C

Mr. Kyle Joe Gilster, 8G

Mr. Ted W. Goins, 9B

Mr. Brett A Kraemer, 4E

Mr. Todd Jason Maloy, 4B

The Rev. Adam John Copeland, Full Communion Partner:

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Mr. Richard Dale Hall, Full Communion Partner: The United Methodist Church

Publishing House (Augsburg Fortress)

The Rev. Stacy Lynn Chavis, 8D

The Rev. Shauna Hannan, 2E

Deacon David Hope-Tringali, 8D

The Rev. Adam Patrick White, 3G

Ms. Ileana (Lilly) Kimmelshue, 2A

Ms. Cynthia Diane Moe-Lobeda, 1B

Ms. Shelly Ann Talcott, 8F

Ms. Jennifer Kay Ward, 5F

Ms. Cheryl Geneva Williams, 8F

Mr. Michael Chan, 3D

Mr. Kurt Barneson Galvez, 2A

Mr. Michael Alan Miller, 5H

Mr. John Erik Opgrande, 3H

Mr. Brook Selassie, 9A

The Rev. Joy J. Moore, Full Communion Partner: The United Methodist Church

Mission Investment Fund

The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, 1B

Ms. Liza Canino, 9B

Ms. Krista H. Kapp, 5A

Ms. Monica R. Powers, 1C

Ms. Julie E. Swanson, 9A

Mr. Randall Foster, 2B

Mr. Warren W. Hanson, 3G

Mr. Joseph T. Nolte, 5D

The Rt. Rev. Ruth M. Woodliff-Stanley, Full Communion Partner:

The Episcopal Church (USA)

Endowment Fund (ELCA Foundation)

The Rev. Franklin Thomas Espegren, 2A

The Rev. William Edward Flippin, 9D

The Rev. Anthony Robert Prinsen, 8G

The Rev. Kathleen O'Keefe Reed, 7B

Ms. Mary Beth Baron, 2D
 Ms. Naomi M. Horsager, 3H
 Ms. Heather L. Marx, 3I
 Ms. Ingrid S. Stafford, 5A
 Ms. Pamela Fetzer Vetter, 4E
 Mr. Roberto C. Lara Aranda, 7C
 Mr. Gregg Alan Draeger, 3I
 Mr. Bruce Douglas George, 7B
 Mr. Mark Fenner Stauffer, 2C
 Mr. Adnrew Steele, 8F
 The Rev. Lisa Carol Bennett, Full Communion Partner:
 The Episcopal Church (USA)

Second common ballot results

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

CA25.04.19 To declare elected those who received a majority of votes cast on the second common ballot.

Church Council

Mr. Christopher Anthony Vergara, 7C

Action related to the election of the secretary

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-702; NO-54

CA25.04.20 To declare the second ballot for secretary invalid and revote the second ballot for secretary.

Action related to Motion C: Proposed amendment of constitutional provision 22.11.b.

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-485; NO-287

CA25.04.21 To suspend the order of business of the assembly:
To allow proposal of additional amendments to the recommended amendment to 22.11.b. after the deadline.

Further action related to Motion C: Proposed amendment of constitutional provision 22.11.b.

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

YES-644; NO-119

CA25.04.22 To postpone consideration [of the amendment to constitutional provision 22.11.b.] until the next Report of the Reference and Council Committee.

Motion E: Proposed amendment of bylaw 14.32.01.

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-765; NO-11

CA25.04.23 To approve amending bylaw 14.32.01. by striking “four-year” and inserting “three-year” in its place.

- 14.32.01. The Church Council shall have as liaison members nine synod bishops, each elected by the Conference of Bishops to one ~~four-year~~ three-year term. One bishop shall be elected from each region.

Adoption of social statement on “Faith and Civic Life” and its implementing resolutions

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-762; NO-16

CA25.05.24

To adopt the proposed social statement “Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All,” as amended, as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018).

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-761; NO-13

CA25.05.25

To adopt the recommended proposed implementing resolutions from “Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All,” as amended, as resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018).

1. To urge members of this church to pray for, participate in, and advocate for civic life in the United States that reflects God’s activity and call, seeking the well-being of all people and creation marked by justice and peace;
2. To encourage members to draw inspiration from the ELCA social message on “Government and Civic Engagement: Discipleship in a Democracy,” which highlights the call to embrace daily our baptismal vocation through active participation in self-governance;
3. To reaffirm and encourage use across this church of other existing social teaching and policy documents that promote robust and wise civic participation, such as those that address matters of voting, campaign finance, public service, nonviolent protest, and the like;
4. To recognize with deep appreciation the commitments and efforts by those in this church—including but not limited to churchwide organization teams such as Witness in Society and Building Resilient Communities, as well as the many church-related social ministry organizations and educational institutions—that contribute to healthy civic life through service, advocacy, or education;
5. To urge members of this church to pray, participate in, and advocate for civic life in the United States by supporting efforts to increase voter registration and access to polling places, and to help dismantle structural barriers to the ballot box and to civic participation more broadly, all as a part of this church’s faithful civic witness.
6. To call upon all members of this church to intentionally evaluate the dangers of polarization and the threats posed by disregard for democratic practices and self-government;
7. To encourage ELCA worshipping assemblies and ministries to build bridges, foster reconciliation, practice communal discernment, provide opportunities for difficult conversations, and address polarization constructively in their communities;
8. To encourage synod leaders, in collaboration with other appropriate bodies, to explore creating or expanding state public policy advocacy in their domains

as part of the ELCA Witness in Society network, similar to those already existing in several states;

9. To direct the churchwide organization, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, theologians and ethicists, and rostered ministers, as well as elected lay leaders, to develop guidelines and protections consistent with this social statement regarding the roles in civic life of representatives of this church with official responsibility to preach, teach, and lead on behalf of this church;
10. To call upon the publishing and educational ministries of this church, including but not limited to Augsburg Fortress Publishers, to consider the need for civics education curricula, civic participation guidance, and related theological reflection, and to create these in multiple formats, including multimedia and online;
11. To call upon the publishing and educational ministries of this church, including but not limited to Augsburg Fortress Publishers, to explore the need for resources dedicated to nonviolent resistance and peaceful engagement in civic life, with special concern for materials dedicated to religious and political histories, liturgical guidance, and training for rostered and lay leaders;
12. To direct the churchwide organization, including but not limited to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and churchwide organization teams such as Witness in Society and Building Resilient Communities, to live out this church's commitments to racial justice and civic engagement in accordance with the best practices of this church. This includes centering the voices of people most impacted by injustice, working for equitable representation in leadership, and assessing the impact of its public witness on historically marginalized communities.
13. To direct the Witness in Society team of the churchwide organization and call upon all expressions of this church in their advocacy efforts to support and advocate for policies and laws consistent with this social statement and to give sustained attention to the fresh convictions and commitments found here in its creation of programs and projects;
14. To direct the Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to share this statement as a resource for dialogue, discernment, and collaboration with ecumenical and inter-religious partners toward the well-being of all people and creation from within the U.S. context;
15. To urge faculty, staff, and administrators of ELCA-related colleges, universities, and seminaries to renew and emphasize education toward callings in public service and to model and encourage dynamic civic participation among their students;
16. To direct appropriate units in the churchwide organization, coordinated by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to establish or oversee processes for implementation of these resolutions, with an initial report to the Fall 2027 meeting of the Church Council.

Election of the secretary

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

CA25.05.26

To elect the Rev. Lucille “CeCee” Mills to a six-year term, commencing on the first day of the third month after election, as secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Adoption of editorial updates to Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-724; NO-46

CA25.05.27

To adopt the identified changes to the social statement on *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009), as amended, as an editorial update to bring wording up to date, to clarify, and to bring it into congruence with subsequent social teaching, as authorized by 2022 Churchwide Assembly action CA22.01.07.

Motion D: Amendment of continuing resolution 5.01.E19.

ASSEMBLY

YES-530; NO-236

ACTION

CA25.05.28

To amend 5.01.E19. to increase the percentage goal of youth and young adult voting membership of Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, and churchwide boards and committees from 10 percent to 20 percent, as follows:

5.01.E~~19~~²⁵. It is the goal of this church that at least 20 ~~10~~ percent of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, and churchwide boards and committees be youth and young adults. The Church Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

and

To direct the Church Council to develop and present a plan for implementation of this continuing resolution at its April 2026 meeting that also addresses barriers to youth and young adult participation.

Referral of consideration of Motion C: Proposed amendment of constitutional provision 22.11.b.

ASSEMBLY

YES-517; NO-247

ACTION

CA25.05.29

To refer amendment of 22.11.b. to the Office of the Secretary for further study.

Motion J: Resolution on artificial intelligence in this church

ASSEMBLY

YES-584; NO-15

ACTION

CA25.06.30

To refer Motion J to the Office of the Presiding Bishop (Theological Discernment) and to the Service and Justice unit (Advocacy), in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer (Information Technology), and to request a progress report to the Church Council by its Spring 2026 meeting.

Adoption of resolutions expressing appreciation

ASSEMBLY

ADOPTED EN BLOC BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

ACTIONS

CA25.06.31a–31n

Resolutions expressing appreciation to various individuals and groups.

APPENDIX A

Including the text of responses
to synod memorials approved *en bloc*
at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A1: Immigration Detention

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Southwest California Synod and the Pacifica Synod on ceasing the use of private for-profit companies for immigration detention;

To reaffirm this church's commitment to the AMMPARO strategy to accompany migrants and advocate for recognition and respect for their human dignity including through the protection of their human rights;

To affirm this church's ongoing screening out of private prison companies from social purpose funds and look for engagement opportunities with private prison companies;

To request that the Service and Justice unit identify and act on opportunities for this church to publicly call for an end to the U.S. government practice of contracting out the management of U.S. immigration detention centers to private for-profit companies; and

To request that the Service and Justice unit provide a report on the implementation of this work to the Church Council at its Spring 2026 meeting.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A2: Support of the Transgender Community

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Support of the Transgender Community" from the Southwest California Synod;

To publicly affirm that all people, including transgender and gender non-conforming individuals (TGNCI) are made in the image of God and are worthy of dignity in church and society;

To direct the Witness in Society Advocacy Team to support legislation that protects human rights of persons who are transgender and gender non-conforming;

To recognize the previous adoption of the continuing resolutions in Chapter 5 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* that addressed the inclusion of TGNCI serving as voting members of assemblies or other committees; and

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop (Human Resources in consultation with Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment) in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, review the ELCA policies and procedures for bias, especially in regard to TGNCI, and provide a report to the Church Council at its Fall 2027 meeting.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A4: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorials on "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women" from the Alaska Synod, Montana Synod, Southwest California Synod, Pacifica Synod, Western North Dakota Synod, Northeastern Minnesota Synod, Minneapolis Area Synod, Metropolitan Chicago Synod, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, and Metropolitan Washington D.C., Synod; and

To direct the churchwide organization to address the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) through the following actions:

- Encourage congregations, synods and the churchwide organization to observe annually MMIW Awareness Day on May 5 and to promote the wearing of red to raise awareness of MMIW;

- Strengthen education by urging Augsburg Fortress, the ELCA World Hunger Education and Network's team, and ELCA Service and Justice unit staff to work together to develop educational resources about the prevalence and origins of this crisis;
- Increase awareness by requesting the ELCA Strategic Communications team to promote participation in educational opportunities and advocacy opportunities for missing and murdered Indigenous women;
- Lament and repent by urging Augsburg Fortress and the ELCA worship team to work together to provide worship resources to include prayers of repentance and intercession for congregation and synod use;
- Plan a public service at the 2028 Churchwide Assembly of lament and repentance that leads to further actions toward healing people;
- Advance partnership by requesting the ELCA Service and Justice unit staff to collaborate with governmental, ecclesiastical, and non-profit organizations to increase public awareness and provide concrete ways for congregations to support affected families through prayer, search efforts, and appropriate outreach; and
- Advance advocacy by requesting the ELCA Witness in Society team to support legislation at state, local, and national levels addressing MMIW.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A5: Youth Gathering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Youth Gathering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA)” from the Minneapolis Area Synod;

To reaffirm the commitment of the ELCA Youth Gathering team to continue and expand DEIA-centered trainings, resources, policies, procedures, and structures for the gathering staff, volunteers, and participant leaders;

To affirm the desire for a Rapid Response team for the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering in partnership with the Minneapolis Area Synod and led by the ELCA director for racial justice, so that it will be replicated at all ELCA Youth Gatherings beyond 2027; and

To request the ELCA Youth Gathering team explore options to implement a racial equity audit for the Youth Gathering that would address barriers for participation with the goal of increasing and strengthening the leadership of the youth participants with persons of color and intersecting identities.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A6: Affirm People of God of All Gender Identities

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorials on “Affirm Transgender, Nonbinary, Gender Expansive, Two-Spirit, and Genderqueer People of God” from the Northwest Washington Synod, New Jersey Synod, and Southeastern Synod;

To affirm the intent to support this church to advance public discourse and advocacy grounded in information and theological background that supports persons who are transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, two-spirit, and genderqueer in consultation with persons who so identify; and

To refer continuing collaboration between the ELCA churchwide organization and ReconcilingWorks to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the ELCA Church Council.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A7: Restoration of Funding of USAID

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Restoration of Funding of USAID” from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod;

To reaffirm this church's commitment to advocacy in support of international humanitarian aid; and

To direct the Witness in Society Advocacy Team to seek and promote occasions for timely and impactful advocacy on restoration of USAID, including opportunities for the presiding bishop to address this issue.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category A8: Decarbonization of the Energy Grid

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Decarbonization of the Energy Grid" from the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod;

To reaffirm the work of Lutherans Restoring Creation and encourage congregations and ministries to connect with its network and explore its resources for sustainable living;

To recognize the current efforts of the churchwide organization to reduce its carbon footprint and to request the churchwide organization consider transitioning to carbon-free electricity in its buildings by prioritizing community-based energy sources that do not perpetuate environmental injustice; and

To urge all expressions of the ELCA to make and continue commitments to decarbonization through adopting sustainable practices, carbon reduction goals, and environmental policy advocacy.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B1: Accompaniment and Accountability of Bishops

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Accompaniment and Accountability of Bishops" from the Saint Paul Area Synod and the Delaware-Maryland Synod;

To refer the memorial to the Task Force on Interdependence and Purpose for matters concerning governance, with a report to the Church Council by Fall 2027;

To refer the memorial to the Committee on Appeals for matters concerning accountability and conflict resolution resources, with a report to the Church Council by Fall 2026; and

To encourage synods to make use of the existing consultation process, Mutual Ministry Committees, and conflict resolution training.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B2: Increasing Continuing Education Commitments

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Increasing Continuing Education Commitments" from the Greater Milwaukee Synod;

To encourage congregations and agencies to increase the guidelines for financial commitments for continuing education; and

To refer the memorial to the Church Council, in consultation with the Christian Community and Leadership unit, to create a process for these guidelines by establishing a "Continuing Education Advisory Committee" tasked with regular reviews of the guidelines and recommending appropriate increases for continuing education support.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B3: Limiting Insurance Costs for Rostered Ministers

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Limiting Insurance Costs for Rostered Ministers" from the Allegheny Synod;

To acknowledge that the concerns raised in the memorial are part of a larger issue of affordability of and commitment to rostered ministers;

To affirm the comprehensive review of the ELCA Health Plan previously conducted by Portico Benefit Services through the Benefits reExamined process;

To recognize Portico's collective approach ensures sustainability, stability, and consistent care for all rostered ministers across their lifelong service yet prevents the ability to provide a numeric and statistical comparison with the Affordable Care Act exchange or to administer coverage through an Independent Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement;

To recognize that neither the Office of the Secretary nor Portico Benefit Services obtain information from ELCA congregations regarding the specific cost of benefits;

To commend the Guiding Principles outlined in the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits for the health and wellness of this whole church and its leaders; and

To urge Portico to continue providing benefits that both address the needs of employers and plan members and recognizes the realities of the contexts of their ministries, and to encourage employers and plan members to choose a health insurance option that best meets their needs.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B4: Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorials on "Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection" from the Minneapolis Area Synod and the Saint Paul Area Synod;

To urge synods to apply the existing policies and implementing resolutions available in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* (2019) to ensure protections for vulnerable adults and for synods and congregations to provide for the implementation and maintenance of policies and procedures, including regular trainings and resources;

To refer the specific concerns addressed in the memorial regarding protection of children to the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for their continued work on strengthening the forthcoming social message on child protection; and

To urge synods to include the protection of children and vulnerable adults in their training for all rostered ministers and other leaders in their synods; that such training be open to members of congregations and other ministries in their synods who work with children and vulnerable adults; and that synods urge their congregations and other ministries to adopt policies requiring training and other background checks for those who work with children and vulnerable adults.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B5: Interpretation for ELCA Churchwide Assembly and Youth Gathering

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Interpretation for ELCA Churchwide Assembly and Youth Gathering" from the Southeastern Iowa Synod;

To acknowledge the importance of inclusivity through translation of official materials before, during, and after Churchwide Assemblies and Youth Gatherings;

To encourage use of local interpreters at Churchwide Assemblies and Youth Gatherings;

To direct the planning teams of the Churchwide Assembly and Youth Gathering to commit to investigating and finding the most responsible means to provide translation and interpretation services.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B6: Legal Action in Support of ELCA Communities

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Legal Action in Support of ELCA Communities" from the Northwest Washington Synod, Sierra Pacific Synod, New England Synod, and Delaware-Maryland Synod; and

To refer it to the Task Force on Interdependence and Purpose to be addressed in its work.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B7: Congregation Constitutions

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Congregation Constitutions” from the Nebraska Synod; and

To refer it to the Task Force on Interdependence and Purpose to be addressed in its work.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B8: Evaluating and Updating the Call Process

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Evaluating and Updating the Call Process” from the Greater Milwaukee Synod;

To affirm the importance of the call process in the relationship among congregations, synods, and candidates; and

To acknowledge work underway concerning substantial revision of the Rostered Minister Profile and the Ministry Site Profile.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B9: Becoming a Global Refuge Denomination

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Southwest California Synod on “Becoming a Global Refuge Denomination” but respectfully decline to be identified as a “Global Refuge denomination” as Global Refuge is already identified as an Independent Lutheran Organization through ELCA constitutional language;

To reaffirm this church’s commitment to the AMMPARO strategy to accompany migrants globally and advocate for recognition and respect for their human dignity including through the protection of their human rights; and

To request the Service and Justice unit to continue the ELCA’s relationship with Global Refuge as an Independent Lutheran Organization and the work contemplated by the Memorandum of Understanding signed by both the ELCA and Global Refuge dated February 10, 2025.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B10: Abuse Prevention and Reporting

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Abuse Prevention and Reporting” from the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin;

To affirm the importance of abuse prevention and reporting;

To direct the Christian Community and Leadership unit and the Office of the Secretary to continue to identify resources, trainings, and other materials to assist synods in using best practices to document and share reports of abuse and misconduct comprehensively and transparently;

To direct the Christian Community and Leadership unit and the Office of the Secretary to include trauma-informed approaches to the trainings and resources provided to synods regarding misconduct; and

To direct the Christian Community and Leadership unit and the Office of the Secretary to report on the progress of these tasks to the Fall 2026 Church Council meeting.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B11: Boundary, Racial Justice, and LGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Boundary, Racial Justice, and LGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training” from the Lower Susquehanna Synod;

To affirm the three-year training cycle that is being utilized by synods as well as the training resources developed for synods to use for their boundary, racial justice, gender justice, and LGBTQIA+ cultural competency trainings by the Boundaries Education Working Group;

To encourage synods to use and adapt these resources for their specific contexts; and

To encourage all rostered ministers and other leaders to participate in a regular process of training in order to enhance their ministry skills.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B12: Remove Gendered and Binary Language

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Remove Gendered and Binary Language” from the New Jersey Synod; and

To affirm the work of the Office of the Secretary to remove gendered binary language in the ELCA Constitution and to encourage synods to report to the Office of the Secretary any further improvements to the governing documents.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B13: Review of ELCA Investments and Procurement

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Review of ELCA Investments and Procurement” from the Indiana-Kentucky Synod;

To reaffirm this church’s commitment to using the tools of corporate social responsibility to call corporations to treat people fairly and with dignity and create sustainable communities through the screening of social purpose funds through social criteria investment screen; and

To direct the Service and Justice unit and ELCA Corporate Social Responsibility Review Team to provide guidance in regard to current concerns and advice on best practices to encourage responsible and just corporate behavior and provide to the ELCA Church Council a summary of findings and options for action.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category B15: Consideration of Full Report of CRLC

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Consideration of Full Report of CRLC” from the Southwest California Synod; and

To affirm the work of the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC) and the response of the Church Council, and to respectfully decline to act on this memorial.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C1: Council of Nicaea 1700th Anniversary

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on the “Council of Nicaea 1700th Anniversary” from the Slovak Zion Synod;

To thank the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for its proactive efforts in the development of resources to assist congregations and synods in observing this anniversary, especially in ecumenical settings; and

To acknowledge the proposed actions of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as the response of the Churchwide Assembly to the memorial.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C3: Social Statement on Vulnerable Youth

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Greater Milwaukee Synod for development of a social statement on children and vulnerable youth; and

To decline the request for a social statement in light of work underway on a social message on child protection that is intended for consideration by the ELCA Church Council in Fall 2025.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C4: Confession of Faith in Our Time

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorials on “A Confession of Faith for Our Time” from the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin and on “Theological Imagination and ELCA Public Witness” from the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod;

To reaffirm the ELCA’s official Confession of Faith as described in this church’s constitution and the use of ELCA social teaching as speaking for the ELCA in its public witness, and as a guide to moral deliberation among members about societal issues and challenges;

To consider action taken by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly on the recommended proposed social statement, *Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All* as the response to these memorials, since it addresses many of the concerns it lifted up, such as authoritarianism, political idolatry, deceptive speech, and Christian Nationalism;

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop consider the concerns expressed in these memorials in future social writing processes and social teaching resources;

To refer the memorials’ concerns to the Theological Discernment, Justice, and Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations teams in the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Witness in Society Team for assessment and a report to the Church Council by its Spring 2026 meeting;

To encourage ELCA congregations, rostered ministers, and lay leaders to utilize social teaching, preaching resources, and ecumenical and interreligious partnerships to publicly resist political violence, voter suppression, racial scapegoating, and any use of faith to justify autocracy; and

To encourage ELCA bishops and synods to create spaces for discernment, lament, and repentance for the church’s complicity in systems of political idolatry, and to accompany congregations seeking to rediscover their prophetic vocation in this time.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C5: Reconsideration of Social Message on End-of-Life Decisions

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Reconsideration of the Social Message on End-of-Life Decisions” from the Saint Paul Area Synod;

To forward this memorial to the ELCA Church Council, acting in consultation with the Theological Discernment staff of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, as the appropriate body to authorize a reconsideration; and

To identify the section titled “Physician-Assisted Death” for a substantive reconsideration in light of legal, medical, and social changes in end-of-life care and medical assistance in dying. While focused on that section, other references connected to that topic in the social message could be reconsidered.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C6: Educational Materials Regarding the Word and Service Roster

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Educational Materials Regarding the Word and Service Roster” from the Oregon Synod;

To direct the Christian Community and Leadership unit, Office of the Presiding Bishop, and Office of the Secretary to collaborate on the development of additional educational resources designed for congregations, synods, and other church settings that clearly communicate the roles and responsibilities of ministers of Word and Service in varied contexts; and

To provide an update to the Church Council on the status or completion of this work no later than the Spring 2027 meeting.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C7: Reconsideration of Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial concerning a reconsideration of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) and related issues from the Southwest California Synod;

To acknowledge the reconsideration process currently underway by the “ELCA Taskforce for Reconsiderations of Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust”;

To consider actions taken by this assembly on the Recommended, Proposed Edits of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and on the “Affirm Transgender, Nonbinary, Gender Expansive, Two-spirit, and Genderqueer People of God” memorial as the response to this memorial’s RESOLVED 7;

Given the process and timeline in place, to decline to direct the Office of the Secretary and the Christian Community and Leadership unit, in consultation with the ELCA Conference of Bishops, to take up the tasks of revisiting ministry policies at this time;

To refer this memorial’s RESOLVED 4 to the ELCA Conference of Bishops to work on and develop education and pastoral care materials; and

To decline the request for an Archive Reconsideration of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* entailing the authorization of a new social statement on the topic.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category D2: Palestinian Destruction Response

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Palestinian Destruction Response” from the Minneapolis Area Synod;

To reaffirm this church’s commitment to advocacy that urges an end to unconditional financial support for arms and related technologies to Israel;

To reaffirm this church’s sense of urgency for ongoing advocacy, awareness, and accompaniment through the Sumud initiative,

To reaffirm this church’s commitments to reject anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim bigotry; to differentiate between criticism of the State of Israel’s policies and hatred of the Jewish people; and to work with this church’s ecumenical and inter-religious partners to address anti-Jewish, anti-Muslim, and other interlocking forms of hatred; and

To affirm continued dialogue with Portico Benefit Services around how the Human Rights Screen is implemented and encourage ELCA congregations to review its current and future investments.

Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category D3: Public Discourse about Palestine-Israel

ASSEMBLY ACTION

EN BLOC

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Public Discourse about Palestine-Israel” from the Northeastern Minnesota Synod;

To reaffirm the ELCA’s sense of urgency and action for ongoing advocacy, awareness, and accompaniment through the Sumud initiative and through the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To reaffirm this church’s partners’ voices on the ground and their language of justice for their own people;

To commend the recommendation from the 2022–2023 Review Summary and Recommendations on Israel and Palestine document for formal review and update of the “Strategy for Engagement in Palestine and Israel” (2005) and to present a timeline for the consideration of the updated strategy, encouraging continued collaboration between ELCA Sumud and the Office of the Presiding Bishop; and

To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in partnership with ELCA Sumud, to convene a consultation with representatives of the ELCA Conference of Bishops, Church Council, Palestinian partners from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and other key stakeholders to discuss matters of language for addressing the injustice happening to the Palestinian people on the ground, and to report to the Church Council its findings and any recommendations.

APPENDIX B

Including the text of responses recommended by the Memorials Committee
to synod memorials referred to the Church Council
following the 2025 Churchwide Assembly

Recommended Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C2: Update the Social Statement on Abortion

RECOMMENDATION

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Northern Illinois Synod on updating the social statement on *Abortion* (1991) or to create a new social statement on this issue;

To re-affirm the theological and ethical teachings of the social statement on *Abortion* and its study guide because of its attention to complexity and nuance and its continued use in discernment and conversation;

To encourage study of recent resources such as the book *ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on Abortion* by Caryn D. Riswold (Augsburg Fortress, 2024) that analyzes the foundations and contemporary applications of this social statement;

To refer the memorial to churchwide organization staff members of Theological Ethics and Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment to develop additional study resources to address the concerns expressed in this memorial;

To decline at this time the request to update, revise, or create a new social statement on *Abortion*; and

To direct that the ELCA Church Council authorize the development of a social policy resolution that applies the ELCA statement on *Abortion* to the challenging personal struggles and pastoral issues brought about because some social conditions have changed since 1991.

Recommended Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category C8: Social Message on Rural Life and Ministry

RECOMMENDATION

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Montana Synod for development of a new social message on the challenges facing rural, remote communities, and sovereign Tribal Nations, and gifts provided by ministry in rural and remote contexts;

To direct Theological Discernment staff in the ELCA churchwide organization to review the request for a new social message on rural, remote communities, and sovereign Tribal Nations and bring a recommendation to the ELCA Church Council no later than the Spring 2026 meeting on what means should be authorized to address the questions involved; and

To direct Christian Community and Leadership staff in the ELCA churchwide organization to assess available resources on rural congregations and communities and to provide a report and recommendation for resource development to the ELCA Church Council no later than Fall 2026.

Recommended Response to Synod Memorials grouped as Category D1: Justice for Palestinians and Israelis

RECOMMENDATION

To receive with gratitude the memorial on "Justice for Palestinians and Israelis" from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod;

To reaffirm this church's commitment, set forth in the social statement *For Peace in God's World* (1995), to serve as a reconciling presence, including through promoting respect for human rights, particularly for "groups most susceptible to violations, especially all minorities, women, and children";

To lament the trauma experienced by Palestinians and Israelis and encourage congregations to recognize and respond to the need to confess shared responsibility for the suffering;

To reaffirm this church's sense of urgency for ongoing advocacy, awareness, and accompaniment through the Sumud initiative;

To request that the Service and Justice unit, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop, implement the recommendations in the memorial for continuing accompaniment, awareness-raising, and advocacy efforts to end the Israeli occupation in Palestine, to stop the unconditional supply of weapons and military aid to Israel, and to support and participate fully in the restoration of infrastructure in the Gaza Strip; and

To request that the Service and Justice unit provide a report to the Church Council at its Spring 2026 meeting.