

1995 Churchwide Assembly
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Reports and Records

Assembly Minutes

August 16-22, 1995
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Contents

Page Nos.

Introduction 5

Minutes of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly

Plenary Session One	11
Plenary Session Two	41
Plenary Session Three	95
Plenary Session Four	105
Plenary Session Five	159
Plenary Session Six	257
Plenary Session Seven	293
Plenary Session Eight	343
Plenary Session Nine	441
Plenary Session Ten	485
Plenary Session Eleven	619

Exhibit A: Members of the Churchwide Assembly	697
Voting Members	697
Advisory Members	709
Other Members	709
Exhibit B: Report of the Elections Committee	713
First Ballot	713
Second Ballot	740
Exhibit C: Mission Prayers	749
Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (as amended)	759
Restated Articles of Incorporation	771
Churchwide Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions	775
Constitution for Synods	927
Model Constitution for Congregations	957
Index	977

Plenary Session One
Wednesday, August 16, 1995
8:00 p.m.–9:30 p.m.

Order for the Opening of an Assembly

Plenary Session One was preceded by the order for the Opening of an Assembly, which took place at 6:04 p.m., Central Daylight Time, at the close of the opening Service of Holy Communion held in Central Lutheran Church at Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Organization of the Assembly

The Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called Plenary Session One to order at 8:01 p.m., Central Daylight Time. Bishop Chilstrom welcomed the assembly members and visitors to the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. He also welcomed the thousands who were joining the assembly by cable television.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Ms. Dorothy M. (“Dottie”) Rietow, vice president of the Minneapolis Area Synod, who brought greetings on behalf of Bishop David W. Olson [Minneapolis Area Synod] and Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl [Saint Paul Area Synod].

Report of the Credentials Committee:

Determination of a Quorum

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued on Minutes, pages 35, 41, 91, 105, 159-160, 253, 257, 619; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Bylaw 12.41.11. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides a formula for determining the number of voting members of each Churchwide Assembly. The Church Council and the secretary of this church determined that the proper number of voting members for the 1995 Churchwide Assembly was 1,053. That number included an allocation of 1,049 voting members from synods, plus the four churchwide officers.

In order to fulfill the constitutional mandate that “at least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies . . . shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English” (ELCA 5.01.f.), the Church Council allocated additional voting-member positions from certain synods as listed in the Rules of Organization and Procedure (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 582), which were subsequently adopted by this assembly. Voting members listed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-578, were certified by synodical secretaries as of August 7, 1995.

Reporting on behalf of the Credentials Committee, the Rev. Lowell G. Almen, secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, presented the initial report of the Credentials Committee, current as of 6:15 p.m. on August 16, 1995:

Bishop Chilstrom then declared a quorum to be present.

Voting members from Hawaii presented leis to Bishop Chilstrom and his spouse, the Rev. E. Corinne Chilstrom.

Voting Procedures

Bishop Chilstrom expressed appreciation to Lutheran Brotherhood Securities Corporation (Minneapolis, Minn.) for underwriting the cost of the electronic voting system. Most votes would be cast electronically, although some may be cast using colored voting cards (green for yes, red for no, and white for abstain), he said. He then explained the use of the electronic voting system (key one for “yes,” two for “no,” and three for “abstain”), exhorting voting members to use only their own keypads as proxy voting would not be permitted under the assembly’s Rules of Organization and Procedure and the bylaws of this church. Bishop Chilstrom then led voting members through a practice session.

Adoption of Rules of Organization and Procedure

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 581-594.

Bishop Chilstrom referred voting members to the Rules of Organization and Procedure for this assembly. He reminded the assembly that “new business” was to be submitted to the secretary of this church by 12:30 p.m., Saturday, August 19.

Nominations

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-589

Nominations from voting members at this assembly were to be submitted to the Nominations Desk in the assembly office by 2:25 p.m. on Friday, August 18. Bishop Chilstrom stated that nominations would be considered in the order in which they were filed.

Election Process for Officers

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-589.

Bishop Chilstrom explained the process used for election of churchwide officers. He referred assembly members to the description of the ecclesiastical ballot and election of the officers detailed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586 and 587-588, and to the balloting schedule printed in the Order of Business. The names of all persons nominated would appear on the second ballot, except for those persons who requested withdrawal of their names, he said.

Voting members were instructed to submit questions, which might be posed to the nominees for bishop, prior to the fourth ballot, no later than the end of the Thursday evening, August 17, session. A form for that purpose would be available from the secretary’s deputy.

During ballots three, four, and five for the election of the officers, the electronic voting system would be used. Bishop Chilstrom indicated that results would be reported after a brief delay to permit the Elections Committee to verify the tallies.

Access to Seating

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 589.

Bishop Chilstrom noted that only voting members and those with appropriate credentials would have access to the assembly floor. Visitors would be seated in the visitors’ area.

Speeches

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 589-590.

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that during debate speeches would be limited to three

minutes. Statements pro and con would alternate. Those speaking in favor of the motion were to display a green voting card, those against a red card, and those offering a motion or amendment or rising for some other purpose a white card. Voting members were to refrain from applauding, he cautioned.

Social Statement on Peace

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 590-591; continued on Minutes pages 113-137, 260-265, 356-374.

Bishop Chilstrom noted that potential amendments or substitutions to the proposed social statement on peace were to be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church by Thursday, August 17, at 6:00 p.m. Such motions must, nonetheless, be moved orally during plenary sessions when germane to the business then before the assembly. He stated that even if the deadline were to be missed, "a good idea can always get debated," if the assembly would choose to consider such amendments by common consent or by a simple majority vote. He noted also that a two-thirds vote was required for final passage of proposed social statements.

Amendments to ELCA

Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 591-592; continued on Minutes pages 277-279, 297-311, 623-630, 637, 644-645.

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that assembly members would be considering proposed changes to this church's Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions. Such amendments, as recommended by the Church Council, were printed in the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 851-872, and on supplemental pages 872a, 875a-b. The deadline for submission of any new bylaw change was Friday, August 18, at 12:30 p.m. New provisions to the governing documents were to be submitted to the secretary of this church for referral to the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Budget

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 592; continued on Minutes, pages 60-64, 463-465.

Bishop Chilstrom stated that any amendments to the budget proposal were to be submitted to the secretary of this church by 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, August 20.

Memorials

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 593.

Bishop Chilstrom explained that, in order to provide time for adequate debate of memorials transmitted from synods to the Churchwide Assembly, the responses recommended by the Memorials Committee to the majority of such memorials would be considered en bloc. The committee recommended that several memorials, treating controversial issues, be considered individually, rather than en bloc (see 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 881-882). Motions requesting removal of memorials from the en bloc resolution for separate consideration by the assembly were to be submitted to the secretary of this church by 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 17.

Assembly

Action Yes-983; No-7; Abstain-11

CA95.1.1 To adopt the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 1995 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted constitution and bylaw provisions that are already in force).

Rules of Organization and Procedure For the 1995 Churchwide Assembly

Authority of the Churchwide Assembly

The legislative function of the churchwide organization shall be fulfilled by the Churchwide Assembly . . . (ELCA 11.31.).

The Churchwide Assembly shall be the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization and shall deal with all matters which are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church. The powers of the Churchwide Assembly are limited only by the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, and the assembly's own resolutions (ELCA 12.11.).

Duties of the Churchwide Assembly

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. Review the work of the churchwide officers, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- b. Review the work of the churchwide units, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- c. Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.
- d. Establish churchwide policy.
- e. Adopt a budget for the churchwide organization.
- f. Elect officers, board members, and other persons as provided in the constitution or bylaws.
- g. Establish churchwide units to carry out the functions of the churchwide organization.
- h. Have the sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws.
- i. Fulfill other functions as required in the constitution and bylaws.
- j. Conduct such other business as necessary to further the purposes and functions of the churchwide organization (ELCA 12.21.).

Parliamentary Procedure

The Churchwide Assembly shall use parliamentary procedures in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly (ELCA 12.31.09.).

Note: the 1990 edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, is, therefore, the governing parliamentary law of this church, except as otherwise provided.)

No motion shall be out of order because of conflict with federal, state, or local constitutions or laws.

Assembly Presiding Officer

The bishop of this church shall preside at the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.21.c.).

The vice president . . . shall serve . . . in the event the bishop is unable to do so, as chair of the

Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.31.).

Assembly Secretary

The secretary shall be responsible for the minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.41.02.a.).

Assembly Voting Members

Each synod shall elect one voting member of the Churchwide Assembly for every 6,500 baptized members in the synod. In addition, each synod shall elect one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. The synod bishop, who is ex officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. There shall be at least two voting members from each synod. The secretary shall notify each synod of the number of assembly members it is to elect (ELCA 12.41.11.).

The officers of this church and the bishops of the synods shall serve as ex officio members of the Churchwide Assembly. They shall have voice and vote (ELCA 12.41.21.).

Inclusive Representation

Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the churchwide organization, through the Church Council, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies . . . be lay persons; that as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of these assemblies . . . shall be female and 50 percent shall be male, and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both female and male. At least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies . . . shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English . . . (ELCA 5.01.f.).

Additional voting members have been allocated by the Church Council as follows:

Synod	Additional Members	Stipulation
Caribbean	3	All three persons must be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English (total voting members from synod would be five: three clergy, including bishop, one lay woman and one lay man)
Alaska	2	At least one must be Native Alaskan (total voting members from synod would be five: two clergy, including bishop, one lay woman and two lay men)
Arkansas-Oklahoma	3	At least one must be a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English (total voting members from synod would be five: three clergy, including bishop, one lay woman and one lay man)
West Virginia-Western Maryland	3	At least one must be a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English (total voting members from synod would be seven: two clergy, including bishop, two lay women, two lay men, and one either lay male or lay female)
Slovak Zion	2	None (total voting members from synod would be four: two clergy, including bishop, one lay woman, one lay man)
Eastern Washington-Idaho.	1	Must be a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English
Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana	1	Must be a person of color or a person whose

primary language is other than English Northern Great Lakes	1	Must be a person of color or a person whose
primary language is other than English LaCrosse Area	1	Must be a person of color or a person whose
primary language is other than English Northwestern Pennsylvania	1	Must be a person of color or a person whose
primary language is other than English Metropolitan Washington, D.C.	1	Must be a person of color or a person whose
primary language is other than English Assembly Properly Constituted		

Each assembly . . . of the churchwide organization . . . shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly . . . may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly . . . (ELCA 5.01.j).

Eligibility to Serve as Voting Member

Each voting member of the Churchwide Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church and shall cease to be a member of the assembly if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 12.41.13.).

Certification of Voting Members

The secretary of each synod shall submit to the secretary of this church at least four months before the assembly a certified list of the regular and alternate voting members elected by the synod (ELCA 12.41.12.).

Seating of Alternate Voting Members

If a synodical bishop certifies that one of the voting members elected from that synod is not or will not be present, the Credentials Committee shall seat the alternate as previously certified by the secretary of that synod.

Advisory Members

Members of the Church Council and board chairpersons or their designees, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Executive directors of churchwide units, the executive for administration, and executive assistants to the bishop shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.41.31.).
Advisory members shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.32.).

Other Members

Other categories of non-voting members may be established by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.41.41.).

Presidents of the colleges, universities, and seminaries of this church, unless elected as voting members of the assembly, shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.A89.).

An individual, whose term of office as a bishop of a synod commences within one month of the assembly, shall have the privilege of seat and voice, but not vote, during the assembly.

An individual who served as a churchwide bishop in a predecessor church body, unless elected as a voting member of the assembly, shall have voice but not vote.

Resource Members

Resource members shall be persons recommended by the bishop of this church or by the Church Council who, because of their position or expertise, can contribute to the work of the Churchwide Assembly. Resource members shall have voice only with respect to matters within their expertise, but no vote.

Official Visitors

Official visitors shall be persons invited by the bishop of this church or the Church Council to address the Churchwide Assembly. They shall not have vote.

Mandated Committees

The Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, and a Nominating Committee. The description of these committees shall be in the bylaws (ELCA 12.51.).

Reference and Counsel Committee

A Reference and Counsel Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review all proposed changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws and other items submitted which are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly (ELCA 12.51.10.).

Memorials Committee

A Memorials Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review memorials from synod assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for assembly action (ELCA 12.51.21.).

Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate 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 of this church (ELCA 12.51.31.).

The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position [on the Nominating Committee] (ELCA 19.21.01.).

Nominations Desk

Nominations from the floor shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church.

Nominations from the floor must be made by using the prescribed form. This form is included in each voting member's registration packet. Information and additional forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk on Wednesday, August 16, 1995, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on Thursday, August 17, 1995, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on Friday, August 18, 1995, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:25 p.m.

Nominations Form

The prescribed form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the

nominee's name, address, phone number, gender, lay/clergy status, white/person of color or primary language other than English status, congregational membership, synodical membership, and affirmation of willingness to serve, if elected; the name, address, and synodical membership of the voting member who is making the nomination; and such other information as the secretary of this church shall require.

For purposes of nomination procedures, "synodical membership" means:

- In the case of a lay person, the synod that includes the congregation in which such person holds membership, and
- In the case of an ordained minister, the synod on whose roster such ordained minister's name is maintained.

Constitutional Membership

Each nominee for an elected or appointed position in this church shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 19.05.).

Making Floor Nominations

Floor nominations for positions on a board of a churchwide unit require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least 10 other voting members. Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other churchwide committee require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least 20 other voting members.

Nominations from the floor for any position (other than bishop, vice president, and secretary) shall be made by filing the completed prescribed form with the Nominations Desk on Thursday, August 17, 1995, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on Friday, August 18, 1995, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:25 p.m.

Nominations will be considered made in the order in which filed at the Nominations Desk.

Restrictions on Floor Nominations for Boards (cf., ELCA 19.21.02. and 19.21.04.)

Nominations from the floor for positions on the churchwide boards shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided in advance to each voting member of the assembly.

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given synod serving on a board with terms not expiring this year plus the number of positions on the same board to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of two individuals from the same synod who may serve on that board, an individual from the same synod may be nominated for another position on that board, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Individuals from the same synod also may be nominated for a position on a board to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated, provided other criteria and restrictions are met.

Restriction on Floor Nominations for Church Council (cf., ELCA 19.02. and 19.21.02.)

Nominations from the floor for positions on the Church Council shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and Nominating Committee and set

forth in materials provided in advance to each voting member of the assembly.

So long as other criteria and restrictions are met, an individual may be nominated for a Church Council position, unless someone from the same synod is serving on the Church Council with a term not expiring this year. In addition to meeting other criteria and restrictions, individuals from one synod can be nominated only for one position on the Church Council.

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Church Council with terms not expiring this year plus the number of Church Council positions to which individuals from the same region already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of individuals from the same region who may serve on the Church Council, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Church Council position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Church Council position for which someone from the same region already has been nominated.

Restriction on Floor Nominations for Nominating Committee (cf., ELCA 19.21.01.)

Nominations from the floor for positions on the Nominating Committee shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and set forth in materials provided in advance to each voting member of the assembly.

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Nominating Committee with terms not expiring this year plus the number of Nominating Committee positions to which individuals from the same region have already been nominated (whether by the Church Council or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of three individuals from the same region who may serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Nominating Committee position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Nominating Committee position for which someone from the same region already has been nominated.

Restriction on Nominations for Officers

The bishop shall be an ordained minister of this church. The bishop may be male or female, as may all other officers of this church (ELCA 13.21.).

The bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term (ELCA 13.22.).

The bishop shall be a full-time, salaried position (ELCA 13.22.02.).

The vice president of this church shall be a layperson (ELCA 13.31.).

The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a four-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 13.32.).¹

The vice president shall serve without salary (ELCA 13.32.02.).

The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a four-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 13.42.).²

The secretary shall be a full-time, salaried position (ELCA 13.42.02.).

The secretary may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.

Other Committees

The Churchwide Assembly may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary (ELCA 12.51.).

Agenda Committee

The Agenda Committee shall assist the bishop of this church in the preparation of the agenda of the Churchwide Assembly.

Program and Worship Committee

The Program and Worship Committee shall assist the bishop of this church in the preparation for the program and worship at the Churchwide Assembly.

Physical Arrangements Committee

The Physical Arrangements Committee shall assist the secretary of this church in the physical arrangements for the Churchwide Assembly.

Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee shall oversee the registration of voting members and shall report periodically to the Churchwide Assembly the number of voting members registered.

Minutes Committee

The Minutes Committee shall review minutes of the Churchwide Assembly prepared under the supervision of the secretary of this church, and periodically recommend that the assembly receive the preliminary minutes of sessions, as distributed. The bishop and secretary shall have the authority to approve the minutes on behalf of the Churchwide Assembly and shall deposit in the archives of this church the protocol copy of the assembly's minutes.

Election Procedures—Common Ballot

The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical ballot is not used.

For the first common ballot, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from the synod.

Unless the second common ballot is conducted by electronic device, the distribution of ballot forms will be in the same manner.

Any discrepancy between the number of ballots given to a synodical bishop and the number of voting members (including the synod bishop) from such synod must be reported by the synodical bishop to the Elections Committee.

If a ballot is damaged so that it cannot be scanned, a replacement ballot may be obtained at the Ballot Station upon surrender of the damaged ballot.

Ballots must be marked in accordance with video and written instructions presented in plenary session.

A member may vote for only one nominee on each ticket.

Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate one's ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked.

Ballot forms should not be folded.

Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot.

Marked ballot forms for the first common ballot should be deposited at the tables designated Ballot Station at certain exits of the hall in which plenary sessions are held. Unless

the second common ballot is by electronic device, the marked ballot forms for the second common ballot also should be deposited at the same Ballot Station.

Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 19, 1995.

Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly or unless the second ballot is conducted by electronic device, polls for the second common ballot close at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 21, 1995.

Upon recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, the second common ballot may be conducted by electronic device. If so conducted, the first position on each ticket shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot, and, if two nominees are tied for the highest vote, the first position on the ticket shall be determined by draw. On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes.

Election Procedures—Ecclesiastical Ballot

An “ecclesiastical ballot” for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an election process:

- a. In which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;
- b. Through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;
- c. That precludes spoken floor nominations;
- d. In which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;
- e. In which the first ballot defines the total slate of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations;
- f. That does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;
- g. In which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;
- h. That does not preclude an assembly’s adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and
- i. In which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents (ELCA 19.61.A94.).

For each election by ecclesiastical ballot, the appropriate ballot set will be distributed in the same manner as the common ballot forms.

Unless otherwise ordered by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the appropriate ballot set is to be used on each ballot for elections determined by ecclesiastical ballot.

Ballots should not be marked prior to the time the chair advises the voting members to do so.

The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the appropriate ballot set that is to be used for each ballot. Failure to use the correct numbered ballot will result in an illegal ballot.

On the first two ballots for each office being selected by ecclesiastical ballot, both the first and last names of a nominee should be used. On subsequent ballots conducted by written ballot, only the last name of the nominee need be used, provided there is no other nominee with the same or similar name.

Written ballots should not be folded.

Written ballots will be collected at the voting member's table in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.

A member may vote for only one nominee on each ballot.

When the results of the first ballot are presented, the chair will announce when and how persons nominated can withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot.

Whenever the number of names of nominees that will appear on a ballot is nine or less, on recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, voting shall be by means of electronic device.

When voting by electronic device, the first position on each ballot shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, with the remaining position assigned to the other nominees in descending order of the number of votes received on the immediately preceding ballot. If two or more nominees were tied with the same vote on the immediately preceding ballot, their respective positions shall be determined by draw. On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes.

Voting Procedures Other Than for Elections

As directed by the chair, voting (other than in elections) may be by voice, by raising voting cards, by show of hands, by standing, by written ballot, or by electronic device.

Each voting member's registration packet contains three voting cards—green (yes), red (no), and white (abstain). These cards also are to be used, when requested by the chair, to obtain recognition at the microphone.

When a vote is taken by standing, those persons voting affirmative shall rise when requested by the chair, and remain standing until counted and told to be seated by the chair. Thereafter, those voting negatively shall respond in the same manner followed by those who wish to abstain.

Each voting member's registration packet contains a ballot pad of numbered ballots. Each voting member is responsible for this pad. When directed by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the ballot pad shall be used. The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the ballot pad that is to be used for a particular vote. Failure to use the correctly numbered ballot will result in an invalid ballot. These ballots should not be folded, and will be collected at the voting member's table in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.

When a division of the house is ordered, the vote shall be by electronic device, by standing vote, or by written ballot as directed by the chair. No division of the house is in order when a vote has been taken by electronic device, by standing vote, or by written ballot.

Any member who has an electronic device on which the green light does not illuminate when the chair has called for members to test their electronic devices should notify immediately

the Elections Committee.

Any member who because of a physical limitation has difficulty in using the electronic device or in seeing the visual display on which voting instructions are projected should contact the Elections Committee for assistance.

Each member shall vote only by the electronic device at his or her assigned seat.

Voting by electronic device shall be in accordance with instructions from the chair or the Elections Committee.

A member's vote by electronic device can be recorded and transmitted only when the green light on the device is illuminated.

While the green light on the electronic device remains illuminated and prior to transmission of the vote, a member can change his or her vote by pressing the clear-erase key.

The member's vote by electronic device will be shown on the display panel of the device prior to the transmission of the vote. Once the vote is transmitted, it cannot be changed or corrected.

The vote by electronic device shall be recorded by entering #1 for yes, #2 for no, or #3 for abstain.

On each vote by electronic device, the member must select her or his vote by entering the appropriate key number, which number will then be shown on the display panel of the device.

A member's vote by electronic device shall be recorded before the chair orders the voting closed.

Elections Committee

The Elections Committee shall oversee the conduct of elections in accordance with election procedures approved by the Churchwide Assembly.

In the elections for bishop, vice president, and secretary, the Elections Committee shall report the results of any balloting by announcing the number of votes received by each nominee and the names of those nominees qualified to remain on the next ballot or the name of the nominee who is elected.

The Elections Committee shall report the results of balloting in other elections by announcing the name of the person elected or by announcing the names of nominees qualified to remain on the ballot. Vote totals shall be reported to the secretary of this church and recorded in the minutes of the assembly. Based on this report, the chair shall declare elected those who received the required number of votes.

A written report showing the results of a ballot shall be distributed to the voting members concurrently with, or as soon as possible after, the announced report of the Elections Committee.

Election of the Bishop

The bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be

necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot (ELCA 19.31.01.a.).

Prior to the third ballot for bishop, the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the bishop of the synod of such person's roster shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

Prior to the fourth ballot for bishop, the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to participate in a question and answer period moderated by an individual appointed by the Executive Committee of the Church Council.

Election of the Vice President

The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.31.01.b.).

Prior to the third ballot for vice president, biographical data will be distributed for the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot.

Prior to the fourth ballot for vice president, the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the bishop of the synod of such person's congregation's roster shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

Election of the Secretary

The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.31.01.c.).

Prior to the third ballot for secretary, biographical data will be distributed for the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot.

Prior to the fourth ballot for secretary, the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the bishop of the synod of such person's roster, or such person's congregation's roster, shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

Election of the Editor of The Lutheran

The advisory committee of The Lutheran, in consultation with the bishop of this church and the Church Council, shall nominate the editor for the church periodical (ELCA 17.21.01.).

The Churchwide Assembly shall elect the editor of the church periodical. If the first nominee nominated by the advisory committee is not elected, the advisory committee shall nominate another person. The editor shall be elected to a four-year term (ELCA 17.21.02.).

The editor of the church periodical shall be elected to a four-year term (ELCA 19.51.04.).

For the position of editor of The Lutheran, a majority of legal votes cast shall be necessary for election (ELCA 19.11.01.b.).

Majority Required for Election

Other than in elections of the bishop, vice president, and secretary, a majority of votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for election. If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the second ballot. On the second ballot, a majority of legal votes cast shall be necessary for election (ELCA 19.11.01.b.).

On the final ballot for the election of the bishop, vice president, and secretary of this church, when only two names appear on the ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election (ELCA 19.11.01.e.).

Breaking Ties

On the ballot for the election of the bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist. On the first common ballot the blank ballots of the treasurer and vice president shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee to be presented to the treasurer for his or her vote only in those elections where a tie would otherwise exist, and to be presented to the vice president for his or her vote only in those elections to break a tie remaining after the ballot of the treasurer has been counted. On the second common ballot, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist.

Additional Officials or Committees

Additional officials or committees (sergeant-at-arms; parliamentarian; tellers; pages; etc.) of the Churchwide Assembly shall be appointed by the bishop of this church.

Notice of Meeting

The secretary shall give notice of the time and place of each regular assembly by publication thereof at least 60 days in advance in this church's periodical (ELCA 12.31.02.).

Written notice shall be mailed to all voting members not more than 30 days nor less than 10 days in advance of any meeting (ELCA 12.31.02.).

Assembly Reports

At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a pre-assembly report (ELCA 12.31.03.).

Reports of the Bishop and Secretary of This Church

Following presentation, the bishop's report and the secretary's report shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

Status of Reports

All reports published in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volumes 1, 2, and 3, and in supplements to those volumes, shall be treated as having been received by the assembly without formal vote.

Quorum

At least one-half of the persons elected as voting members must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum for the legal conduct of business. If such a quorum is not present, those voting members present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place, provided that only those persons eligible to vote at the original meeting may vote at the adjourned meeting (ELCA 12.31.07.).

Proxy Voting Prohibited

Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted at a Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.31.08.).

Absence of Members

Members shall not absent themselves from any session of the assembly without valid excuse, under penalty of forfeiture of the per diem allowance for the day of absence and proportionate reimbursement of travel expenses.

Access to Seating

A person will be admitted to restricted seating areas only upon display of proper credentials.

Obtaining the Floor

In plenary sessions of the Churchwide Assembly, the voting members, including the ex officio members, always have prior right to obtain the floor. Advisory members shall be entitled to obtain the floor, if it does not prevent voting members from being heard. Resource members shall be entitled to the floor only with respect to matters within their expertise, if it does not prevent the voting members from being heard. Official visitors may address the assembly when requested to do so by the chair.

Speeches

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to three minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down, unless the chair proposes and receives consent that an additional minute or minutes be allowed the speaker.

Alternating Speeches

Insofar as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side.

To facilitate alternating speeches and when requested by the chair, assembly members awaiting recognition at the microphones shall display one of the colored (green, red, white) cards found in their registration packets. The green card is to be used to identify a member who will speak in favor of the pending matter on the floor (i.e., the question that will be voted upon, if there is no further motion of any kind). A red card is to be used to identify a member who wishes to speak against the pending matter. A white card is to be used to identify a member who wishes to offer an amendment to the pending matter, or some other motion that would be in order.

Moving the Previous Question

A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question(s).

Applause

In the give and take of debate on issues before the Churchwide Assembly, members of the assembly and visitors shall refrain from applause.

Departing from Agenda

With the consent of the Churchwide Assembly, the chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order he or she considers most expedient for the conduct of the assembly's business.

Motions and Resolutions

Substantive motions or resolutions, or amendments to either, must be presented in writing to the secretary of this church promptly after being moved. A form is provided for this purpose. This form is included in each voting member's registration packet; other forms are available at the tables of voting members.

A resolution, which is germane to the matter before the assembly, may be offered by any voting member from the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair.

Any resolution not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda must be submitted to the secretary of this church in writing no later than 12:30 p.m., Saturday, August 19, 1995. Each resolution must be supported in writing by one other voting member. At least 24 hours must elapse before such resolution may be considered in plenary session. The secretary shall refer such resolution to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may:

- (a) Recommend approval;
- (b) Recommend disapproval;

- (c) Recommend referral to a unit of this church; or
- (d) Recommend a substitute motion to the assembly.

Any resolution not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda that might be submitted by a voting member, because of circumstances that develop during the assembly and cannot be submitted to the secretary of this church before 12:30 p.m., Saturday, August 19, 1995, must be submitted to the secretary in writing and supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such resolutions to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may:

- (a) Decline to refer the resolution to the assembly;
- (b) Recommend approval;
- (c) Recommend disapproval;
- (d) Recommend referral to a unit of this church; or
- (e) Recommend a substitute motion to the assembly.

Substitute Motions

When a substitute motion is made, secondary amendments may be offered to either the pending motion or the substitute motion at any time until the substitute motion is substituted or rejected.

With respect to any recommendation made by the Memorials Committee in a printed report distributed to the assembly members prior to, or at, the first business session of the assembly, a voting member of the assembly may offer a substitute motion to the committee's recommendation only if such member, prior to 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 17, 1995, has given written notice to the chair of the Memorials Committee, or other committee member designated by the chair of the Memorials Committee.

Amendments to Major Statements

Any amendment to the following major statement must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church prior to the hour and date indicated:

Statement	Deadline
Peace	6:00 p.m. Thursday, August 17, 1995

Voting members who submit amendments may be requested to meet with the staff of the unit that developed the statement.

If in the opinion of the chair of the assembly the amendments to a major statement are either too voluminous or too complex for the assembly to consider expeditiously, all amendments may be referred by the chair to either the Committee of Reference and Counsel or to an ad hoc committee appointed by the chair with the consent of the assembly for its recommendations for the consideration of the statement and the proposed amendments by the assembly.

If a voting member wishes to offer a substantive amendment that was not submitted prior to the deadline, the assembly may consider such amendment by a simple majority vote.

Vote to Adopt Social Statements

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly shall be required for adoption of a social statement.

Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Task Force Reports

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

Review Groups

Voting members, advisory members, other members, resource members, official visitors, and other categories approved by the Churchwide Assembly constitute review groups as assigned by the secretary of this church. Review groups have no legislative authority.

Constitutional Amendments

The constitution of this church may be amended through either of the following procedures:

a. The Church Council may propose an amendment, with an official notice to be sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of the members of the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting.

b. An amendment may be proposed by 25 or more members of the Churchwide Assembly. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation, following which it shall come before the assembly.

Adoption of such an amendment shall require passage at two successive regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting (ELCA 22.11.).

A constitutional amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

Bylaw Amendments

Bylaws not in conflict with this constitution may be adopted or amended at any regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly when presented in writing by the Church Council or by at least 15 members of the assembly. An amendment proposed by members of the assembly shall immediately be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation. In no event shall an amendment be placed before the assembly for action sooner than the day following its presentation to the assembly. A two-thirds vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary for adoption (ELCA 22.21.).

A bylaw amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed bylaw amendment must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church prior to 12:30 p.m. on Friday, August 18, 1995. The secretary shall first report to the assembly any bylaw amendments so submitted and the amendments then shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Continuing Resolutions

Provisions relating to the administrative functions of this church shall be set forth in the continuing resolutions. Continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council (ELCA 22.31.). Should the board or standing committee in question disagree with the action of the Church Council in amending a continuing resolution, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 15.41.04.; 16.11.41.; 16.22.17.; 17.21.21.; 17.31.06.; 17.41.08.; 17.51.04.;

17.61.07.).

A continuing resolution amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

En Bloc Resolutions for Constitutional Amendments

The constitution may be amended and bylaws and continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by en bloc resolutions, unless a voting member objects to the inclusion of any particular provision. The objection of a voting member shall be made in writing delivered to the secretary of this church not later than 6:00 p.m. on Friday, August 18, 1995. Particular provisions to which objection is so noted shall be considered separately and all other provisions not objected to will be considered as part of the en bloc resolution.

Budget Procedures

The bishop shall provide for the preparation of the budget for the churchwide organization (ELCA 13.21.f.).

At the direction of the bishop, the executive for administration shall 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 (ELCA 15.11.B91.d.).

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 with voice but not vote in the committee. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer (ELCA 14.41.A91.).

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets (ELCA 14.21.04.).

Proposed amendments to the budget must be submitted to the secretary of this church in writing no later than 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, August 20, 1995. Each amendment must be supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such proposed amendments to the Budget and Finance Committee. During the consideration of the budget by the assembly, the Budget and Finance Committee shall report on the implication of each proposed amendment.

Any amendment to the budget that increases a current program proposal of, or adds a current program proposal to, a churchwide unit must include a corresponding decrease in some other current program proposal of the same or another churchwide unit(s) and/or increase in revenues. Any amendment to the budget that proposes an increase in revenues shall require an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting.

The Churchwide Assembly shall adopt a budget for the churchwide organization (ELCA 12.21.e.).

Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage of all donor unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod, such percentage to be determined by the Churchwide Assembly. Individual exceptions may be made by the Church Council upon request of a synod (ELCA 10.71.).

Appropriations

When a motion calling for an appropriation comes before the Churchwide Assembly from

any source other than the Church Council or a memorial from a synod, it shall be referred at once to the Committee of Reference and Counsel. The Committee of Reference and Counsel shall refer the proposed appropriation to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council. The Budget and Finance Committee may consult with the churchwide unit(s) affected by the proposed appropriation. The Budget and Finance Committee may conclude that it cannot evaluate adequately the proposed appropriation prior to assembly adjournment and may request that the Church Council be designated to receive the evaluation later and to determine whether or not the proposed appropriation shall be authorized. The findings of the Budget and Finance Committee shall be forwarded to the Committee of Reference and Counsel, which shall then make its recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly. If the report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel is negative, a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

A proposed appropriation that originates with a synod through a memorial will be handled in the same way as in the preceding rule, except that reference shall be to the Memorials Committee rather than to the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

New Studies or Research Proposals

Each proposal by a voting member for a study or research project shall be made as a main motion and shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel. The Reference and Counsel Committee shall refer the proposal to the Department for Research and Evaluation. This department, in consultation with the churchwide unit to which the proposal is directed, will seek to determine the purpose, relationship to existing studies and research projects or current programs, potential value, overall costs including staff requirements, and availability of budget and staff. The Department for Research and Evaluation may conclude that it cannot evaluate adequately the proposal prior to the assembly adjournment and request that the Church Council be designated to receive the evaluation at a later time and determine whether or not the study or research project should be initiated. The findings of the Department for Research and Evaluation shall be submitted to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may make its recommendation to the assembly. When a proposal falls within the responsibilities of another unit, that unit may submit its reactions to the proposal in a separate report. If the recommendation calls for a new appropriation, the matter also shall be referred at once to the Budget and Finance Committee for consideration and report to the Reference and Counsel Committee. If the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee is negative, a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

A proposal that originates with a synod through a memorial shall be handled the same way, except that reference shall be to the Memorials Committee, rather than to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

Relationship to Church Council

This church shall have a Church Council which shall be the board of directors of this church and shall serve as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.11.).

“Interim legislative authority” is defined to mean that between meetings of the Churchwide Assemblies, the Church Council may exercise the authority of the Churchwide Assembly so long as:

- a. the actions of the Church Council do not conflict with the actions of and policies established by the Churchwide Assembly; and
- b. the Church Council is not precluded by constitutional or bylaw provisions from taking action on the matter (ELCA 14.13.).

The Church Council shall act on the policies proposed by churchwide unit boards subject to review by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.01.).

The Church Council shall review recommendations from churchwide units for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.03.).

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets (ELCA 14.21.04.).

The Church Council shall arrange the process for all elections to boards of churchwide units to assure conformity with established criteria (ELCA 14.21.08.).

The Church Council shall report its actions to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.14.).

Status of Church Council Recommendations

The recommendation of the Church Council with respect to any proposal by a churchwide unit board shall be treated as a motion before the Churchwide Assembly, unless the Church Council shall otherwise determine.

Status of Recommendations of the Memorials Committee and Reference and Counsel Committee

When either the Memorials Committee or the Reference and Counsel Committee has made a recommendation (other than merely recommending approval or rejection) concerning a memorial(s) or resolution(s) considered by the committee, such recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When either the Memorials Committee or the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended the passage of a memorial or resolution considered by the committee, such memorial or resolution recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

When either the Memorials Committee or the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended the rejection of a memorial or resolution considered by the committee without making any other recommendation on the same or closely related subject, such memorial or resolution recommended for rejection shall be the main motion before the assembly and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

The responses to the 1994 and 1995 synod memorials, as recommended by the Memorials Committee in a printed report distributed to assembly members prior to, or at, the first business session of the assembly, may be approved by en bloc resolutions when so proposed by the Memorials Committee, unless a voting member objects to the inclusion of any particular response. The objection of a voting member shall be made in writing delivered to the chair, or other committee member designated by the chair, of the Memorials Committee or the churchwide secretary, not later than 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 17, 1995. Particular responses so objected to shall be considered separately and responses not objected to will be considered a part of the en bloc resolution.

Relationship to Boards of Churchwide Units

Each board shall be responsible to the Churchwide Assembly and will report to the Church Council in the interim. The policies, procedures and programs of each board shall be reviewed by the Church Council in order to assure conformity with the governing documents of this church and with Churchwide Assembly actions (ELCA 16.11.11.; 17.41.03.; 17.51.02.; 17.61.05.; 17.61.A91.g.; 17.21.04.).

Relationship to Commissions

Action of the Churchwide Assembly is required to establish a commission or to determine that a commission's mandate has been fulfilled (ELCA 16.21.).

Relationship to Board of Pensions

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. authorize the creation of the governance structure for this program;
- b. approve the documents establishing and governing the program;
- c. refer any amendments to the program initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of members with respect to their pension accumulations;
- d. direct the establishment of an appeal process within the Board of Pensions to enable participants in the plans to appeal decisions (ELCA 17.61.01.).

The Church Council shall refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments [to the church pension and other benefits plans] to the Churchwide Assembly for final action (ELCA 17.61.02.d.).

[The Board of Pensions] shall manage and operate the pension and other benefits plans for this church within the design and policy adopted by the Churchwide Assembly and shall invest assets according to its best judgment (ELCA 17.61.A91.a.).

[The Board of Pensions] shall report to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council, with the Church Council making comments on all board actions needing approval of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 17.61.A91.g.).

Distribution of Materials

Materials may be distributed on the floor of the assembly only with the written consent of the secretary of this church. In cases where the secretary does not consent, appeal may be made to the Committee of Reference and Counsel, whose decision shall be final.

Assembly Costs

The churchwide organization shall be responsible for the costs of the Churchwide Assembly, including the reasonable costs for travel, housing, and board for voting and advisory members (ELCA 12.31.06.).

College Corporation Meetings

The voting members of the Churchwide Assembly also constitute the voting members of certain college corporations that hold meetings as part of the agenda of the assembly. The assembly will recess to conduct the corporation meeting(s) and reconvene at the conclusion of the corporation meeting(s), or at the beginning of the next scheduled session of the assembly.

Unfinished Business

When the orders of the day are called for adjournment of the Churchwide Assembly, all remaining unfinished items of business shall be referred to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for disposition.

Report of the Credentials Committee:

Roll of Assembly Members

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes pages 11-12; continued on Minutes, pages 41, 91, 105, 159-160, 253, 257, 619; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Secretary Almen, reporting on behalf of the Credentials Committee, presented a revised Roll of Assembly Members. There being no objection, the revised roll of assembly members was received by common consent. Bishop Chilstrom ordered that the roll of assembly members be entered into the official minutes of the assembly. The roll is appended here as Exhibit A, pages 697-712 of this volume.

Committees of the Churchwide Assembly

Reference: Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 579-580; Program, pages 6-7.

ELCA bylaw 12.51. specifies that “the Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, and a Nominating Committee. . . . The Churchwide Assembly may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary.” Bishop Chilstrom drew attention to the memberships of the Nominating Committee, Reference and Counsel Committee, and the Memorials Committee, printed on pages 6-7 of the assembly Program booklet. Hearing no objection, he declared those committees authorized and so constituted.

The Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, as adopted by this assembly (CA95.1.1), provided for additional committees, the members of which were listed on page 7 in the assembly Program booklet. Hearing no objections, Bishop Chilstrom declared those committees to be duly authorized and so constituted.

Local Arrangements Committee

Bishop Chilstrom recognized the Local Arrangements Committee, chaired by Ms. Suzanne Bjork and Mr. Harold Huwe, and presented to them keepsakes in appreciation for their contribution to the life of this church. Assembly members recognized them with applause. Bishop Chilstrom also expressed gratitude to Bishop David W. Olson [Minneapolis Area Synod] and Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl [Saint Paul Area Synod], to their synodical staff members, and to the hundreds of volunteers working to facilitate the work of this assembly.

Introduction of the Parliamentarian

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Ms. Angeline Haines (Lutherville, Md.), parliamentarian for this assembly. He then presented her with a gift of appreciation for her service.

Adoption of Order of Business

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 561-565, 594; Order of Business.

Bishop Chilstrom drew attention to the following motion for adoption of the Order of

Business, printed on the cover of the Order of Business booklet.
Secretary Lowell G. Almen moved the following motion:

Moved;

Seconded: To approve the Order of Business as the agenda of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, in keeping with the provisions of the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" for the calling of items of business before the assembly.

The Rev. Walter R. Bouman [Northeastern Ohio Synod] then moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-302; No-642; Abstain-13

Defeated: To amend the proposed Order of Business to change the schedule for the election of the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as follows:

	Plenary Session One:	Prayer for the process;
	Plenary Session Two:	First ballot;
	Plenary Session Three:	Report of the first ballot;
ballot;	Plenary Session Four:	Second ballot and report of second
and addresses by candidates;	Plenary Session Five:	Biographies of the seven candidates
ballot;	Plenary Session Six:	Third ballot and report of third
	Plenary Session Seven:	Questions to the three candidates;
ballot;	Plenary Session Eight:	Fourth ballot and report of fourth
	Plenary Session Nine:	Fifth ballot and report of fifth ballot.

Speaking to the foregoing motion, Pastor Bouman observed the need for provision of ample time for prayerful and careful consideration of a momentous decision in this church's life, namely, the election of the bishop of this church. Bishop Chilstrom explained the process and rationale for setting the agenda as originally proposed. He noted that the proposed agenda had been reviewed by both the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops without objection. The Rev. Steven K. Thorsen [Saint Paul Area Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, stating that he wanted to have more time to think and pray before voting on such a crucial matter.

The proposed revision to the agenda was not adopted.

The Rev. Larry V. Smoose [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] inquired whether the results of the first ballot might be posted in both the Hilton and Hyatt hotels and at the convention center, giving voting members more time to consider the nominees before the second ballot. Bishop Chilstrom observed that it previously had been determined that all voting members should receive the results of the ballots at the same time.

Pastor Smoose sought to move to amend the proposed Order of Business to reflect his previously stated request. Bishop Chilstrom ruled the motion to be out of order, because the mover had already spoken to the matter.

The Rev. George E. Keck [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] then moved on behalf of

Pastor Smoose the following amendment:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-554; No-422; Abstain-23

Carried: To amend the proposed Order of Business to stipulate that the results of the first ballot for bishop be posted at the Minneapolis Convention Center and at the Hilton and Hyatt hotels as soon as the results are known and prior to the official report on Thursday morning, August 17.

Speaking to the foregoing motion, Pastor Smoose reiterated that the amendment would provide additional time for consideration of the nominees prior to the casting of the second ballot.

Assembly

Action Yes-949; No-32; Abstain-3

CA95.1.2 To approve, as amended, the Order of Business as the agenda of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, in keeping with the provisions of the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" for the calling of items of business before the assembly.

Elections: First Ballot for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued on Minutes, pages 53-55, 64-65, 95-96, 105-113, 137-138, 160-174, 253-254, 265.

In preparation for the casting of the first ballot for the office of bishop of this church, Bishop Chilstrom cited the Apostle Paul's exhortation to the leaders of the church at Ephesus, "Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son" (Acts 20:28). Bishop Chilstrom also recalled the governing documents of this church, which state concerning the office of bishop, "This church shall have a bishop who, as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church."

Bishop Chilstrom explained that assembly members might write in the name of any ordained minister of this church on the ballot; no nominations would be made orally from the floor. He announced that nominees who wished to withdraw their name must necessarily do so prior to the casting of the second ballot. Noting that three-fourths of the votes cast would be required for election on the first ballot, he then instructed the synodical bishops to distribute ballots.

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] inquired how ballots should be completed for nominees who may be known by their middle name and first initial only. "As best you can," replied Bishop Chilstrom.

Bishop Chilstrom led the assembly in prayer and then directed that ballots be cast. Subsequently, he declared the first ballot to be closed.

Announcements

In an aside, Secretary Lowell G. Almen noted that the word, "Counsel," as in "Committee

of Reference and Counsel,” had been misspelled in an assembly publication. “For those whose stomachs would churn every time they saw it spelled incorrectly during the next week,” he offered adhesive labels imprinted with the correct spelling.

Secretary Almen reported that the Elections Committee anticipated completion of its tally of the nominating ballot for the office of bishop at approximately midnight. Posting of the results could not occur until after that time, he indicated.

Bishop Chilstrom then called upon the Rev. Andrea F. DeGroot-Nesdahl, bishop-elect of the South Dakota Synod, to offer the closing prayer.

Plenary Session One recessed at 9:04 p.m.

Plenary Session Two
Thursday, August 17, 1995
8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

The Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called Plenary Session Two to order at 8:31 a.m. Central Daylight Time. He welcomed those who were viewing the proceedings of the assembly by cable television.

Opening Prayer

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. John O. Knudson [Pacifica Synod], worship leader for this plenary session, and noted that Pastor Knudson would complete his term as a member of the Church Council at the conclusion of this assembly. Prior to worship, Mr. Scott C. Weidler, assembly organist, taught the assembly the hymn, “Come, All You People.”

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes, pages 11-12, 35; continued on Minutes, pages 91, 105, 159-160, 253, 257, 619; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen, who, as ex officio chair of the Credentials Committee, provided the following report as of 8:37 a.m. August 17. (A revised report is printed at the end of this plenary session, on page 91 of these minutes.)

Voting Members			
Ordained Ministers	Female	109	
			Male 310
			Total 419
Lay Members	Female	319	
			Male 291
			Total 610
Total		1,029	
ELCA Officers			4
Total Voting Membership			1,033

Of the 1,033 registered voting members, 94 were persons of color or persons whose primary language was other than English.

Report of the Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 1027-1033.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom relinquished the chair to Vice President Kathy J. Magnus.

Chair Pro-Tem Magnus called for the Report of the Bishop and stated that the prepared text of the bishop's report would be distributed at the end of Plenary Session Two. A summary of the bishop's spoken comments and the full text follow.

Bishop Chilstrom began and ended his report with words of thanks. He thanked those with whom he had worked most closely during the past eight years, and, departing from his prepared remarks, particularly commended the Rev. Eric C. Shafer, whom he described as "my right-hand person," serving as assembly coordinator. He described "mission" as "the first priority of this church" and yet noted "that most of our members do not feel the urgency of mission." He said that this church can no longer "rely principally on ordained persons and other set-aside persons to do the work of witness and service." He provided a lengthy list of accomplishments over the course of the past eight years, including, among others, the launching of 272 new mission congregations, supporting ELCA missionaries in 60 countries, a doubling of the ELCA Mission Investment Fund, and dialogue with 12 other church bodies.

Bishop Chilstrom called for a renewed sense of confidence within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, noting that some members "long for a unity we had in the past" or for a unity envisioned for the future when there would be "no issues to divide us." "Our memories may need refreshment," he cautioned, because there were always "tensions" in the predecessor churches. Bishop Chilstrom characterized a view of the future with no divisive issues as "naive." He also affirmed that "size has little to do with unity; what holds us together is agreement on the Gospel."

Bishop Chilstrom called upon this church to "use the Bible with care," building on accurate interpretations, the tradition of the Church, the gift of reason, and the experience of believers. He urged this church to "work for peace with vigor," expressing concern that even in the United States a "civil religion" might emerge as a substitute for "a dynamic church of the

Gospel.”

Address to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly
Herbert W. Chilstrom, Bishop

Thank You! Thank You!

Like bookends, I want to begin and end this final report to this church with words of gratitude.

I thank God, whose we are and whom we serve, that we have been sustained through these first eight years of our life together in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Paul's word that "God is faithful" is the source out of which we have lived. We are indeed "deeply and confidently rooted in the Gospel of God's grace."

But, God uses people. I am keenly aware of the partnership of so many in this venture. Today, I am especially thankful for a faithful churchwide staff, for synodical bishops and their staffs, regional coordinators, and a network of others who are related to the churchwide organization in one way or another.

When hundreds of us on the churchwide staff came together in late 1987 and early 1988 we were, by and large, strangers to one another. But, as we worked together a bond of unity and purpose formed and we soon developed friendships and alliances that have undergirded our common work for this church. My thanks to all of you, some already having moved on to new ventures and others who have joined us in more recent years.

I am especially grateful for those who have worked with me in a closer circle. Chris Grumm and Kathy Magnus, vice presidents; Lowell Almen, secretary; George Aker and Richard McAuliffe, treasurers. In my own office I have been supported by the steady and competent assistance of Robert Bacher, Lita Brusick Johnson, assistants since the beginning, and Morris Sorenson Jr., Lee Thoni, and Craig Lewis, who served earlier. All of us, in turn, rely on Rena Rustad, Patricia Hoyt, Nancy Vaughn, current staff, and Karen Knox, Gladys Farstrup, and Dee Dee Rivers who have retired or gone on to other work.

We have been blessed with a cadre of heads of churchwide units who not only manage their work well, but, who also keep raising up a vision of who we can be in every aspect of our work. These persons, in turn, are surrounded by dedicated staff persons who are willing to go the second and third mile in making certain our work is done with efficiency and high standard. I give thanks for all of them.

And in the innermost circle, I give thanks for Corinne. Because it is important for the bishop of this church to be with the people of this church, I have spent more than four of the past eight years away from home. It is not a thing to choose. How grateful I am for a life partner who loves this church as much as I do, who prays faithfully for this church, and who has been my most important source of encouragement these eight years in office.

Normally these kinds of acknowledgments come at the end of a report. I put them up front, however, for good reason. Over these past several months, as I have moved toward the end of my time in office, I have been the recipient of many words of gratitude from every corner of this church. I am aware, however, that the office of bishop of this church is highly symbolic. Thus, when grateful expressions of thanks come to me, I know they are meant for all who have worked with me in the ELCA churchwide, regional, and synodical offices. Like this church itself, we have been an interdependent team of colleagues, committed to a common cause.

A Church in Mission

From the beginning we have accented "mission" as the first priority of this church a priority inherited from our three predecessor churches. In our Mission90 emphasis we underscored the need for us to understand our faith—what it means to be a Christian—in order that we might be "free to give our life joyfully in witness and service."

I fear, however, that most of our members do not feel the urgency of mission. As we gather here in Minneapolis, folks from other parts of the country tend to think of this area as the heart of Lutheranism, a place where many belong to one of our ELCA congregations, and where most folks go to church. The Rev. Christopher Nelson, pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran Church on the south side of this city, reported recently to his congregation that a survey of a five mile radius around Bethlehem Church reveals that nearly 40 percent say they have no faith involvement whatever. Another 30 percent say they are only marginally related to a church. If we have a mission field of that magnitude here in this highly-churched city, we can only imagine the challenges in other places.

I repeat with strong emphasis what I have said in every corner of this church: We must pray that the winds of the Spirit will blow among us and convert us from a settled church to a mission-driven church!

Empowerment through Prayer

This will not happen so long as we continue to rely principally on ordained persons to do the work of witness and service. In the course of this assembly we will discuss and take action on a forward-looking plan for theological education in this church. But, let it be said here in the beginning, that our greatest need is for the laity of this church to come alive in the Spirit, to use the gifts that are theirs, and to carry the Good News of the Gospel into their daily lives. Only then will we be the church God intends us to be.

The resources to support us are available: Bible study programs, evangelism workshops, worship materials, personal development seminars, global mission events, spiritual growth retreats, a reservoir of good books published by this church, and on and on. And all this in addition to what is most important for a Lutheran church—the weekly gathering for nourishment through Word and Sacrament.

Is prayer the missing or neglected element? Surely prayer is not some magic potion, used to manipulate God. But, listen to what Luther says about prayer:

If any good is to be done and evil is to be prevented, it must . . . be accomplished by prayer. Every Christian should say to himself: Since prayer is so pleasing to God and so highly necessary and useful to me, to the church and to [society], I, too, intend to come to the assistance of the church with my prayers as much as I can; for I know that prayer shall not and cannot be offered in vain.

In these last months in office I have called for prayer in this church—prayer for new leadership, prayer for an understanding of our mission as we move toward the new millennium, and prayer for all of us, that the winds of the Spirit may blow though every corner of this church.

Pray and Work

"Ora et labora" is the ancient formula, relevant for today. In answer to our prayers, God gives us work to do. And we have done much work in these past eight years. We have:

- reflected on the Means of Grace, central to our understanding of what it means to be the

church;

- put Bible study and witness helps into the hands of our members;
- provided educational materials for all ages in the congregations of this church;
- started 272 new mission congregations;
- supported ELCA missionaries in 60 countries;
- maintained a commitment to become a more multicultural and inclusive church;
- adopted forward-looking statements in a number of important areas, including ecumenical relations, racism, the environment, abortion, and capital punishment;
- encouraged life-long learning in schools, college, university, and campus ministry settings in scores of places;
- ordained 2,403 pastors, commissioned 280 associates in ministry, set apart five deaconesses, and taken the first steps in the development of a theological education system focused on the future;
- fed the hungry and helped the hungry feed themselves through the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, raising more than \$83 million since 1988;
- encouraged work among our youth, women, and men through the Lutheran Youth Organization, Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Lutheran Men in Mission;
- shared in the growing sense of a communion of Lutheran churches through our membership in the Lutheran World Federation;
- identified with Christians of many backgrounds through the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches;
- supported The Lutheran magazine, still by far the largest-circulation magazine in any church in the U.S.;
- engaged in dialogue with 12 other churches, all aimed at better understanding and cooperation among Christians or the establishment of full communion;
- brought our churchwide budget into line with our resources, operating with a balanced budget for the past four years;
- doubled the ELCA Mission Investment Fund from \$60 million to more than \$120 million;
- increased the deferred gift fund of the ELCA Foundation for the future benefit of local, synodical, and churchwide ministries from \$25.8 million to \$75.3 million; in addition, the ELCA Foundation has received a further \$57 million for immediate distribution to ELCA ministries from bequests and outright gifts.

So much more could be added. But, I want to devote the remainder of this report—my final report—to three larger concerns. I want to lift up what I believe are three areas to which we must devote much prayerful thought and reflection if we are to maintain our heritage and, at the same time, speak a relevant word to our world.

Here is my plea:

First, Let us be the church with confidence.

Second, Let us use the Bible with care.

Third, Let us work for peace with vigor.

Let Us Be the Church with Confidence

As soon as decisions were made by our predecessor churches in the early 1980s to move

toward merger, we were intensely involved in theological as well as structural questions. Those of us on the Commission for a New Lutheran Church (CNLC) were surprised at the dispatch with which we moved toward agreement on a "Statement of Faith." This confirmed for us that we had broad and deep unity regarding theological matters.

With the actual formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came more theological and structural questions. Simply getting this church "up and running" in all of its expressions—churchwide, regional, and synodical—meant enormous concentration of energy in administrative matters.

Then came the reality that income from congregations would not be sufficient to carry out all we had dreamed of doing through synods and the churchwide organization. That called for several more attempts at bringing structure into line with resources.

More adjustments will probably be needed in the years to come. I know of no church body in the United States that anticipates a surge in financial support. That may call for more restructuring.

But, we need to be careful not to exaggerate this issue, at least not in this church. After two or three years of enormous adjustment, we achieved a balanced budget and have had one for the past four years. We have a good idea of what kind of support there will be from congregations, even as we search for new ways to stimulate giving.

As we deal with structural issues, we need to intensify our reflections on issues of faith and theology. We must continue to ask, not only what it means to be a Christian, but, what it means to be the church—the Lutheran church—in this time and in this place.

That reflection must begin with the strong reassertion that the Church is not ours. The Church is a creation of the Holy Spirit. However else we define the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we must see ourselves as a part of that great body of believers God has called through Word and Sacrament to be witnesses and servants in the world.

But, we must also consider what it means to be a Lutheran church. We can begin with our constitutional "Confession of Faith." When we study it carefully we find it to be a model for brevity, even as it covers all the important elements. Our "Confession" points us to the Augsburg Confession, in itself a model for brevity. Both the Augsburg Confession and our own ELCA "Confession of Faith" underscore what I have lifted up again and again these past eight years as the sign of a healthy church. I repeat it once more, hoping that it might be remembered for future discussions:

A healthy church is one that lives in creative tension between two extremes, framed by two questions: How much unity shall we demand? How much variety shall we tolerate?

This is exactly what is at the heart of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession. It frustrates those who insist that we must agree on all things if there is to be unity; and it frustrates those who look for the least possible number of requirements for unity. It does so for a very simple yet radical reason: that we might be free to proclaim the Good News that God makes sinners right in Jesus Christ. To agree on Gospel and Sacraments is sufficient. Ceremonies and other forms of human tradition can vary from time to time and from place to place, so long as the Gospel is faithfully proclaimed and the Sacraments are faithfully administered.

Now and then we hear from those who long for a unity to come some day in the future, for a unity they thought we had in the past. For I hear some folks say, "You know, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is such a large church and there are so many special

interest groups, how can we ever achieve a sense of identity and unity?" Well, as for the past, our memories may need refreshment. When we were in those smaller enclaves, where most members were of the same ethnic background, German, Danish, Norwegian, or what have you, did we have a great sense of identity? No, not necessarily. Then, just as now, there were tensions as you read the histories. Tensions in the church often leading to division. And as for the future, is it not naive to believe that a time will come when there will be no issue with the potential to divide us? As for size, history again is our teacher. Unity, or disunity, have little to do with the size of a church, whether it be local congregations or an entire denomination. Regardless of the issues or the size of this church, what holds us together is our agreement on the Gospel and the Sacraments.

I dwell on this because I see this issue as critical to our health as a church. There is a meanness in our culture these days, which can be seen in this church as well. Someone hears of an isolated incident of faulty practice and suddenly our synodical bishops are all accused of failing to guard the faith. Or someone attends a conference where something is said that is questionable and then makes the quantum leap to accuse the entire church of supporting false doctrine.

We need not be that uncertain of ourselves. In a spirit of mutual love and respect we can discuss openly and freely what makes for unity in this church. If we understand that the purpose of the Gospel is not to lead to agreement in each and every detail of how the Christian life is to be lived, but, is for proclamation of the radical Good News about Jesus, then we have sufficient basis for any kind of discussion we want to have.

One of the finest articles I have read in the past year or two was written by a Methodist for Methodists. But, because we share many similarities, his words are pertinent for us as well. Thomas E. Frank writes about what he calls "the rhetoric of crisis" that pervades so much of our church life these days. We have surrendered ourselves, says Frank, to certain "church gurus" whose business it is to analyze what is happening in our churches. The more they can manipulate the data to make the churches look bad, the more they are in demand as speakers and authors. We give power to these "distant experts," not only believing everything they say, but also buying into the programs of change they prescribe. This rhetoric of crisis "profoundly serves American culture's idol of success. An obsession with declining numbers and loss of influence is the mirror image of a compulsion for growing numbers and increasing influence and notoriety," says Frank.

The problem with all this, writes Frank, is that it detracts the Church from the Gospel it has been entrusted with, from being a church "that announces the Good News of Jesus Christ, identifies with the poor, cares for the broken-hearted, welcomes the stranger, pours money and volunteers into places of crisis, acts for justice, and pleads for the beauty and integrity of God's good creation. . . ."

We need to celebrate our strengths and build on them. Hundreds of ELCA congregations are going strong after 100 to nearly 300 years of ministry in their place. Churches in older urban settings continue to find new forms of ministry even as the communities around them have drastically changed. Many rural and small town congregations have come through the enormous transitions of their communities with sustained membership and growing mission.

Let us be the church with confidence!

Let Us Use the Bible with Care

This may sound strange to your ears. Why should we be careful in our use of the Bible?

Let me begin by saying that I love the Bible. When my faith was awakened as a teenager one of the best words of advice I heard from more mature believers was that I should read the Bible every day. Now fifty years later, I can say that that advice was good. I can see that there has been a very direct correlation between the vitality of my Christian life and the attention I have given to Bible reading and study.

In my parish ministry study of the Bible by adults had the highest priority. I spent nearly a decade teaching the Bible to college students. And in my near-twenty years in the office of bishop I have taken time to teach the Bible to pastors and laity, believing that the study of the Bible is also essential to spiritual vitality in the whole Church. Corinne and I begin each day by reading the three appointed lessons for the day. I read the Bible privately. I have already agreed to spend part of my time in the next stage of life writing sermon helps for pastors, based on the texts for the appointed Sundays.

I stress all of this so that you will understand how I long for this church to become more deeply grounded in the Holy Scriptures. But, my concern is not simply that we read and study the Bible. My concern is with HOW we read and HOW we study.

We live in a culture where there is a growing tendency to use the Bible in a manner that I believe is alien to the traditions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is assumed by many that every verse of the Bible is of equal importance and that all we need to do in resolving difficult issues is to find the right Bible verses and apply them as the last word. The Bible is made into an object of worship. As we approach the new millennium we can expect this pattern to proliferate.

That is not our way of using the Bible. We do not worship the Bible, the written word. The Bible is the means through which we find the Living Word. Christ, the Living Word, is the one we worship. Luther and the reformers taught us that there is what they called "a canon within the canon." That is to say, there is "a Bible within the Bible." Not every verse or every book is of equal value or usefulness. Surely Luther considered the book of James, for example, to be a part of the Bible. But, he felt free to move it to the edge because it does not speak as clearly to what he considered to be at the heart of the Bible—the Good News that we are saved by grace alone through faith.

When we deal with difficult questions there is a pattern we should follow:

- We should indeed begin with the Bible. We should call on the best minds in this church, persons knowledgeable with the Scriptures in their original languages and persons known for their skills of interpretation, to help us to ask the question, "What does the Bible say?"

- We should ask about the tradition of the Church. We should call on those who can instruct us in the history of the church to guide us in asking the question, "How has the church dealt with this matter in the past? Why did believers in earlier generations come to certain conclusions?"

- We should use the gift of reason. Luther recognized that reason, like any other good, can be demonic. But, he also encouraged us to use this gift, shaped by the Spirit, to gain insight into the will of God.

- We should look at the experience of believers. If God is alive and at work in the church, then God may be doing new things. What can we learn from our brothers and sisters in Christ out of their experience in the world? How does that experience fit with our understanding of the Bible and the tradition of the Church?

This way of forming the mind of the Church was already at work in the period just after

Pentecost. As Paul, Peter, Barnabas, Junia, and other apostles and evangelists brought the Gospel to new peoples they soon discovered that there was a conflict between their traditions and those of other cultures. Circumcision was one of the first to test their unity. Their sacred Scriptures commanded that all males be circumcised as a sign that they were God's people. They had kept this tradition for more than fifteen centuries!

But now, reason and experience were telling them a different story. It did not seem right to require this of the Gentile believers. The debate precipitated a crisis that resulted in a great council of the Church that is recorded for us in Acts 15. At that meeting they decided what was essential and what was peripheral. The one central requirement would be that all agree that we are saved by faith in Christ alone. Circumcision, they reasoned, must not be a requirement. It was a difficult decision for those who feared they were disrespectful of their sacred Scriptures and were disregarding their holy history. But, for the sake of the Gospel, they took that important step.

The Church has been engaged in this same process ever since. Let me cite only one or two examples from our American past. Some of you are the great-grandchildren of devout Lutherans who believed that the Bible supported slavery. They believed that the Bible did not disapprove of it. Furthermore, they could cite a long history of its practice by Christians. When slaves were treated respectfully, they believed that having slaves was not a sin.

But, other believers, including devout Lutherans, began to question whether it was right for one person to own another, no matter what the Bible seemed to say or what the tradition had been.

The ensuing controversy divided Lutherans in this land, both in the South and in the North. It took many years for the division to heal and for the church to come to one mind. But, as the church searched the Scriptures, reflected on tradition, exercised good reason, and looked at its experience, the rift was healed and the church came together in an understanding that slavery could not be tolerated by the church.

We celebrate 25 years of the ordination of women at this assembly. But, have we already forgotten the struggle we went through to come to that decision? Many felt that both the Bible and tradition precluded that possibility. But, we studied the Bible more carefully, we looked at the traditions of other churches, we exercised our reason, we looked at experience, and out of it came an important change for our predecessor churches and for us.

We have seen this same process at work in our discussion regarding human sexuality, and especially in relationship to the very complex issue of homosexuality. We have the Bible, which most of us believe speaks only in negative terms of any expression of homosexuality. And in spite of the efforts of some to rewrite history, the overwhelming evidence remains one of a negative tradition.

But, some are asking hard questions. Is it still reasonable to assume that a person can change something as fundamental as sexual orientation? When tens of thousands of gay and lesbian persons tell us that they have tried to change, but, have not been able to do so, is it still reasonable to insist on it? Is it right to deny them an intimate relationship? And as more and more members of this church experience first-hand what it means to have a member of their family, a co-worker, or a friend who is homosexual, the issue becomes even more critical.

As with every other major issue that has confronted the Church over the years, we must be patient in dealing with all of the matters related to human sexuality. That will be difficult for those at both ends of the spectrum of debate where patience is wearing thin. I believe, however,

that there are many in this church—probably our "silent majority"—who want to continue the discussion, using the elements we have mentioned: study of the Bible, respect for tradition, the proper use of reason, and attention to experience.

If this is to happen in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it will be important that we recapture our Lutheran understanding of the use of the Bible. We can differ on many matters. But, there is a core—the bedrock agreement that all are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Let Us Work for Peace with Vigor

Just last week we commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. At a meeting at our Lutheran Center in Chicago those of us old enough to remember that day recalled exactly where we were when we heard the news. It is riveted in our memory. Though I was too young to understand fully what it meant, I knew the world had been ushered into a new era of fear and instability.

Since this church was born a little more than eight years ago our world has changed dramatically once more. If asked at that time what was the greatest threat to world peace, most of us would have said, "The conflict between East and West." In 1988 I visited the Lutheran church in what was then East Germany. I recall vividly the walk through the tunnel from the train station in East Berlin to West Berlin. All of the darkness and conflict of the world seemed focused on that place that day.

Suddenly, dramatically, breathtakingly it all changed. "The Wall" fell, and with it most of the barriers that had separated East from West. It will take years for us to understand it. No more saber rattling between East and West. No more fear of the Soviet Union—the "Evil Empire." There was talk about "a new world order," an age of unprecedented peace and tranquility in the world.

Now, less than a decade later, we are beginning to know better. And, of course, good Lutherans should have known all along that the human condition was, is, and always will be such that the resolution of one conflict only makes room for another to erupt. The Mid-East, Somalia, Liberia, the former Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan. We can only wonder where the next fires will burn.

Lutherans have never been identified as "Peace Churches," even though individual members and some groups have refused to engage in armed conflict of any kind. We have tended toward support of the so-called Just War Theory, believing that under certain clearly prescribed circumstances it is legitimate to engage in a war that resists tyrannical powers. Many would argue that this still continues to be an appropriate response in a fallen and broken world. This may be true.

What we need to ask, however, is whether there are ways in which we can work pro-actively to avert war and conflict. In a history of the Civil War a Union soldier noted in his diary: "The very sensible question was asked, but, not satisfactorily answered: What are we fighting each other for?" It is the task of the churches to ask that question. While we may give thought and reflection to the question of what conditions must prevail before taking up arms, we must give equal energy and deliberation to the question of how we can bring peace to our neighborhoods, country, and the world.

The bombing in Oklahoma City has shattered the myth that we live here in the United States in a safe haven. After visiting more than 50 countries in the last decade, Robert Kaplan states that future conflicts will not be between great national powers. What we can expect, he

says, is growing animosity rooted in religious, cultural, ethnic, and economic differences. And he says that the latter—the growing gap between the rich and the poor will probably be the greatest cause of bloodshed.

What can the Church do? What can this church do?

We can pray. In addition to the prayers I suggested earlier in this report, I urge that every one of our 11,000 congregations include prayers for peace every Sunday. If we believe there is One who hears our prayers, then we have few things of greater importance for which to pray.

We can promote dialogue among peoples of different backgrounds. As our nation becomes increasingly multicultural, let our ELCA congregations be meeting places for these differing peoples. While evangelism and proclamation of the Gospel are central to our task, Jesus has also called us to be peacemakers. While we continue to promote dialogue between different churches, we must also step up our efforts to support inter-faith conversation. I am grateful for the efforts of our Division for Global Mission to help us to understand the faith of Islam and to begin to open doors of dialogue with Muslims. There are others, of course, whom we scarcely know—Buddhists, Hindus, and others. My strong hope is that we are now stable enough so that my successor will be able to lead this church in those kinds of ventures. There are people of good will in all major religious groups who long for a more stable, peaceful world. While there will always be conflict, surely we can find ways to reduce them and to deal with them more effectively.

We can call our own country to accountability. Like many others who think of themselves as "Christian" nations, we continue to be a major supplier of arms to warring factions all over the world. In the meantime, the percentage of our U.S. gross national product that goes for peaceful aid to others continues to decline. If this is unconscionable, and if we are called to be a conscience to our society, then we cannot be quiet about this sin.

Finally, we must recognize that peace and justice are inseparable. If Kaplan is right—that the economic gap is our greatest threat to peace and security—then churches who believe that Christ was on the side of the poor must position themselves exactly in that place. We must give, changing the pathetic pattern that characterizes ELCA members. We must advocate, resisting even our own church members who say that our only responsibility is to "preach the Gospel" and that other matters are to be left to the state.

Several years ago a friend opened my eyes to see the important distinction between "peace making" and "peace building." He helped me to see that "making" peace in a broken and sinful world implies a certain finality that is not achievable. It leads to the faulty impression that if we do the right things a kind of permanent peace and tranquility will result.

That doesn't hold. In a sinful world where yesterday's promises and last week's pact or treaty continually fall apart, the most we can do is build peace. This is reality. This approach reminds us that the task begins all over again each day, week in and year out.

We in this land could take some lessons from South Africa. Why did it take them so long to resolve their differences? According to David Bosch, a South African theologian, it was because certain white settlers saw themselves becoming an increasingly beleaguered minority. They sought refuge in their religion. In the process, and ever so subtly, the distinction between church and state blurred until finally they were indistinguishable one from the other. What is called "civil religion" emerged as a substitution for a dynamic church of the Gospel. The church defended the state at all cost and in the process lost its prophetic edge. Love of nation took highest place.

You may think it far-fetched to suggest that this could happen in the United States. And I hope I am wrong. But, I am convinced that, if present trends continue, it will not be long until we see a similar pattern in this land. Then the question will be whether we in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have kept ourselves close enough to the word of judgment and grace so that we will be able to speak a wise and prophetic word.

It was the late William Stringfellow who suggested that it may be churches that resist the urge to "Americanization," churches that maintain a rich heritage of liturgy and biblical preaching, that can speak that prophetic word. I pray that will be true for this church.

On the wall of our living room is a photograph I took several years ago on the site in Nagasaki where the second atomic bomb fell. It is a picture of a branch of a cherry tree in full bloom. It hangs there as a reminder of the hope of the Gospel, a hope that impels us to work for peace even when all hope seems lost, a hope that gives us confidence that life can flourish again where death has seemed to speak a final word.

Thank You—and Farewell

My heart is full of so many other things I would like to share with you. But, that will be for others to say.

We have come through a challenging time in these first years of our life together in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. If you ask me what is the "glue" that has held us together I would point first and foremost to you, the voting members of this assembly, and to all the faithful sisters and brothers across this church you represent. And I would add those who serve faithfully in colleges, universities, and schools, at our seminaries, social ministry settings, specialized ministries, chaplaincies, and all the places identified with this church.

In my acceptance speech eight years ago I likened this venture to a ship departing its safe harbor and heading out into the deeper waters. I predicted that there would be storms, as there surely have been. But, I also reminded us that the deeper waters are the safer waters. Your faith, deeply and confidently rooted in the Gospel of grace, and your witness and service, given joyfully and freely—these have been our strength and hope.

Let my last word—a word from both Corinne and me—be a very personal "thank you." So many have sent and spoken words of appreciation and encouragement in these last few months. We receive them as gifts of grace from you and from God.

A few have also expressed concern. "What will you do?", they ask. Don't worry. Our plates are full and running over. The God who has been so good to us will continue to be "our refuge and strength." We will take to heart what I have just urged you to do.

- We will speak with confidence of this church, assured that God will bless us;
- We will continue to read the Bible each day, drinking from its rich reservoir and thinking about how that word applies to our world today;
- We will pray for and work for peace, seeking those places where each of us can be salt, light, and leaven.

God bless you, one and all!

Presentation to Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom

Chair Pro-Tem Magnus thanked Bishop Chilstrom and stated that, under the Rules of Organization and Procedure, the report of the bishop would be received and referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel without further action by the assembly.

Chair Pro-Tem Magnus then called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to make a presentation to Bishop Chilstrom. Secretary Almen stated, “We stand with an eye towards history at this moment. Indeed, for historical commemoration and remembrance of the service of the Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom as the first bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this presentation is made. The object before us [a mosaic], which you will see in a moment, depicts the Jerusalem Cross. It reflects Bishop Chilstrom’s emphasis and leadership in ministry of the Gospel for the whole world. He has called repeatedly upon the people of this church to be ‘rooted in the Gospel for witness and service.’ Around the outside of the design is the record of the years of his service as bishop of this church, 1987-1995. This mosaic is now provided for Bishop Chilstrom’s personal use as long as he so desires and then eventually when he no longer wishes to retain it, it is to be delivered to the archives of this church. In the archives, it will hang permanently as an historical record and reminder of the years of his ministry as the first bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Secretary Almen then presented the mosaic to Bishop Chilstrom. The mosaic was designed and executed by Mr. David J. Hetland of Fargo, North Dakota. Bishop Chilstrom thanked the assembly and said, “My very deep and profound thanks. This is beautiful. I will hang on to it as long as I possibly can.”

Elections:

Report of the First Ballot for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, page 39; continued on Minutes, pages 64-65, 95-96, 105-113, 137-138, 160-174, 253-254, 264.

Bishop Chilstrom assumed the chair and called upon Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, to present the report of the first ballot for bishop. Mr. Hardy drew attention to the written report provided to each voting member and read the names of those nominees receiving 12 or more votes. It also was reported that there was a total of 186 nominees on the first ballot.

Number of ballots cast:	979
Number of illegal ballots cast:	4
Number of legal (valid) ballots cast:	975
Number of votes necessary for election:	735

Bishop Chilstrom declared that no election had occurred and announced that the second ballot would be cast later during this plenary session. He noted that nominees who wished to withdraw their names must do so prior to the next ballot.

Report of the Vice President and the Church Council

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 167-441; 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 707-875b.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Vice President Kathy J. Magnus, who, as chair of the Church Council, presented the council’s report. A summary of her spoken comments and the full text of the address follow.

Vice President Magnus used a photographic image to describe the challenge continually faced by the Church Council: “Where do we point our mental cameras when different subjects are competing for our attention?” The task of the vice president, she said, is “to maintain a focus

for the group.” The struggle at every meeting is to be a Church Council where concerns are heard and managed. The council has been blessed with “an abundance of good common sense, and I thank God for that.”

She listed the following issues, which had been acted upon by the Church Council during this biennium and transmitted to the Churchwide Assembly:

1. Follow-up from 1993 Churchwide Assembly action regarding representational principles;
2. Proposed social statement on peace with recommendations from the Church Council;
3. Study of the “Ministry of All the Baptized”;
4. Study of Theological Education;
5. 1996-1997 budget proposal;
6. Resolutions related to the prevention of violence against women and violence in society;
7. The “Inquiry” into the future of the Churchwide organization;
8. Development of a possible statement on human sexuality;
9. Focus on the Division for Global Mission and the Division for Higher Education and Schools;
10. The Study of Sacramental Practices available for study and response;
11. Dialogue concerning the role of bishop and the characteristics needed for leadership in the next century;
12. A study of implications of the proposed ecumenical relationships.

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the items listed for action would be taken up at a later time during this assembly.

Address to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly
Kathy J. Magnus, Vice President

What do an environmental educator, a water plant superintendent, a state supreme court justice, a campus pastor, a seminary professor, a woman who raises horses, and a parish pastor have in common? They are all elected members of your Church Council. They are lay and clergy, women and men, diverse in race and culture and thought. They, along with the officers of this church and 25 other elected members, make up your Church Council. They come together with astonishing diversity. Perhaps the most important thing I could say about these council members of yours is that they passionately love their God, they love this church unabashedly, and they are committed to enabling the telling of the Gospel story in hundreds of places and hundreds of ways throughout this country and around the globe.

I love pictures of faces. My first camera was a Brownie Hawkeye. I received it from my mom and dad when I was eight years old and the first trip we took with that marvelous camera was to northern Minnesota’s Lake Itasca State Park. My dad has pictures of the tiny Mississippi and the stately pines. I did not take one picture that did not have blurry faces in it. In a photo gallery I am drawn immediately to the wall of faces.

I have been married for almost 29 years to a man who loves pictures of landscapes. Our pictures of shared vacations are quite interesting. You would think we had not even been on the same planet. I have faces of women and babies and elderly couples walking hand in hand, and Dick has pictures of crashing surf and majestic mountain ranges. I am not at all a good photographer, although perhaps that is a fantasy of mine. I own one of those point-and-shoot

contraptions and secretly, well, I guess not anymore, I would wish that I understood F-stops and aperture openings and the like.

There is a tiny microchip inside today's camera that does just about everything for the photographer and provides a lesson for us as well. The lesson comes with the automatic focus feature. The camera automatically focuses on whatever you point it at, but you must decide that which you are going to focus on in the first place.

This council has developed its own systems for staying focused on the critical tasks at hand. The trick is to choose the right subject for its focus. Where do we point our mental cameras when multiple subjects are competing for our attention? Deciding where and when to focus takes discipline. How do we focus on the priority objectives of this church?

Some of the choices in this biennium have been easier than others, but they all involve the ability to focus and prioritize the issues and people that are most important. We cannot focus on something simply because it is competing loudly for our attention. Our focus must be drawn to the task or the issue that has the greatest potential for making Christ known. At times, our total focus has been needed in one particular area. At other times, the mission focus is multifaceted. Sometimes I have felt like the electronic control in my little point-and-shoot camera as chair of this council.

My task is to maintain a sharp focus for the group. Sometimes, some of the council is focusing on a face and others are focusing on the crashing surf. The council needs to ask the hard questions of program, of staff, and of each other, and stay focused. And they do—because of our clarity of purpose. It comes directly from chapter four of the ELCA constitution: “The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.”

We struggle at every meeting with being a church in which concerns are heard and cared-for. At times, the issues that we have needed to address were complex and have been overwhelming. But, our moments of celebration have come when we have heard about the ministries happening across this church, when we have heard your stories. As I tell you a bit about our council meetings, I invite you to take a look on the [video] screen at the council at work.

This council has had an abundance of good common sense, and I thank God for that. The meetings are usually four days in length, with a day of committee meetings preceding the council. We are joined in the meetings by two youth advisory members and nine advisory bishops. Their contributions to our deliberation are critical. One evening during council meetings, the council has been divided into groups of four or five members who have gone to dinner with staff from the churchwide units. This has provided time for council members to get an in-depth look at the cutting-edge ministries of the units, the areas of visions and dreams and the struggles. Not every unit has had agenda time at every council meeting and so such dinners have provided a time to keep us in touch with the work of the church even if a unit was not bringing an item before the council for action.

Each council meeting begins with worship. I am convinced that, as a council, one of our most important tasks is the enabling of holy spaces in all the corners of the globe in which the people of God can hear the holy Word that brings hope, that creates community, and that sends us outward with the Good News. The council members and my fellow officers have become part of my “cloud of witnesses,” which has supported and sustained me as we have deliberated, struggled, celebrated, prayed, wept, laughed, and created. To those of you who elected us, I give

thanks on behalf of this council for the privilege of serving in this church.

Your council has performed the functions assigned in the constitution. We have been reviewing, appointing, calling, setting salaries, advising, communicating, overseeing, and being the interim legislative body between meetings of the assembly. This council has taken its responsibility with energy and focus. Frances Hesselbein, CEO [chief executive officer] of the Peter Drucker Foundation, is credited with saying, “The first responsibility of leadership is to share the vision. The last is to say thank you. And in between to be a servant.” I believe that characterizes this council in this biennium as we have been focused for mission.

What have the issues been that have kept us busy for these past two years? I am sure that you have read with care the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, but in case you missed a paragraph here or there, let me share a few brief highlights with you. Many of these items will come before you for action in some way during these next days.

There has been follow-up from the 1993 Churchwide Assembly action calling for a study of the representational principles upon which this church is structured. The council was requested to establish a process for reflection by the council, the Conference of Bishops, the Commission for Women, the Commission for Multicultural Ministries, and the seminary faculties and to report back to this 1995 Churchwide Assembly. A process for reflection was designed by the council’s Executive Committee and approved by the council in April 1994. That full report will be brought to you on Saturday morning.

A statement entitled, “For Peace in God’s World,” comes to you with the recommendations of the council. The broad-based group that undertook this study and writing has, in the opinion of this council, done an excellent job. Our concern remains that, if indeed the study is adopted, it must become more than a document that we store on the shelf. The issues raised in this document must affect the synods and your congregations and your own lives.

We have received progress reports from the Division for Ministry and affirmed the plans of the division to continue and to deepen the churchwide conversation on matters related to the ministry of all the baptized in the coming biennium.

Documents related to associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers have been adopted.

The Study of Theological Education comes to you with the strong recommendation and appreciation of the council. As we look to the next century and the preparation of candidates for ministry and leadership in this church, we know that theological education is going to be up against new challenges. There is excitement for us about first-call education and the eleven imperatives approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. The study comes to you with expectations for action—not only at this assembly but in the years ahead—as the designs are implemented.

The budget has been ever before us. We begin already this morning to look at budget recommendations. My personal thanks to Edith Lohr, who has chaired the Budget and Finance Committee of this council for eight years and who now leaves the council. Her leadership has been critical in this arena of work of the council.

During this biennium, several churchwide boards and steering committees developed resolutions related to violence against women. In November 1994, the council approved a resolution that incorporates those concerns and now comes to you for action.

We adopted a message on community violence. It calls on ELCA members to consider how each one of us—5.2 million of us—might become more involved in countering the reality

and fear of violence in our own communities.

A proposal entitled, "Inquiry, the Future of the Churchwide Organization," was discussed at length at the December 1993 meeting of the council. An outgrowth of our on-going long-range planning processes, this proposal also addressed questions raised by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. Many of you are aware of the call to prayer and reflection issued by Bishop Chilstrom. That was part of the inquiry process. The question that inquiry raises, my friends, is, How do we tell the old, old story in a 21st century world? The council is excited about what we are hearing in the inquiry process and I look forward to sharing some of those findings with you later in this assembly.

We have struggled with the development of a possible social statement on human sexuality. A progress report, and a report from the council, will come to you at this assembly. The verbatim debate from our December 1993 meeting is before you in volume one [of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report]. If you take time to read that through, you will have a better understanding of the multiple concerns discussed by the council around this document and what we were hearing across this church.

The Program and Structure Committee of the council undertook a review of the Division for Global Mission and the Division for Higher Education and Schools. The Division for Global Mission also engaged in its own intensive internal evaluation process. We are pleased and excited about the work and the mission of these two units. I hope that before you leave this assembly you will have a new focus on global mission and higher education and schools. What exciting stories there are for you to hear about our ministry together across and around the globe.

A study on sacramental practices is now out in this church for study and response. We had great conversation in the council meeting on that document and I know that many of you have begun studying it in your own congregations. We are looking forward to hearing the responses and thoughts, questions and ideas, that come back to us as this document continues in development.

In light of the election of a bishop at this assembly, the council adopted a study piece so that members of this church could prayerfully discuss the role of the bishop and the characteristics needed for leadership to carry us into the next century.

As 1997 draws closer, and with that the possibility of significant ecumenical decisions, the council has begun to spend much more time becoming familiar with the implications of the proposed decisions. These next two years in our church must be a time of in-depth study and conversation around these possible decisions.

As we move through these next days and you take actions on many of these items, please take those actions seriously in your synod, and in your congregation, and in your own life. We will do little to change the world, if each of us is not bold enough to step forward and not only believe but act as if the Gospel really does transform lives and communities.

As this biennium comes to a close, I want to offer my thanks to the council. They are seated to my right and some throughout the auditorium as they sit with their synodical delegations. A group of persons on the council deserve particular thanks. They are the members who have served on the council since being elected at the constituting convention of this church. As their terms now end, we lose the gift of their collective memory, their wisdom and commitment. Those persons are Mr. William E. Diehl, the Rev. John O. Knudson, Ms. Edith M. Lohr, Ms. Patsy Gottschalk, Mr. Loren W. Mathre, Ms. Susan H. Stapell, the Rev. James G. Cobb, and the Rev. David G. Gabel. It has been said that with whom you walk determines what

you learn. I am so grateful to have had the privilege of walking with and learning with these incredible people. Thank you, council.

In closing, I would invite you into a story from my childhood. Once upon a time, the ruler of a certain kingdom wondered what it would sound like, if everyone in the whole world were to shout as loudly as they could, all at one time. What a roar that would be. And so, the story goes, word was sent out to all the regions, to every people everywhere, that on one day at the stroke of 12, everyone was to go outside and shout as loud as possible, all together. The king became quite excited about this and the people, too, wondered what this would sound like. In fact, Sarah, the tailor, thought, "I want to hear this sound, but, if I shout, I will not hear it. I will just pretend to shout and then I will hear this marvelous result." Sarah mentioned her plan to her neighbor who thought Sarah's idea a good one. They vowed to be silent so they could hear. Then, Sarah's neighbor told his colleague of their plan and he in turn told someone else, and so on and so on. They all looked forward to the great day.

The day finally arrived and all the people started filling the city streets in the morning waiting in great anticipation for the signal—the moment when everyone would shout together. The king took his place on the balcony of the palace for the great event and as high noon approached, everyone became quiet to get ready for the great roar of the people. "Ten, nine, eight," counted the town crier, "five, four, three," he loudly announced. "Two, one," and at the exact stroke of noon, all the mouths in the kingdom opened and not a sound was heard anywhere in the kingdom. Not one peep. Silence. Everyone wanted to hear the result.

That childhood story came to mind as we approached this assembly. I think we all dream of the powerful mission and ministry that could come from 5.2 million people in this church. We have a lot of work to do, and we have been given a marvelous partnership in which to do it—in which to make Christ known. I do believe that we are in this together—congregations, specialized ministries, synods, churchwide staff, the Church Council, this assembly, and each one of you. But, none of us can stand in silence. We must risk bold action, shouting with our hearts and our hands, our voices and our actions, focusing on our greatest task and our greatest privilege—Making Christ Known.

Budget: First Reading

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 811-850; continued from Minutes, page 14; continued on Minutes, pages 463-465.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Edith M. Lohr, chair of the Church Council's Budget and Finance Committee, and the Rev. Robert N. Bacher, executive for administration, to make the first presentation of the proposed 1996-1997 budget. Ms. Lohr reminded voting members that part of their responsibility was to adopt the churchwide budget. She drew attention to the Rules of Organization and Procedure affecting adoption or amendment of the budget, which appeared in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, on page 592, and noted replacement pages 815-818 for those printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2. She announced that proposed amendments were to be submitted to the secretary of this church by 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, August 20, and indicated that there would be three opportunities for consideration of the budget:

1. A presentation by Pastor Bacher later during this plenary session.
2. Three budget hearings to be held during the afternoon; and
3. A final presentation during Plenary Session Nine on Monday, August 21.

A summary of Pastor Bacher's presentation and the full text of his remarks follow.

Pastor Bacher introduced his presentation by posing a series of questions to assembly members, who responded using the electronic balloting system.

1. What is the average U.S. household income? Answer: \$44,075 (A total ELCA household income of \$92.9 billion).
2. How much did ELCA members give to congregations in regular offerings in 1994? Answer: \$1.2 billion (1.3 percent of total ELCA household income).
3. What percent of weekly offerings supports synod and churchwide ministries? Answer: 9.55 percent (\$118 million annually).
4. What percent of weekly offerings in congregations supports churchwide ministries? Answer: 5.1 percent (\$62.8 million).
5. How much of the 1996 income for the budget of the churchwide organization (without World Hunger) is anticipated from the regular weekly offerings of members? Answer: 84 percent (\$63 million).

Pastor Bacher drew attention to the chart on page 843 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, which shows how that budget was allocated in accordance with the stated purposes of this church. That information, he said, would help assembly members to answer the question: "What specific categories of mission and ministry does the budget cover?"

Pastor Bacher then introduced a brief video "about where the money goes." He reported that the 1996-1997 budget called for the establishment of 30 new congregations. This number could grow to 40, he said, through the donation of "designated gifts." The proposed budget reflects the following priorities: Global Mission, New Congregations, Theological Education, and Expanded Ministries. Pastor Bacher drew attention to many ministries that could be expanded, if member giving rose from 1.3 percent of income to 1.5 percent.

Following the presentation, Bishop Chilstrom reminded assembly members that hearings on the budget proposal would be held during the afternoon.

Budget Presentation

The Reverend Robert N. Bacher, Executive for Administration

A budget is an expression of faith active in the world; while in these last years we have often had to talk about what we could not do because of the shortfall in income, it is also important to understand what we can do together as a church.

[A series of questions were then asked of the assembly members, who responded using the electronic balloting system.]

Question: What is the average U.S. household income?

Answer: According to U.S. census data, the average U.S. household income is \$44,075. According to our Department for Research and Evaluation the ELCA is composed of more than two million households. You put these two figures together, that means that ELCA household income is annually about \$93 billion.

Question: How much did ELCA members give to congregations in regular offerings in 1994? That is, regular unrestricted giving, not world hunger or specific gifts to missionary support, the regular Sunday morning offering.

Answer: The records show that the members of ELCA congregations gave a little over \$1.2 billion in regular unrestricted offering in 1994. This represents 1.33 percent of the estimated income of ELCA household income. If other designated giving through congregations

like World Hunger, there would be an additional \$17.9 million or 0.19 percent of estimated income of ELCA households in designated gifts.

Some studies show that Lutherans give about 2.3 percent of their income to the church and rough estimates would be about 1.5 percent through congregations and another 0.8 percent to church-related institutions other than the congregation.

Question: What percent of Sunday morning offerings supports synodical and churchwide ministries?

Answer: The 1994 ELCA Congregational Report forms stated that over \$118 million of unrestricted offerings, that is, mission support, was given by congregations to synods for the sharing of those funds between synods and the churchwide organization. That represents 9.55 percent of the total unrestricted member giving to congregations and is 0.12 percent of estimated total ELCA household income.

With this money, synods support ministries within the synod, such as the pastoral care of congregations and leaders; helping congregations in crisis; the call process for pastors and associates in ministry; support of agencies and institutions, such as seminaries, colleges, campus ministries, Lutheran Social Services, synod assemblies, outreach within the synod, communication with congregations through newsletters and inserts in *The Lutheran*; services such as evangelism, worship, multicultural ministries; and appropriate ecumenical relationships.

Question: What percent of Sunday morning offerings in congregations flows into the basic churchwide budget to support churchwide ministries?

Answer: The churchwide organization received about \$62.8 million in mission support from synods in 1994. This represents 5.1 percent of the regular unrestricted income received by congregations from its members. That is about 53 percent of the income from congregations to synods and is 0.068 percent of the estimated total ELCA household income. However, the income that comes to the churchwide organization comes through this mission support and through designated gifts.

Question: How much of the 1996 income for the budget of the churchwide organization (without World Hunger) is anticipated from the regular Sunday morning offerings of members?

Answer: The 1996 churchwide budget proposal anticipates \$63 million (without World Hunger) for mission support out of the total of \$75,325,000. World Hunger income is estimated at about \$12 million for 1996 but is totally funded by designated giving and not through the operating budget of the churchwide organization.

Pastor Bacher then invited assembly members to consider, "How is this money used? What does it do? What specific acts of mission and ministry does it accomplish?" Pastor Bacher stated that the questions could be answered in a variety of ways and drew attention to the charts on pages 840-841 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, which show how money is expended by categories such as by grants, compensation, and travel. The 1996 Expense Proposal by units was presented on page 842. "Another way to understand how dollars flow into specific acts of ministry is on page 843 where the display is by purpose. These purposes come directly from our constitutional assignments. They express who we are as the total Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—what we are called by God to do. This chart shows how we work together to fulfill our reason for being."

A brief video "about where the money goes" was shown. Following the video, Pastor Bacher stated that the 1996-1997 budget called for the establishment of 30 new congregations. This number could grow to 40, he said, through the donation of "designated gifts."

“The budget proposal for 1996 calls for a slight increase in income,” he stated, “but that will not even keep pace with inflation. Let’s imagine what could happen, if ELCA members were to give a little more. For example, if that percentage of household income referred to [earlier] were to increase from 1.33 percent to 1.5 percent, then this could happen: Congregations would receive an additional \$158 million. If 9.55 percent of that amount were to be shared with synods and the churchwide ministries, synods would receive \$15.1 million and \$8 million would come to the churchwide budget to support churchwide ministries. What could \$8 million accomplish? By way of illustration, by using the ELCA budget priorities, in the case of Global Mission, it would mean that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America could support 50 more missionary couples at a cost of \$2.75 million. In addition to adding to our global presence, we could start 25 more congregations for \$1.4 million, and we could provide more support to help existing congregations reach out with the Gospel. We support eight seminaries with grants totaling about \$4 million. Additional funds there could strengthen our theological education in the 1990s and up to the year 2000. So, besides strengthening global mission, outreach in the United States and Caribbean, and theological education, an \$8 million increase in churchwide income would result in expanded ministries, including more resources for evangelism, for Christian education, for campus ministries, for technology to enhance communication throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Pastor Bacher concluded his presentation by reflecting on 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9. “In these chapters, we see Paul, the great theologian, up to his hips in administration. He is trying to collect money for the poor in Jerusalem from the churches he had visited. Some of those churches were wealthy, but some of the churches themselves were poor. Some were of Greek background and some were of Jewish. Some carried political resentments against others. All were separated by long distances given the nature of transportation of that day. Paul is thrust into the midst of church politics and church finance. He seeks to fund Christian mission without sacrificing mission identity. He wants very badly for the church to raise money in a way that it does not lose its own soul. So, how does he bring it off? In those chapters, we seem to see six key principles that we could well heed:

1. Clarity—Paul is saying that the topic is funding the mission. Do not beat around the bush. Money is needed to carry out mission.
2. Grace—‘We call your attention, friends, to the grace of God that has been given in the churches of Macedonia. Because the abundance of their joy overflowed into the wealth of their generosity.’ And, ‘For you know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that because of you though he was rich, he became poor so that through his poverty you might become rich.’ In other words, generosity is grounded in grace and joy.
3. Zeal—‘I do not speak to you in terms of a command but as one who through the zeal of others conducts a test of the genuineness of your love.’ In other words, funding the mission is important. I am excited about it and this is what I am doing about it.
4. Prudence—Let’s compare. Let’s be fair. Let’s talk about where the greatest need is.
5. Challenge—If I did not care about the mission and you, I would not try to stir you up to generosity and sharing.
6. Thanksgiving—You believe the message about Christ and you obeyed it by sharing generously with God’s people and with everyone else. Now they are praying for you and want to see you because God used you to bless them so very much. Thank God for his gift that is too

wonderful for words.

May clarity, grace, zeal, prudence, challenge, and thanksgiving be present in our giving and spending even in this budget proposal before this assembly, but especially because of what this proposal will enable this church to be and to do.

Elections: Second Ballot for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, page 39, 53-55; continued on Minutes, pages 95-96, 105-113, 137-138, 160-174, 253-254, 265.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. David J. Hardy to announce the nominees who had withdrawn their names from consideration and reminded assembly members that from this point onward there could be no withdrawals. The persons who withdrew their names were:

Mr. Hardy noted that the pastor identified as Robert Miller with one vote had withdrawn from consideration, but that the name of the Rev. Robert L. Miller (with three votes) would remain on the ballot.

Bishop Chilstrom announced that a nominee must receive three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot to be elected bishop. He indicated that votes for nominees not listed on the printed ballot would be invalid. The results of the second ballot would be reported at the beginning of the evening session. If no election occurred, the seven persons receiving the highest number of votes must submit biographical data promptly after the announcement of the ballot results.

Bishop Chilstrom led the assembly in prayer and then instructed voting members to cast their ballots. Subsequently, he declared the second ballot for bishop to be closed.

Report of the Memorials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued on Minutes, pages 139-157, 250-251, 374-427, 452-453, 586-616, 637-644, 660-661.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Nadine F. Lehr and the Rev. Donald M. Hallberg, co-chairs of the Memorials Committee, to explain the process for considering memorials from synods. He noted that synods had submitted only one-third as many memorials as in 1989—"I think that is a good sign. It says something about settling in, hopefully some rising levels of trust and, maybe most importantly of all, realizing that not all matters need to be settled by a Churchwide Assembly."

Pastor Lehr presented an overview of the work of the committee. She referred assembly members to pages 886-887 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, where the 80 memorials received from the various synod assemblies were listed by synod clustered into categories of a common theme or a common proposal for action. Pastor Lehr explained that with each category, there appeared the text of the synodical resolution, background information and the rationale of the committee for its recommendation, and the recommendation of the Memorials Committee. She drew attention to the list on page 881 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, indicating which recommendations were to be considered en bloc and which memorials, at the committee's recommendation, would be considered individually. She recalled today's 12:30 p.m. deadline for removing items from en bloc consideration. Pastor Lehr indicated that memorials to be considered individually would be dealt with by category in the following order: 8, 3, 20, 15, 10, 2, 5, 18, 14, 21, and 6.

Category 8: Interim Ministry

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 915-921.

Pastor Hallberg introduced the first category of memorials for consideration and moved adoption of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee as printed on page 921 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, which subsequently was adopted without discussion.

A. Southwestern Washington Synod (1C) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the call of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. ensure integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
2. work with the congregation through its grief process;
3. facilitate the healing process;
4. share leadership in planning for change;
5. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
6. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change;
7. prepare the congregation to welcome a new leader; and
8. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;

and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, demanding need for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church’s pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Synod Assembly of the Southwestern Washington Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, to direct appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the education, language, and practice of interim ministry, including accreditation of trained interim pastors and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

B. Northeastern Minnesota Synod (3E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;

2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;
 3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Synod Assembly of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod memorialize the 1995 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including the issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, issues of compensation, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C. Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides "Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry"; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
 2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;
 3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, calling for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly memorialize the 1995

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly to direct the ELCA Division for Ministry to work with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

D. Central States Synod (4B) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the call of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. ensure integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
2. work with the congregation through its grief process;
3. facilitate the healing process;
4. share leadership in planning for change;
5. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
6. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change;
7. prepare the congregation to welcome a new leader; and
8. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;

and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, demanding need for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church’s pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Central States Synod Assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in assembly gathered, to direct appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including the issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

E. Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the call of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. ensure integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;

3. facilitate the healing process;
 4. share leadership in planning for change;
 5. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 6. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change;
 7. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader; and
 8. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, demanding need for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Synod Assembly [of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] memorialize the 1995 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in assembly gathered, to direct appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including accreditation of trained interim pastors and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

F. East-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5I) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides "Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry"; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
 2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;
 3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, calling for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Synod Assembly of the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin memorialize the 1995 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

G. Northeastern Ohio (6E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
 2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;
 3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, calling for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church’s pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Synod Assembly of the Northeastern Ohio Synod memorialize the 1995 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry including issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

H. New Jersey Synod (7A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the ELCA Division for Ministry provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
 2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;
 3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, calling for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in assembly gathered, to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

I. New England Synod (7B) [1995 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practices of interim ministry, including issuance of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

J. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, on June 13, 1994, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopted an enabling resolution regarding interim (transitional) ministry as a formal process to respond to congregations in transition with a cadre of trained interim pastors; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;

3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, calling for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in assembly gathered, to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

K. Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides "Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry"; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
 2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;
 3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickening pace, calling for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Synod Assembly of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the 1995 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including the issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

L. Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the call of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, the ELCA Church Council has proposed a bylaw change which incorporates guidelines; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. ensure integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
2. work with the congregation through its grief process;
3. facilitate the healing process;
4. share leadership in planning for change;
5. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
6. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change;
7. prepare the congregation to welcome a new leader; and
8. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;

and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever-quickenning pace, demanding need for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, present practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church’s pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod Assembly memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to direct the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for interim ministry, including accreditation of trained interim pastors and evaluation of the process of interim ministry with congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

M. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) provides for the appointment of interim pastors to serve congregations; and

Whereas, the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides “Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry”; and

Whereas, interim pastoral ministry, utilizing trained interim pastors, has demonstrated its value in leading congregations through various transitional phases in the life of congregations to:

1. provide for the integrity of Word and Sacrament ministry;
 2. work with the congregation through its grief experience;
 3. encourage and support healing within the congregation;
 4. provide competent pastoral leadership to alleviate the fear of diminishing congregational ministry;
 5. share leadership in planning for change;
 6. work through transitions in a positive, constructive manner;
 7. provide continuity during planning and implementation of change; and
 8. prepare the congregation to welcome a new pastoral leader;
- and

Whereas, transition and change in both church and culture take place at an ever quickening pace, calling for trained interim pastoral leadership during times of congregational transitions; and

Whereas, current practice varies from synod to synod regarding accreditation, participation in the church's pension plan, placement, rostering, and training of interim pastors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in assembly gathered, to direct the Division for Ministry and other appropriate boards, commissions, and divisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to dialogue with representatives of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) to develop standards for the language and practice of interim ministry, including issuing of calls, accreditation of trained interim pastors, and evaluation of the process of interim ministry within the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

BACKGROUND

Relationship with the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors: The Division for Ministry reports that the Conference of Bishops/Division for Ministry Liaison Committee met with the chair of the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP) in January of this year. The committee received the concerns of the association and pledged continuing support. The Division for Ministry staff for leadership support has been a member of the Interim Network (an interdenominational group) since the beginning of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and of NALIP for the past year.

During the January 1995 meeting, the liaison committee encouraged NALIP to develop criteria for the certification of interim ministry competencies. These include:

1. criteria for evaluating educational preparation;
2. criteria for review and continuation of certification; and
3. criteria for reinstatement.

The other concerns of supervision and evaluation are the responsibility of synod bishops and churchwide units. (Note: In April 1990 the Church Council approved "Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry.")

The National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors is currently preparing its charter and also is working on standards and accreditation for this area of ministry specialization. The

Division for Ministry has committed itself to a continuing working relationship with the association, and staff met with the association in June 1995 to continue this dialogue.

Future Directions: The 1995 Churchwide Assembly will consider the following proposal to amend ELCA 7.41.11. to provide greater consistency in application of policy regarding call to interim ministry:

Ordained ministers serving as interim pastors appointed by the synodical bishop may serve under a letter of call, according to policies developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. A call to interim ministry shall be a term call extended by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.

Should this bylaw be approved by the assembly, the Division for Ministry will begin working on such policies in September 1995 and will make an initial report to the Liaison Committee of the Conference of Bishops in November 1995.

Assembly

Action Voice Vote

CA9 5.2.3 To refer the memorials on interim ministry of the Southwestern Washington, Northeastern Minnesota, Saint Paul Area, Central States, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Northeastern Ohio, New Jersey, New England, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Delaware-Maryland, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods to the Division for Ministry and the Conference of Bishops, and to encourage further discussion of this matter with the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors; and

To request that the Division for Ministry and the Conference of Bishops submit a report on this matter to the Church Council at its April 1996 meeting.

Category 3: HIV/AIDS

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 892-896.

Pastor Hallberg introduced the second category of memorials for consideration and moved adoption of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee as printed on page 896 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3.

A. New Jersey Synod (7A) [1995 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly to give strong leadership in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by:

1. Encouraging the establishment of an AIDS ministry committee or task force in each synod, providing resources and ideas from synods which already have such a group.
2. Establishing the Sunday closest to St. Luke's Day, October 18, as an annual churchwide day of prayer in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.
3. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to develop and assemble resources firmly rooted in church teachings which will assist in raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and also assist in providing effective prevention education in congregations. Special attention should be given to the development of materials for youth and young adults.

4. Directing the Division for Global Mission to consider the impact HIV/AIDS may be having in countries served by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to strive to see that missionaries are equipped to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
5. Directing the Division for Higher Education and Schools to encourage and support church-related colleges and schools in providing HIV prevention education.
6. Directing the Division for Ministry to encourage and support seminaries in their efforts to prepare pastors and associates in ministry for ministry in the age of HIV/AIDS.
7. Directing the Division for Church in Society to assist ELCA social ministry organizations and institutions in considering the impact the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic is having on health care in this country and encouraging those social ministry organizations to respond in ways that will be helpful.
8. Directing the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women to note the alarming growth of reported cases of AIDS among women and persons of color and language other than English, and to assist this church in providing resources helpful in addressing this reality.

B. New England Synod (7B) [1995 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly to give strong leadership in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by:

1. Encouraging the establishment of an AIDS ministry committee or task force in each synod, providing resources and ideas from synods which already have such a group.
2. Establishing the Sunday closest to St. Luke's Day, October 18, as an annual churchwide day of prayer in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.
3. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to develop and assemble resources firmly rooted in church teachings which will assist in raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and also assist in providing effective prevention education in congregations, giving special attention to the development of materials for youth and young adults.
4. Directing the Division for Global Mission to consider the impact HIV/AIDS may be having in countries served by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to equip missionaries to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
5. Directing the Division for Higher Education and Schools to encourage and support church-related colleges and schools in providing HIV prevention education.
6. Directing the Division for Ministry to encourage and support seminaries in their efforts to prepare pastors and associates in ministry for ministry in the age of HIV/AIDS.
7. Directing the Division for Church in Society to assist ELCA social ministry organizations and institutions in considering the impact the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic is having on health care in this country and encouraging those social ministry organizations to respond in ways that will be helpful.
8. Directing the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women to note the alarming growth of reported cases of AIDS among women and persons of color and language other than English, and to assist this church in providing resources helpful in addressing this reality.

C. Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, more than 14 million people worldwide have been diagnosed with AIDS; and
Whereas, AIDS is now the leading cause of death for Americans age 25-44; and
Whereas, an estimated one million Americans are infected with HIV, with a growing number of persons being infected each year; and

Whereas, this disease affects so many people and carries such extreme stigma and generates such fear; and

Whereas, HIV/AIDS is preventable through effective programs of education; and

Whereas, many persons living with HIV/AIDS, as well as their loved ones and care givers, are active members of ELCA congregations; and

Whereas, the Church of Jesus Christ is called to bear witness to the power of life over death and to engage in ministries of love, service, and healing; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly to give strong leadership in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by:

1. Encouraging the establishment of an AIDS ministry committee or task force in each synod, providing resources and ideas from synods which already have such a group.
 2. Establishing the Sunday closest to St. Luke's Day, October 18, as an annual churchwide day of prayer in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.
 3. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to develop and assemble resources firmly rooted in church teachings which will assist in raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and also assist in providing effective prevention education in congregations, giving special attention to the development of materials for youth and young adults.
 4. Directing the Division for Global Mission to consider the impact HIV/AIDS may be having in countries served by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to strive to see that missionaries are equipped to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
 5. Directing the Division for Higher Education and Schools to encourage and support church-related colleges and schools in providing HIV prevention education.
 6. Directing the Division for Ministry to encourage and support seminaries in their efforts to prepare pastors and associates in ministry for ministry in the age of HIV/AIDS.
 7. Directing the Division for Church in Society to consider the impact HIV/AIDS is having on health care in this country, striving to see that social ministry organizations and institutions are equipped to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
 8. Directing the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women to note the alarming growth of reported cases of AIDS among women, persons of color, and persons whose native language is other than English; and to assist this church in providing resources helpful in addressing this reality;
- and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod and its congregations continue its support for the MNYS Task Force on Ministry with Persons with AIDS and HIV Prevention Education.

D. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, more than 14 million people worldwide have been diagnosed with AIDS; and

Whereas, AIDS is now the leading cause of death for Americans age 25-44; and

Whereas, an estimated one million Americans are infected with HIV, with a growing number of persons being infected each year; and

Whereas, there is no other disease which affects so many people and which carries such extreme stigma and generates such unfounded fear; and

Whereas, HIV/AIDS is preventable through effective programs of education; and

Whereas, many persons living with HIV/AIDS, as well as their loved ones and care givers, are active members of ELCA congregations; and

Whereas, the Church of Jesus Christ is called to bear witness to the power of life over death and to engage in ministries of love, service, and healing; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly to give strong leadership in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by:

1. Encouraging the establishment of an AIDS Ministry committee or task force in each synod, providing resources and ideas from synods which already have such a group.
 2. Establishing a Sunday as an annual churchwide day of prayer in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.
 3. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to develop and assemble resources firmly rooted in church teachings which will assist in raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and also assist in providing effective prevention education programs in congregations. Special attention should be given to the development of materials for youth and young adults.
 4. Directing the Division for Global Mission to consider the impact HIV/AIDS may be having in countries served by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to strive to see that missionaries are equipped to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
 5. Directing the Division for Higher Education and Schools to encourage and support church-related colleges and schools in providing HIV prevention education.
 6. Directing the Division for Ministry to encourage and support seminaries in their efforts to prepare pastors and associates in ministry for ministry in the age of HIV/AIDS.
 7. Directing the Division for Church in Society to assist ELCA social ministry organizations and institutions in considering the impact the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic is having on health care in this country and encouraging those social ministry organizations to respond in ways that will be helpful.
 8. Directing the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women to note the alarming growth of reported cases of AIDS among women and persons of color and language other than English, and to assist this church in providing resources helpful in addressing this reality;
- and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod encourage members, congregations, clusters, mission districts, and all commissions and committees of the synod to explore options for initiating or expanding services for persons infected or affected by HIV/AIDS.

E. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, more than 14 million people worldwide have been diagnosed with AIDS; and

Whereas, AIDS is now the leading cause of death for Americans age 25-44; and

Whereas, an estimated one million Americans are infected with HIV, the virus that causes

AIDS, with a growing number of persons being infected each year; and

Whereas, there is no other disease which affects so many people and which carries such extreme stigma and generates such unfounded fear; and

Whereas, HIV/AIDS is preventable through effective programs of education; and

Whereas, many persons living with HIV/AIDS, as well as their loved ones and care givers, are active members of ELCA congregations; and

Whereas, the Church of Jesus Christ is called to bear witness to the power of life over death and to engage in ministries of love, service, and healing; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly to give strong leadership in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by:

1. Encouraging the establishment of an AIDS Ministry committee or task force in each synod, providing resources and ideas from synods which already have such a group.
2. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to establish the Sunday closest to St. Luke's Day, October 18, as an annual churchwide day of prayer for healing, including but not limited to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.
3. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to develop and assemble resources firmly rooted in church teachings which will assist in raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and also assist in providing effective prevention education in congregations. Special attention should be given to the development of materials for youth and young adults.
4. Directing the Division for Global Mission to consider the impact HIV/AIDS may be having in countries served by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to strive to see that missionaries are equipped to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
5. Directing the Division for Higher Education and Schools to encourage and support church-related colleges and schools in providing HIV prevention education.
6. Directing the Division for Ministry to encourage and support seminaries in their efforts to prepare pastors and associates in ministry for ministry in the age of HIV/AIDS.
7. Directing the Division for Church in Society to assist ELCA social ministry organizations and institutions in considering the impact the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic is having on health care in this country and encouraging those social ministry organizations to respond in ways that will be helpful.
8. Directing the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women to note the alarming growth of reported cases of AIDS among women, persons of color, and persons whose native language is other than English; and to assist this church in providing resources helpful in addressing this reality.

BACKGROUND

The 1991 Churchwide Assembly took the following action:

To express deep appreciation for the work being done by individuals, by this church's agencies and institutions, by congregations, by synods, and by the churchwide organization to address the AIDS epidemic;

To call on the church to increase its efforts to provide a compassionate response to persons affected by AIDS, to educate our members about AIDS, and to advocate for justice in church and in society for persons with AIDS;

To encourage all congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to articulate clearly their welcome to persons affected by AIDS, and their support for them and their families and friends;

To affirm that this church does not discriminate against persons who carry the AIDS virus in its calling or employment practices;

To call on all expressions, agencies, and institutions of this church to implement this commitment to non-discrimination on the basis of HIV antibody status; and

To affirm the request of the Northern Great Lakes Synod and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod that congregations observe an AIDS Awareness Sunday each year, and to transmit this affirmation to the Commission for Communication, as that unit, in consultation with other units, develops the annual ELCA Calendar of Emphases (CA91.2.6).

Since the 1991 Churchwide Assembly, churchwide units have continued to address the types of issues listed in the 1995 synod memorials. In addition, the AIDS steering committee of the churchwide offices has made application for funding to establish an ELCA HIV/AIDS Clearing House. If this is funded, information from across this church will be catalogued, compiled, and made available for distribution to enable members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to network with each other about programs and resources.

ELCA affiliated social ministry organizations were surveyed in 1989 and again in 1994 to determine the nature and range of services available to persons affected by HIV/AIDS. Some of the social ministry organizations have nationally recognized model programs, such as the Second Family program of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and a training manual for nurses produced by Lutheran Social Services of Michigan. A number of social ministry organizations have received Ryan White funds to provide medical services to persons with HIV/AIDS and many provide education to staff regarding prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. If the clearinghouse is established, one aspect of work will be to continue to connect social ministry organizations with new information to assist them in meeting the challenges of HIV/AIDS with new populations and with ongoing developments in the prevention and treatment of the pandemic.

In addition, the Division for Congregational Ministries is completing a youth "Help Sheet" for congregations. It is intended to lift up resources and organizations that are available to assist congregations in AIDS education and ministry with youth. Background information and some statistical information will also be included in these resources, which will be distributed to every congregation in August 1995.

The Social Ministries for Congregations Program of the Division for Congregational Ministries makes available training and information on developing congregationally-based AIDS ministries and education programs. In addition, the division soon will make available an educational packet on the sexual exploitation of children and women. AIDS is just one of the many consequences of this kind of abuse.

The 1995 ELCA Calendar of Emphases, prepared by the Department for Communication, designates October 15 as AIDS Awareness Sunday.

The units mentioned in the memorials have representation on the AIDS steering committee of the churchwide offices and will confer about the multiple resources identified in the memorials. Actual production of such resources will depend on each unit's ability to carry the expense of developing these materials and fitting such production into the work plan of the unit. Also, many excellent resources already exist; therefore, the existence of the churchwide clearinghouse and synod committees will facilitate the sharing of the extant material.

Mr. Kevin Anderson [Southwestern Texas Synod] spoke in favor of the motion and stated, "I am a gay voting member of this assembly and my partner, John, is here with me. John has AIDS. We are very grateful to our congregation that has been open and affirming of us. We are also very grateful for the care and support that they have been able to give us. I encourage all members of this assembly to return to their congregations and to begin a process of care and concern for all in their communities who have AIDS regardless of how they might have contracted that disease. I thank the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for its support and for this motion."

Pastor Bruce Davidson [New Jersey Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the memorial from the New Jersey Synod on HIV/AIDS (Category 3, A., page 892) for the recommendation of the Committee on Memorials.

Pastor Davidson spoke to the substitute motion, observing that the five memorials in this category had come from five synods in the northeast. He stated, "These resolutions were generated at the Northeast Region's AIDS Conference . . . and reflect the thinking of people who gathered in that conference, some people who are health-care providers, some who are pastors in ministry with people with AIDS, some who are people living with AIDS, and also some who are partners and loved ones of people living with AIDS."

Pastor Davidson commented that, while the group appreciated the 1991 Churchwide Assembly resolution, there was concern that the resolution has "not been sufficiently communicated" across this church. "We are concerned that there are things that, we believe, could come from the churchwide expression to support those of us who are in ministry with AIDS and those that are living with this disease in our congregations." He pointed out suggestions in the memorial from the New Jersey Synod that "call for a stronger response from our church than what we have received so far." He referred especially to the need for the establishment of AIDS ministry committees or task forces in synods, the preparation of liturgical materials and of study materials that could be used in churches for an AIDS Awareness Sunday, and the call for various divisions and commissions of this church to take specific actions. Adoption of the New Jersey Synod memorial, he said, would help this church to give "strong leadership" in AIDS ministry.

Mr. Terry Speese [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] offered the following amendment:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the recommendation of the Memorials Committee by deleting paragraph six, which states: "To encourage congregations to observe an AIDS Awareness Sunday each year, and to transmit this affirmation to the . . . [Department] for Communication, as that unit, in consultation with other units, develops the annual ELCA Calendar of Emphases."

Mr. Speese spoke to the motion and urged that one particular affliction not be set apart over another. He said, "We do not set aside a day of awareness for those who suffer from heart disease, cancer, or other illnesses. As a paramedic, I see the suffering of both young and old and

those in-between. I see the fear, anxiety, and pain that diseases other than HIV/AIDS cause on both the patients and their families. We need to lift up all who suffer. One illness should not have precedence over another. The church should focus on education and dialogue of all health issues.”

Ms. Barbara Bernstengel [New Jersey Synod] spoke against the amendment, calling attention to the exceptional “ostracism and discrimination” experienced by persons afflicted with HIV/AIDS.

The Rev. Paul M. Cornell [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] referred the assembly to item 2. of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorial on page 895 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3. Quoting the text, he stated that the memorial spoke to the issue raised by the motion to amend: “Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to establish the Sunday closest to St. Luke’s Day, October 18, as an annual churchwide day of prayer for healing, including but not limited to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-327; No-607; Abstain-26

Defeated: To amend the recommendation of the Memorials Committee by deleting paragraph six, which states: “To encourage congregations to observe an AIDS Awareness Sunday each year, and to transmit this affirmation to the . . . [Department] for Communication, as that unit, in consultation with other units, develops the annual ELCA Calendar of Emphases.”

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] proposed the following amendment to the substitute motion:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the substitute motion by adding a new item 9., which would read, “Affirming the action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly” and then incorporating the recommendation of the Memorials Committee as printed on page 896 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3.

Speaking to the motion, Pastor Schaper stated, “I believe there are issues addressed in the language put forward by the Memorials Committee that are important to include and that are not included in the substitute motion. I would like also to use this opportunity to speak of pastoral colleagues with AIDS. In our synod, we have accompanied three pastors who have died of AIDS in the last three years and now are accompanying another. The synod leadership has provided wonderful pastoral ministry to the congregations as they struggled with the illness of their pastors. I want to at least name this as a reality at the heart of our church.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-398; No-526; Abstain-33

Defeated: To amend the substitute motion by adding a new item 9., which would read, “Affirming the action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly” and then incorporating the recommendation of the Memorials Committee as printed on page 896 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3.

The Rev. Paul M. Cornell [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] proposed the following amendment to the substitute motion:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-827; No-135; Abstain-6

Carried: To amend the substitute motion by replacing item 2. in the New Jersey Synod memorial with item 2. of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorial as printed on page 895 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, as follows: "Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to establish the Sunday closest to St. Luke's Day, October 18, as an annual churchwide day of prayer for healing, including but not limited to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, providing worship and liturgical materials that can be used on such a day."

The Rev. Robert T. Voss [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the substitute motion and stated, "I have been involved with HIV/AIDS ministries for over 10 years. It was surprising to me that the Memorials Committee never mentioned the word, "HIV." You notice all the memorials mentioned HIV as well as AIDS. It has been my experience that it is very helpful sometimes to focus on the virus that is affecting so many people in our congregations and communities."

Mr. Trevis Butcher [Montana Synod] spoke to the issue and said, "I have some really strong feelings of sympathy for people with AIDS. In my local community, I serve as an EMT [Emergency Medical Technician] and we have several young people who are currently dying of this disease. Obviously, the heartbreak and pain that comes with that is evident across this nation. I would like to see us promote education, especially to our young people, that promotes abstinence as the safest way to prevent this disease and promotes fidelity in marriage as also the safest way to protect those whom we love. I was very concerned this past year with the AIDS education in our community. I teach fifth and sixth graders. We had three days of education [on this] . . . they had an incredible understanding of contraceptives, especially condoms, but they had never heard the word, abstinence. They could not wait, in my opinion (from the way they acted), to try out this new-found knowledge." As a church, we need "to take a strong stance on what has traditionally, in my opinion, been our role as Christian models and that would be to promote abstinence and fidelity in marriage."

An unidentified voting member spoke to the issue, saying, "I appreciate and like the recommendation. I am a little concerned that we are talking about a virus like it is a moral issue. Part of it is what we do, part of it is what we say, but it is a blood-borne pathogen. We can catch it from each other. We have to have that education, we have to teach each other, we have to teach our children. I do not know that it is a moral issue, but I do know it is a germ. I like the idea of being educated and I want other people to be educated on the same thing. And those who have it, die very, very badly. We need to have Christ's mercy and love to help them through the rest of their lives."

Mr. Ray Odmark [Southwestern Washington Synod] spoke against the amendment. He said, "The HIV/AIDS issue is such an emotional issue. The risk we run is that, because there are so many different viewpoints and so many specific things that people might want to do, we run the risk of creating ever larger lists of things that synods have to do. I just want to caution people that I see that happening now as different people want another element added to that list. I think that dealing with AIDS, whether it be congregational awareness or communication, can be done

by the synod without this body trying to create a long list of specific things for them to do.”

The Rev. Peter A. Pettit [Pacifica Synod] proposed the following amendment to the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the recommendation of the Memorials Committee (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 896) by adding, “taking counsel from the relevant memorials received by this assembly” following the phrase, “To deal with AIDS,” in the paragraph beginning with, “To call on the Division for Congregational Ministries . . .”

Pastor Pettit spoke to the motion, and said, “I am very much in sympathy with the emphasis that Pastor Bruce Davidson gave to specifying the way in which this church will respond to this epidemic and also to the good ideas that have surfaced in other synods as to some of the options for those particulars. I think we do our work best as an assembly when we commend such good ideas to our staff, to the various agencies of the church, and then leave them free to be creative over the next biennium in the ways in which they make that response on our behalf. I would also note that the affirmation of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly action would be supported by voting the recommendation of the Memorials Committee and that, in fact, both good ideas would be achieved by voting for this amendment and for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee.”

An unidentified voting member spoke against the motion to amend, saying, “Again, to emphasize that those who gathered in the northeastern region at least talked about this; again, including people living with AIDS, loved ones of those with AIDS, and people working with those with AIDS, felt that what we tried to give in numbers three through eight [in the New Jersey Synod memorial] would not tie the hands of any of those churchwide expressions in terms of how they addressed things with creativity. But, we wanted to be very specific about calling our church to some actions that we think would provide good leadership in the next biennium. That is why we were somewhat specific, but hopefully open enough, that there could still be some creativity in response.”

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-631; No-324; Abstain-28

Carried: To amend the recommendation of the Memorials Committee (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 896) by adding, “taking counsel from the relevant memorials received by this assembly” following the phrase, “To deal with AIDS,” in the paragraph beginning with, “To call on the Division for Congregational Ministries . . .”

The Rev. John H. P. Reumann [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] offered the following motion:

Moved;

Seconded; To amend the previously amended substitute motion [New Jersey Synod

Memorial, as printed on page 892], by adding as a preface the recommendation of the Memorials Committee through the words, “. . . on the basis of HIV antibody status;” in paragraph 5. as printed on page 896 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3.

Pastor Reumann spoke to the motion, and said, “The house has before it at the moment the substitute wording from the New Jersey Synod with its splendid specificity. That motion, however, or substitute, fails to lift up and affirm the action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly. By combining the two, we can pick up what is the important, germane wording in those paragraphs I indicated in the 1991 Churchwide Assembly [action] (the first five paragraphs of affirmation), followed by the specificity of the New Jersey Synod substitute.”

Ms. Norah Bringer [Southwestern Washington Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, “because in my experience in synodical assemblies, as well as the national Lutheran Youth Organization, the assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a habit of making these general resolutions and not really giving specific direction. This change would allow us to have the wording that is good from the Memorials Committee as well as the specifics from the New Jersey Synod.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-841; No-150; Abstain-8

Carried: To amend the previously amended substitute motion [New Jersey Synod Memorial, as printed on page 892], by adding as a preface the recommendation of the Memorials Committee through the words, “. . . on the basis of HIV antibody status;” in paragraph 5. as printed on page 896 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-814; No-171; Abstain-11

Carried: To substitute the following motion for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

To affirm the prior action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly:

To express deep appreciation for the work being done by individuals, by this church’s agencies and institutions, by congregations, by synods, and by the churchwide organization to address the AIDS epidemic;

To call on this church to increase its efforts to provide a compassionate response to persons affected by AIDS, to educate our members about AIDS, and to advocate for justice in church and society for persons with AIDS;

To encourage all congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to articulate clearly their welcome to persons affected by AIDS and their support for them and their families and friends;

To affirm that this church does not discriminate against persons who carry the AIDS virus in its calling or employment practices;

To call on all expressions, agencies, and institutions of this church to implement this

commitment to non-discrimination on the basis of HIV antibody status; and

To give strong leadership in response to the HIV/ AIDS epidemic by:

1. Encouraging the establishment of an AIDS ministry committee or task force in each synod, providing resources and ideas from synods that already have such a group.
2. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to establish the Sunday closest to St. Luke's Day, October 18, as an annual churchwide day of prayer for healing, including but not limited to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.
3. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to develop and assemble resources firmly rooted in church teachings that will assist in raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and that also will assist in providing effective prevention education in congregations. Special attention should be given to the development of materials for youth and young adults.
4. Directing the Division for Global Mission to consider the impact HIV/AIDS may be having in countries served by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to strive to see that missionaries are equipped to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
5. Directing the Division for Higher Education and Schools to encourage and support church-related colleges and schools in providing HIV prevention education.
6. Directing the Division for Ministry to encourage and support seminaries in their efforts to prepare pastors and associates in ministry for ministry in the age of HIV/AIDS.
7. Directing the Division for Church in Society to assist ELCA social ministry organizations and institutions in considering the impact the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic is having on health care in this country, and encouraging those social ministry organizations to respond in ways that will be helpful.
8. Directing the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women to note the alarming growth of reported cases of AIDS among women and persons of color and language other than English, and to assist this church in providing resources helpful in addressing this reality.

Ms. Darie Kidwell [Southeastern Synod] suggested adding the acronym, "HIV/," before that of "AIDS" to the recommendation of the Memorials Committee as appended to the substitute motion. Pastor Reumann noted that the Memorials Committee was simply repeating wording from the 1991 Churchwide Assembly. He said, "We cannot make the 1991 assembly say what it did not say." Pastor Hallberg added that the committee "did not alter or tamper with" the action of 1991.

Assembly

Action Yes-862; No-133; Abstain-10

CA95.2.4 To affirm the prior action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly:

To express deep appreciation for the work being done by individuals, by this church's agencies and institutions, by congregations, by synods, and by the Churchwide organization to address the AIDS epidemic;

To call on this church to increase its efforts to provide a compassionate response to persons affected by AIDS, to educate our members about AIDS, and to advocate for justice in church and society for persons with AIDS;

To encourage all congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to articulate clearly their welcome to persons affected by AIDS and their support for them and their families and friends;

To affirm that this church does not discriminate against persons who carry the AIDS virus in its calling or employment practices;

To call on all expressions, agencies, and institutions of this church to implement this commitment to non-discrimination on the basis of HIV antibody status;

and

To give strong leadership in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by:

1. Encouraging the establishment of an AIDS ministry committee or task force in each synod, providing resources and ideas from synods that already have such a group.
2. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to establish the Sunday closest to St. Luke's Day, October 18, as an annual Churchwide day of prayer for healing, including but not limited to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, providing worship and liturgical materials which can be used on such a day.
3. Directing the Division for Congregational Ministries to develop and assemble resources firmly rooted in church teachings that will assist in raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and that also will assist in providing effective prevention education in congregations. Special attention should be given to the development of materials for youth and young adults.
4. Directing the Division for Global Mission to consider the impact HIV/AIDS may be having in countries served by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to strive to see that missionaries are equipped to respond in appropriate and helpful ways.
5. Directing the Division for Higher Education and Schools to encourage and support church-related colleges and schools in providing HIV prevention education.
6. Directing the Division for Ministry to encourage and support seminaries in their efforts to prepare pastors and associates in ministry for ministry in the age of HIV/AIDS.
7. Directing the Division for Church in Society to assist ELCA social ministry organizations and institutions in considering the impact the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic is having on health care in this country, and encouraging those social ministry organizations to respond in ways that will be helpful.
8. Directing the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women to note the alarming growth of reported cases of AIDS among women and persons of color and language other than English, and to assist this church in providing resources helpful in addressing this reality.

Bishop Chilstrom called for a short break, using the opportunity to invite assembly members to stand and sing one verse of the hymn, "Built on a Rock."

Report of the Nominating Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 955-1025.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. Richard E. Lee, chair of the Nominating Committee, to present the committee's report. Mr. Lee said, "The 18 members of the Nominating Committee . . . did their work with delight, with diligence, and with care for the particular needs of leadership and service that will be necessary to carry this church into the next century. The committee has prepared a slate of two nominees for each position on the Church Council, boards, or committees. This was not particularly easy, since we had more than 1,500 names submitted for approximately 100 positions that will be voted on. Our nominations are made in keeping with the representational principles found in chapters 5 and 19 of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and

Continuing Resolutions. Several factors needed to be considered for each nomination. These included the composition of the council, board, or committee; the representational requirements, the appropriate experience, the geographic distribution, and other matters.” Mr. Lee noted that the nominations were presented in three different formats in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3—alphabetically, beginning on page 958; by slate, beginning on page 963; and by vita, beginning on page 975.

Mr. Lee reminded assembly members that nominations from the floor would be accepted prior to the 2:25 p.m. deadline on Friday, August 18. He referred to various items from the assembly’s Rules of Organization and Procedure related to floor nominations, stating that all nominations must have the minimum number of signatures from voting members, must meet all of the requirements and restrictions as indicated on the slate of nominees for council, boards, and committees, beginning on page 963, and must have the consent of the nominee.

It was announced that the ballots would be distributed by synodical bishops on Saturday morning, during Plenary Session Six. Ballots were to be submitted by 2:00 p.m., Saturday, August 19. A second ballot, if needed, would be distributed on Monday afternoon, August 21. Polls for the second ballot would close at 6:30 p.m., Monday, August 21.

Mr. Lee requested a moment of personal privilege in which to express thanks to the members and congregations of this church for their expressions of sympathy and gifts of relief to the people of Oklahoma City, Okla., during the events following the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building on April 19, 1995. He said, “On behalf of the members of the 12 ELCA congregations that serve the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, I would like to express our gratitude and thanks to the hundreds of Sunday School children that made and sent us cards of sympathy and hope—and to their teachers, a big thank you. To the numerous pastors, who called to share their concern and prayers with their former seminary classmates who now serve in Oklahoma City congregations, a big thank you. To the countless former members of the Oklahoma City congregations, who have moved away, and who called to check on their old friends, a big thank you. And to the many, many congregations all across this great church that sent messages of hope to our local congregations, a big thank you. To those of you who gave so generously of your money, and to Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL), Lutheran Brotherhood, and Lutheran Social Services for their support—your generosity is now well over \$1,000,000—a big thank you. And most importantly, to our millions of brothers and sisters in Christ who have kept and continue to keep the people of Oklahoma City in their prayers, a big thank you. From the hearts of your fellow Lutherans in Oklahoma to your hearts, thank you. It is our prayer that God would continue to bless this great church.”

Announcements

Bishop Chilstrom explained to the assembly the preparations for the afternoon hearings, which would be held in three sets. He called upon Secretary Almen to make several announcements.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes, pages 11-12, 35, 41; continued on Minutes, pages 105, 159-160, 253, 257, 619; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Secretary Almen reported a correction in the Report of the Credentials Committee, as

presented earlier during this plenary session. The corrected report follows:

Voting Members				
Ordained Ministers	Female	92		
			Male	310
	Total	402		
Lay Members	Female	319		
			Male	292
	Total	611		
Total		1,013		
ELCA Officers			4	
Total Voting Membership		1,017		

Of the 1,017 registered voting members, 94 were persons of color or persons whose primary language was other than English.

Presentation of Servus Dei Medal to Herbert W. Chilstrom

Secretary Almen introduced Vice President Kathy J. Magnus, who invited the Rev. E. Corinne Chilstrom to join her husband on the dais. She then read a resolution of the Church Council recognizing the Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom for eight years of service as bishop of this church, and presented to him the Servus Dei Medal in recognition of his leadership within this church. A bouquet of roses was presented to Pastor E. Corinne Chilstrom. Details of the presentation follow:

Ms. Magnus referred to programs distributed to the assembly that provided information about the Servus Dei Medal. She said, “[The medal has been] created to honor retiring officers. The established practice of predecessor church bodies in expressing special gratitude to those who have served as officers is carried forward now into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Servus Dei Medal, approximately five inches in diameter and slightly irregular in its circular form, suggests the shape of an ancient coin. On the obverse side is depicted a profile of Christ. The features are intended to convey the sensitivity, purpose, and tranquility of Christ. The crown of the head reveals ever so slightly, the symbolism of the crown of thorns. Arranged about the right lower and left edges in low relief are many symbols which are described in the programs.”

Vice President Magnus presented the Servus Dei Medal to Bishop Chilstrom and stated, “Upon action of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, I confer upon Herbert Walfred Chilstrom the first Servus Dei Medal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

The text of the resolution from the Church Council follows:

After prolonged applause, Bishop Chilstrom stated in response, “I had been thinking that we were going to have sort of a mundane ending to the morning and we were right on schedule and suddenly this happened. I cannot say anything but thank you, thank you, thank you.”

Midday Worship and Bible Study

Bishop Chilstrom then asked for a moment of silent prayer for the family of the Rev. Carl W. Larson, former bishop of the Red River Valley Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, who died earlier this week.

Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to prepare for worship. Midday worship was led by Ms. Connie Garrett [Northeastern Ohio Synod]. Ms. Jane Miller [Southeastern Iowa Synod] read the text from Acts 2:37-47. Mr. Jack Lawson [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] led the Bible study.

Recess

Bishop Chilstrom declared the assembly to be in recess until 8:00 p.m., Thursday, August 17, 1996.

Plenary Session Three
Thursday, August 17, 1995
8:00 p.m.–9:30 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called Plenary Session Three to order on Thursday, August 17, 1995, at 8:00 p.m., Central Daylight Time. He extended a special welcome to those who were viewing the proceedings of the assembly on cable television. The assembly then joined in singing the hymn, "Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven."

Elections:

Report of the Second Ballot for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, pages 39, 53-55, 64-65; continued on Minutes, pages 105-113, 137-138, 160-174, 253-254, 265.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, to present the report of the second ballot for bishop. Mr. Hardy asked that the pages begin distributing the report and the biographical material that accompanied it.

Number of ballots cast	1,014
Number of illegal ballots cast	1
Number of legal (valid) ballots cast	1,013
Number of votes necessary for election	760

Mr. Hardy stated that no nominee received the number of votes necessary for election

and, therefore, under the Rules of Organization and Procedure and the bylaws of this church, the names of the seven persons who received the highest number of votes on the second ballot would appear on the third ballot. He announced that the names of the following persons would appear on the third ballot:

H. George Anderson	239	
April C. Ullring Larson	190	
Donald J. McCoid	95	
David L. Tiede		93
Dennis A. Anderson	84	
Richard J. Foss		64
Joseph W. Ellwanger	51	

Mr. Hardy then announced the names of the next seven nominees and the numbers of votes each had received:

Lowell G. Almen		41
James A. Nestingen	33	
Kenneth H. Sauer		33
Timothy F. Lull		28
Craig J. Lewis		7
Sherman G. Hicks	6	
Robert G. Hughes	4	

By consensus, it was agreed to dispense with the reading of the names of the remainder of the nominees who had received votes on the second ballot for bishop since they were in the written report distributed to the voting members. These nominees and the number of votes for each follows:

Bishop Chilstrom stated that under the Rules of Organization and Procedures, the names of the seven persons who received the highest number of votes would appear on the third ballot. He repeated the names of the seven nominees, referred to their biographical information, which had been distributed with the written report of the results of the second ballot, and reminded assembly members that the seven nominees would be invited to address the assembly on Friday morning, August 18. He also announced that the third ballot would be cast in the plenary session on Friday morning, August 18, at 10:30 a.m.

25th Anniversary of the Ordination of Lutheran Women

Bishop Chilstrom reflected on the processes that had led to the first ordination of Lutheran women in North America 25 years previously. He said, "Through a period of very careful biblical and theological reflection and with courageous leadership, the question was addressed, 'Shall we begin ordaining women in these churches?' Tonight, we are very grateful for that leadership and that vision in our predecessor churches. Those of us who are now in leadership are the beneficiaries of the decision of this church to bring women into ordained ministry." He observed that, although much change has occurred within American Lutheranism since he first became a synodical bishop in 1976, "we are only on the way, we have many miles to go until this church accepts completely in all of its expressions, those women whom we have welcomed into ordained ministry."

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. Eleanor M. Hunsberger, a pastor serving All Saints Lutheran Church (Cottage Grove, Minnesota), to lead the assembly in reflection on and celebration of the past 25 years of pastoral ministry by women.

Pastor Hunsberger stated that she was pleased for the opportunity to celebrate the decision of this church's predecessor churches, reached 25 years previously, to ordain women to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. "You are going to hear a lot of stories tonight—stories about how the ELCA's predecessor church bodies made their decisions for the ordination of women, stories from women clergy about their ministries, and more stories about how clergy women have affected the life and ministry of this church. That is well and good, because we are people of the story. All of the stories you will hear tonight are paragraphs in the larger story—the story of God's love for us shown through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the story of this church's work to make Christ known," she said.

The assembly then viewed videotaped stories documenting how women came to be ordained and how they have influenced the life of this church. The story leading to women's ordained ministry was shown to have begun with the women at Jesus' tomb. Thus, from the Church's beginning, women served in a variety of ministries within its life and witness.

Pastor Hunsberger commented, "It is in the tradition of these first women 'preachers' that women have continued to do ministry throughout the centuries. As early church leaders and martyrs, as mystics and deaconesses, as missionaries, teachers, pastors' wives, and women's organization members, as choir members, cooks, and Luther Leaguers—all of this ministry is valued and vital. Out of these many roles and others, and following the church mergers of 1960 [and 1962], women began to take on more leadership roles within the church. Women served on local and national church councils. They became presidents of congregations and chaired call committees. They serve as delegates to conventions, such as this one. Women are called to work on synodical, district, and national staffs within the churches."

"The most dramatic change to take place in the role of women's leadership in the Lutheran churches in the United States," Pastor Hunsberger continued, "was the decision in 1970 to ordain women to pastoral ministry. Some other American Protestant churches had taken the step already in the 19th century and most European Lutheran churches had done so by the 1960s. For us, however, it was only in the late 1960s that our church began to address the question seriously. With pressure from both women and men within the [ELCA predecessor] church [bodies], as well as the challenging cultural times, the Church Council and Executive Council of The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, respectively, began to discuss the question of the ordination of women. They asked for papers from seminaries of the churches addressing the question of biblical witness and the Lutheran tradition. They established committees to discuss and give guidance to the issue. Finally, after much groundbreaking work, the question was brought to the assembly floors. Should we open the ministry of Word and Sacrament to women? After much spirited debate, the Lutheran Church in America, meeting in Minneapolis, and The American Lutheran Church, meeting in San Antonio, voted to open ordination to women. Both motions passed by about 55 percent. The churches had spoken!"

Pastor Hunsberger provided additional information from the story. In 1970, two women were ordained to ministry of Word and Sacrament—the Rev. Elizabeth A. Platz, campus pastor at the University of Maryland (Lutheran Church in America); the Rev. Barbara Andrews (The American Lutheran Church), who died in a fire in March 1978; followed in 1976 by the then Rev. Jan Otte (Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), who currently is serving as a

clinical therapist and no longer as an ordained pastor. In succeeding years, they were joined by, among others, the Rev. Asha George-Guiser and the Rev. Kwang Ja Yu, the first two Asian women to be ordained; the Rev. Lydia Rivera Kalb, the first Hispanic woman ordained; the Rev. Maria-Alma Copeland and the Rev. Earlean Miller, the first two ordained African American women; and the Rev. Marlene Whiterabbit Helgemo, the first Native American woman to be ordained.

During the first five years only 32 women were ordained. By 1980, there were 223 ordained Lutheran women; by 1985, the number had tripled to 673. By 1990, there were 1,320 ordained women serving on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; at the end of 1994, the number had grown to 1,718.

Pastor Hunsberger observed, "As a group, we clergy women are very diverse. Fifty-four of us are women of color—African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American. Nearly three-fourths of us serve in parish ministry. Some of us teach in seminaries; some are chaplains, pastoral counselors, campus pastors, or missionaries. Some serve on synodical and churchwide staffs. And some combine this ministry with other work and responsibilities. I think it is safe to say that wherever the church is, whatever the church is doing, ordained women are there, too."

Pastors Platz and Helgemo, as representatives of all Lutheran ordained women, came to the platform to receive the thanks of the assembly for their continuing service as pioneers on the road to women's ordination within the Lutheran church in North America.

The Rev. Beth E. Wieseman (Detroit, Mich.) was invited to speak on behalf of the women ordained in the 1970s. She said, "During that first decade there were not many of us clergy women—one, maybe two, in each area. . . . Keeping in touch with the other clergy women was really important as a source of support and encouragement. We learned a lot from each other." She continued, "Now when we get together and reminisce about those days, we laugh a lot. For example, there were those strange stories from call committees, like, 'Do you drive at night?' 'Is it okay with your husband that you are a pastor?' 'Who will take care of your kids?' And even, 'What do we call you—pastorette?' Now they seem funny, back then they caused a lot of pain." Pastor Platz commented, "We often felt we were on display—Exhibit A: All Clergy Women Are Just Like This. We worried that, if we failed or did not live up to everyone's expectations, it would reflect badly on all clergy women everywhere." She concluded, "We who were ordained in the '70s (the first decade after the decision was made) are so thankful for the opportunity to serve as God's servants in ministry to the Gospel and to the whole people of God."

The Rev. Gwendolyn Johnson-Bond (Philadelphia, Pa.) spoke for women ordained in the 1980s. She commented, "It is my privilege to bring you the stories of women, like me, who were ordained in the '80s. As I start, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge publicly and to give thanks to all my sisters in ministry, ordained and lay, who went before me and helped to pave the way. And also for those men, clergy and laity, who worked alongside of us to help the church to decide to ordain and then to accept pastoral ministry from women. . . . By the middle of the second decade, by the mid-1980s, things had started to change. Many people had heard a woman preach and had seen a woman preside at the table."

"I do remember that seminary was a nice surprise," she continued, "by the mid-1980s women comprised almost a third of my seminary class. I even had one woman faculty member and it sure seemed wonderful at the time. . . . It was good by then to be able to meet and see a number of different clergy women and each one had her own style. It really helped me to see that

there was not a ‘women’s way’ of doing ministry, but rather there were many women’s ways of serving.” She concluded, “It is a profound, poignant privilege to be able to serve in this way, and we remember so many others who may have been called by the Spirit, but could not serve as pastors.”

The Rev. Tania K. Haber (Minneapolis, Minn.) represented women ordained in this third decade, the 1990s. “I have come to tell the story of the women ordained more recently,” she said. “We are as diverse and as committed to the Gospel as our sisters ordained 20-some years ago. I stand here tonight feeling very thankful for the faithfulness and courage of all of my sisters who were ordained in those early years—we forget their stories, their strength, their persistence, their pain, and their commitment—for . . . all of those who led the way, who wrote position papers, who argued from pulpits and pamphlets, women and men, laity and clergy, who believed and stuck it out; for all of the lay women in this church now and in years past who have responded to God’s call to them. What a privilege it is to be in partnership with them in ministry of the Gospel.”

Pastor Haber described how many lay women serve the Gospel in daily life, “giving faithful witness to God’s mercy and grace in a multitude of creative ways. . . . And then, sometime, somewhere, that still, small voice stirs into speech. Could it be a call to something new—ordained ministry? It is not a better call [than the variety of calls to lay women], but a different one,” she said.

Pastor Haber reflected on the process of theological education and internship that leads to first calls to parish ministry and that helps to confirm the call to ordained ministry. She concluded, “One of the interns this year tells a delightful story about having women clergy around during her whole life. She was born just three years before the decision was made to ordain women and so, she has been, as she puts it, ‘profoundly blessed and shaped by being born at that time, because I have had women my whole life as pastors, mentors, models, and now friends. . . . I will be the fifth person in my immediate family to be ordained, following my younger sister who will be ordained this summer.’ Is that not amazing—there are now pastors who simply take the presence of women pastors for granted!”

Mr. Joel Mugge (Minneapolis, Minn.) told of a friend whose daughter had been baptized by a women pastor and later in childhood had become a good “buddy” of the pastor. “Not long ago, when Pastor Karen was gone, a local chaplain led worship, and . . . Jessie blurted out, ‘Look, Dad, boys can be pastors, too.’ Boys and girls these days are lucky to have clergy women and men to look up to and learn from. It is healthy and right and just plain fun,” he said.

Ms. Lylie Standingwater (Tulsa, Okla.) spoke as the former chairperson of a call committee that decided to call a woman pastor. She said, “Three years ago I chaired a call committee for our church. We are a small church with only one pastor. The bishop’s office gave us profiles of five people to interview. Only after we had picked two who seemed to fit our needs best did we discover that one of them was a woman. It took a lot of discussion in our committee before we even agreed to interview her. To make a long story short, she was the better candidate, the right one for us; she just seemed to fit our parish to a tee. We really had to talk it up . . . before we dared to tell the congregation council that the candidate was a woman. We were even more certain that she would be a good pastor for us when she agreed to preach and to answer questions before we voted. After people met her and heard her preach, it just was not a problem. I think two families left the congregation, but that was their loss. They did not even give it a chance. The rest of us feel blessed and very glad that women can be pastors, so that one

can be our pastor.”

Mr. Burgess Wilson (Detroit, Mich.) reflected on his response to women as his pastors. He said, “I have been around for a long time. I have seen a lot of pastors come and go. Right now, we have three pastors at our church; one is a woman. She is the second woman pastor we have had. They have both been great. I am not exactly sure of what it is, but it is very important to me to hear a woman preach and sing the liturgy. Pastor Sue also has been a great help to my daughter. She has been able to talk to her woman to woman. She has been able to say things to her that none of the rest of us ever could. I do not think that my daughter would have opened up to the male pastors even though they have both been just great. Pastor Sue was an answer to prayer—besides, she has a great sense of humor.”

Ms. Laura McIntyre (Seminola, Fla.) commented, “When they asked me to talk, I said, why not? What’s the big deal? I have had both male and female youth pastors and they are both great fun. They both talked to me about my faith in Jesus. I kind of like it that the girls have someone they can really talk to. But, we like her, too. I think she really cares about us and I know she loves God. I like her funny stories, and when she caught me crying once, she was really good—not too goopy, but like she really cared. I think guy pastors are fine, too. It does not matter to me as long as they are good and they love Jesus.”

The Rev. Harris A. Hostager (La Crosse, Wis.) spoke of equality. “There are many in our congregations who have not actually seen women and men fully sharing ministry as equal partners. Even in their workday lives, they may find it a problem to share tasks as equals. But, in the body of Christ, and especially in leading worship, male and female partners in ministry can intentionally model a fully shared leadership. The roles of preacher, presider, and assisting minister alternate with grace and respect. In leading worship together, there is the ongoing public declaration that there is one ministry here, fully shared for the sake of Christ and for the sake of God’s people. Deep respect and trust and celebration of each other’s gifts must be very real to people who work together and also made obvious to the congregation. This matter of making it obvious is so important that it deserves deliberate words and actions.

“One of the first things I noticed in beginning a shared ministry with a woman colleague was that she was more likely to be sought out by the community’s victims. But, that was just the beginning of new discoveries. I learned that she had not come to that community merely to cover the gaps in my ministry. My new partner had brought with her new vision and new power for absolutely everything. It brought a deeper understanding of what true partnership in Christ looks like. We both hope that partnership was a living example of how all women and men might affirm each other and work together as servants of Christ in any calling. Through faithful women pastors, partners in ministry, God has been calling and leading and pushing and prodding all of us toward wholeness in the Church and in our lives. God is still working on that and we still have work to do, but I am very grateful that God has surprised me and enriched me along the way and I hope that every one of us can say, ‘I have come a long way,’ and thank God.”

Bishop E. LeRoy Riley Jr. [New Jersey Synod] told of his synod’s reflection on the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women. “One of the pastors, who is a woman, remembered that in the first years, ‘We had to buy guys’ shirts and the tails were below our skirts, so we had to adjust them. In some ways, the struggle to fit into the clothing symbolizes the struggles women have had to fit into the office of ordained ministry.’” He said, “Expectations so often were shaped, it seems, by male models of being pastors. As one woman put it, ‘We were not always exactly sure what was particularly male about the models of ordained ministry and what was

simply the nature of the office; so, we tucked here and took a little in there, and grew into the role and learned how to make the shirts and vestments fit.’ Only twice in the New Testament,” Bishop Riley observed, “is gender specifically mentioned: first in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, where Jesus reminds us of our created order as male and female, and then in Galatians, where Paul reminds us that ‘In Christ, there is no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. For in Christ Jesus, you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ, have clothed yourselves with Christ.’ It is that clothing, that vestment, that fits us all—the baptismal garment of God’s grace through Jesus Christ. This wonderful anniversary should remind us again that, for the sake of Jesus Christ, one size fits all.”

Pastor Hunsberger stated, “We have heard stories from clergy women ordained in three different decades. We have heard stories from people whose lives have been affected by the ministry of clergy women. The ordination of women and its impact does not belong to just a few. It is a part of the story of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It belongs to all of us and I believe that all of us have experienced the impact of women clergy in a variety of ways. I have seen the faces of many women and some men tonight. Now, I invite you to look around and to see each other—a visual picture, right here in this room, of this representative body of Lutherans, the faces of all who have felt the effect of the ministry of ordained women.”

Recounting the celebration, “Breaking Open the Jar,” held earlier in the week to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women in the Lutheran churches in North America, Pastor Hunsberger noted the participation of more than 700 people. Ms. Rachel Conrad Wahlberg (Austin, Tex.) then read the text for that celebration, the story from Mark 14:3-9 of the woman breaking the jar of ointment to anoint Jesus.

The assembly joined in singing “Holy Woman, Graceful Giver,” a hymn newly composed by Susan and David Cherwein (Minneapolis, Minn.) in celebration of this anniversary.

The “Inquiry” Process

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 709-715; continued on Minutes, pages 138-139.

Bishop Chilstrom recalled that earlier this year he had asked all ELCA members to participate during the 1995 Pentecost season in prayer and reflection on the future of this church, as part of a process of listening, reflecting, and planning known as the “Inquiry.” He then called upon Vice President Kathy J. Magnus and Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, director of the ELCA Department for Research and Evaluation, to describe the “Inquiry” process and to lead the assembly in small-group discussion.

Vice President Magnus began the introduction by quoting the hymn text, “The Church of Christ in every age, beset by change but Spirit led, must claim and test its heritage, and keep on rising from the dead.” She observed that the words of the hymn “call us without hesitation into the future. That is what the ‘Inquiry’ is all about. The ‘Inquiry’ began with a request from the Office of the Bishop in the fall of 1993 as a way of discussing the future of the churchwide organization. At the Church Council’s request, the ‘Inquiry’ gained a much wider scope—that of looking at the future of our whole church. This process was to include open and honest conversation, establishing an understanding of current realities and future trends, and examining the future mission of this church in all its expressions. In the almost two years since then, we have made good progress toward accomplishing those goals.” Vice President Magnus explained

that the process thus far had included an extensive review of literature on the future of mainline denominations and discussions with key ELCA leadership groups, including synodical bishops and synodical vice presidents. “Currently, we are in the process of engaging ELCA voices across the country in dialogue about our common future,” she said.

Ms. Magnus expressed thanks to the members of the Inquiry Advisory Committee: the Rev. H. George Anderson, chair, president of Luther College (Decorah, Iowa); Bishop Paul J. Blom (Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod); Ms. Kay Conrad, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas (Raleigh, N.C.); the Rev. Laura L. Klick, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church (Allentown, Pa.); Mr. Charles Y. Glock, (Sandpoint, Idaho), formerly professor of the sociology of religion at the University of California at Berkeley; the Rev. Gerald W. Nelson, pastor of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church (Naperville, Ill.); Mr. Athornia Steele, law professor at Capital University (Columbus, Ohio); the Rev. David L. Tiede, president of Luther Seminary (Saint Paul, Minn.); and Vice President Magnus. She also expressed appreciation for the participation of ELCA staff members: Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, director of the Department for Research and Evaluation; Ms. Kathy Sime, research assistant for the “Inquiry”; the Rev. Robert N. Bacher, executive for administration; and Ms. Lita Brusick Johnson, executive assistant to the bishop. Vice President Magnus also recognized Mr. Anthony Harris of the Lyceum Group in Minneapolis, Minn., who had given of his services, and Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL, Appleton, Wis.) for helping to fund the project.

Vice President Magnus reported that through a series of nine dialogues, five of which already had been held, the voices of ELCA members, both clergy and lay, were being heard in discussion of their common past, present challenges, and hopes and dreams for the future. She asked, “What have we learned so far?—that this church is blessed with commitment and passion for the Gospel; that we are rich in talent, wealthy in dedication, and although we may take it for granted and overlook it, we are blessed with each other. . . . We know that God has blessed us with all the resources we need to face boldly the challenges of the future. We agree that times have changed and that we must respond. The question is how. We are concerned about maintaining a Lutheran identity, but desire to be open to diversity. We are hearing,” she said, “that we believe that mission must occur on the local level and yet we are also rooted in the tradition of maintaining a national and global Lutheran presence. We have heard that we have concerns about education for leadership in our church—both seminary education for clergy and the equipping and empowering of our lay leaders. And most loudly and clearly we have heard that we are hungry for strong, stable, and faithful relationships across this whole church. Yearning for an environment of trust where growth and risk-taking are made possible and encouraged. We need to honor our differences while hearing a cry for community, and we must remember that in spite of the challenges, we are sisters and brothers in Christ.”

Assembly members then met in small groups of four or five people to discuss two questions related to hopes and dreams for this church: “What is God calling us to do?” and “What is God calling us to be?” Assembly members were requested to submit their responses on cards, which were to be posted as a way to celebrate those hopes and dreams. Some of the comments were to be shared during the morning plenary session on Friday, August 18. After ten minutes of small-group discussion, Vice President Magnus concluded the presentation: “Remember that our own inquiry into the future of our church is actually a never-ending process. We hope that the discussion that you began at the tables tonight will carry beyond the walls of this plenary session and this convention center. As you talk about the business of this church

tonight and in the days and weeks ahead, allow yourself time to dream about what we could be and what we should be. In keeping with that wish, we have just a little bit of homework for you . . .; take some time before tomorrow morning to reflect on where you see this church ten years from now. Where will we be? What will we be doing? How will we be accomplishing our mission and where are the mission fields? How will we be making Christ known in 2005?"

Greetings: David W. Preus

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. David W. Preus, presiding bishop emeritus of The American Lutheran Church, who presently was serving as interim pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church (Moorhead, Minn.). Bishop Preus said about his current interim in parish ministry, "It is just a lot of fun to be back preaching to the same bunch of people after a great many years of one-night stands [in preaching and speaking in various settings]. To be able to correct last week's mistakes is a great virtue." He urged, "We have no option but to be the Church of Christ in mission and I know that is what is motivating you to be here in this kind of gathering. I look forward to this Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaching the promise that has been a part of its life from its beginning. We came together from our respective backgrounds and it is now for us to make this into the great church that we all know God intends it to be."

Announcements

Secretary Almen underscored several deadlines for submission of amendments and nominations. A reception honoring the bishops who are women would be held immediately following this plenary session, he said.

Recess

Bishop Robert W. Kelley [Northeastern Ohio Synod] offered the closing prayer. Plenary Session Three recessed at 9:37 p.m.

Plenary Session Four

Friday, August 18, 1995

8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called Plenary Session Four to order at 8:31 a.m., Central Daylight Time. He welcomed persons joining the assembly through cable television, stating, "Some of you may not be members of one of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America congregations. I am sure you know, however, that there are hundreds of these congregations in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area. We hope you will look up one of those churches, if you do not have a congregation of your own. I know you will find a very warm welcome."

Opening Hymn and Prayer

Bishop Chilstrom then invited Mr. Scott Weidler, assembly organist, to introduce the gathering song, "Come, All You People." Opening worship was led by Mr. J. David Ellwanger [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod], a member of the Church Council.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes, pages 11-12, 35, 41, 91; continued on Minutes, pages 159-160, 253, 257, 619; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Secretary Lowell G. Almen presented the report of the Credentials Committee, stating that as of 8:05 a.m., Friday, August 18, 1995, the voting membership of the Churchwide Assembly was registered as follows:

Voting Members					
Ordained Members	Female	92	Male	314	
	Total	406			
Lay Members	Female		321		
			Male	295	
	Total	616			
Total					1,022
ELCA Officers					4
Total Voting Membership		1,026			

Elections: Addresses by Nominees for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, pages 39, 53-55, 64-65, 95-96; continued on Minutes, pages 137-138, 160-174, 253-254, 265.

Prior to calling upon the seven nominees for bishop to address the assembly, Bishop Chilstrom reflected, "Welcome, chosen seven. I have been through this process before a few times and, not having to go through it this time, I thought I would sleep like a kitten last night. But, as I am sure was the case with many of you [assembly members], I found myself instead awake quite a bit, agonizing in prayer with these seven persons who have been willing to be open to a call from this church to the office of bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. So we come well prepared in our prayers."

The seven nominees for bishop were seated on the dais. Bishop Chilstrom announced that the order in which the nominees would address the assembly, as listed below, had been determined by lot. Each speaker would have five minutes in which to address the assembly:

- The Rev. David L. Tiede
- The Rev. Joseph W. Ellwanger
- The Rev. April Ulring Larson
- The Rev. Donald J. McCoid
- The Rev. Dennis A. Anderson
- The Rev. H. George Anderson
- The Rev. Richard J. Foss

The texts of their remarks follow.

The Rev. David L. Tiede

“The Lord be with you. We are not our own in this assembly. Hear God’s word from Isaiah, ‘It is too light a thing that you should be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the survivors of Israel. I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth’ (Isaiah 49:6). The mission is God’s. Eleven thousand congregations surround us like these quilts [that decorate the assembly hall], synods from Alaska to the Caribbean, a global network of witness and service, and millions of Christians called to the life of God’s people in the world. We are God’s servants working together, says the apostle, you are God’s field. The mission is God’s. Our commission lies in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the justification of sinners like us by God’s grace through faith, we come together across regional and racial and economic boundaries. We love this land. Our name, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, is a calling to make Christ known.

“In 1970, I was called to become a pastor and a teacher in the church. I telephoned my mentor, Dr. Kent Knutson, then at Wartburg Seminary. We discussed the church for about two hours. We shared our hope of Lutheran unity. We rejoiced in the ordination of women. Our confessional church had a mission and I did not want to miss it. I have a great job right now with a gifted, committed faculty. It is full-time work. Our seminaries and our clusters are equipping a new generation of leadership. But, what will be their future, the church in which they will serve? Declining mainline? Let us pray not.

“One critic has said many ELCA congregations and pastors really have not joined this new church. I think it is time to invite all to discern and to join in God’s mission for this church. If I am called as bishop, that is exactly where we will begin. Many congregations, pastors, agencies, and bishops are out ahead. The Church Council began the ‘Inquiry’ process and our large congregations hosted the national teleconference. These are signs of hope. So, let us move together. Let the bishop, the Church Council, and the Conference of Bishops lead us in a discipline of listening for God’s call to us, undergirded by worship and prayer and Bible study and the catechism. We will ask the people of God in each place, ‘what is God calling you to be and to do, say, as a Lutheran congregation in the heart of Detroit or in the Great Plains or among the new immigrants in metropolitan New York?’ ‘How will you welcome young people to Lutheran worship on the Pacific Rim where 70 to 90 percent are unchurched?’ ‘What language and what music will you borrow to communicate Christ in the [Roman] Catholic culture of Rhode Island or among the Baptists in the South?’

“By the 1997 assembly, we will gather this wisdom and we will propose the best way to mobilize our church. The major focus will be on the work of our congregations. God’s mission includes both Law and Gospel, evangelization and justice. Lutheran communities of Word and Sacrament ministry have a ministry within and a mission beyond their own membership.

“Early this summer, I spent several hours in conversation with Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, one of our great saints. He will soon celebrate his 100th birthday. He was so hopeful for our young ELCA. ‘When I was a pastor’s son in Connecticut,’ he said, ‘I could not have imagined such a wonderful church with so promising a future.’ I was moved. ‘Dr. Bergendoff,’ I said, ‘you know our problems and you are full of years. Only someone who believes that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead could be so hopeful.’ ‘That’s right, David,’ he smiled, ‘Jesus Christ is raised from the dead. The best is yet to be.’ Thanks be to God.”

The Rev. Joseph W. Ellwanger

“My brothers and sisters in Christ, if you are surprised that a parish pastor, and an urban pastor at that, is in the running for presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, you are not alone. I am surprised as well. But, the more I think about that possibility, the more I think about it. You see, what it is that is expected of the bishop is to be a pastor, to be a teacher, to be a prophet with a vision for the church. And would not a pastor—who is walking with the people, walking with the poor—is not such a person an individual who is in an excellent position to have a vision for the Church that is in touch with people, in touch with the local congregation, and in touch with the power of the Gospel at work in the lives of people and the Church?”

“As a pastor in an African American community in Birmingham, Alabama, for nine years during the exciting and transforming sixties, and as a pastor in an urban, diverse congregation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for 28 years, I stand before you today as someone who has great hope for the urban church and for the whole Church. And, I have even greater confidence than ever that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation and unto wholeness and transformation for all—for all who believe.

“And I have a vision for the Church. I have a vision of a church where every Christian and every congregation is alive in Jesus Christ and passionate and active in mission. I have a dream and a vision of a church where the local congregation is in touch with the needs of its neighborhood, is going the second mile to meet those needs, and is intentional about seeking to transform that neighborhood into the ‘shalom’ kingdom for which Christ gave his life. I have a vision of a church where the urban congregation is not an appendix to the body that can be cut off and nobody misses it, but where the urban congregation is seen as the heart. And when the heart bleeds, the whole body bleeds. And when the heart is alive and pumping, the whole body is alive and growing and pumping. I have a vision of a church where Christians and congregations—each of them—are active and creative in doing justice, not because it is the political and correct thing to do—not in spite of the Gospel, but because of the Gospel. I have a vision of a church where all the gifts of all of the people are sought out, celebrated, and used—where women pastors and women leaders have mobility, where their gifts are used to the utmost for the building up of the kingdom; a vision of the church where the gifts of gay and lesbian Christians are not simply tolerated, but sought after and celebrated and lifted up and used for the common good of all.

“I recognize that as Martin Luther King once said, ‘True peace is not the absence of tension, but the presence of justice.’ I know that living into this kind of a vision for the Church is not going to be without tension, but where tension results from this kind of active, eager, risk taking—this attempt to live into the new wineskin of the Church—that kind of tension is healthy and good and will result in growth in the Church. I am committed to walking with you as presiding bishop or as pastor with confidence, with joy, into this vision that will result surely in the growing of God’s people and of the Church.”

The Rev. April C. Ullring Larson

“Well, that was a perfectly good night of sleep utterly ruined. By the way, for those of you who carefully read biographical information, my last parish ministry was not ‘Old East Pain Creek,’ but ‘Old East Paint Creek.’

“I bring you greetings from people that I have been gifted to serve in the La Crosse Area

Synod—not too far from here, actually. It borders the mighty Mississippi River on both sides with congregations in Minnesota and in Wisconsin and they have been joining with us in prayer for the assembly.

“Along with you, I have read and listened and watched what my fellow ELCA members are expecting of their new bishop. I want to tell you that I know that I am dust and ashes and that is all. A clod of clay. Yes, I also am created, as you, in the image of God, but I am still clay. I am in bondage to sin and am helpless to free myself. I have been buried with Christ and daily raised up again. First of all, I stand always with all of you on this side of the altar, lay and clergy alike, with empty hands looking for a crumb of bread and a taste of wine to nourish and feed my broken life. As a sinner who is baptized or as a baptized person who is also a sinner, I find my walk with God to be a daily struggle. I find I am more likely to spend a significant part of my day trying to talk God into April’s agenda than listening to God’s agenda.

“I am also a pastor of the Church, and that means that I am one of the privileged ones who is called to preach Christ to the people of God, administering the living Word and the sacraments in their midst. I am also the one who is trusted to bring the laments and the sorrows and the joys and the thanksgivings of the people of God to God. Our calling together as God’s people is made clear in Luke 10, where Jesus does something not done in Matthew and Mark. Jesus combines the first and second into one law, one commandment, ‘You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself’—two made into one, which are indivisible, and the Church always holds those in tension. And right after that we see those two stories—the Good Samaritan where Jesus says everyone is your neighbor, the one local, the one far away; everyone is your neighbor. And then follows the story of Mary and Martha where the one doing all the justice work and getting the job done is admonished to relax; Mary has chosen the better part, sitting at the feet of Jesus. So, the Church seeks to hold together these two elements of the one law.

“I believe in Holy Communion, not only in the bread and the wine, broken and shed for you and for me, I believe in this Holy Communion, my brothers and sisters in Christ, sitting sinful like me, yet made in the image of God. I believe by God’s reckless, extravagant, ridiculous grace, that we can be together, we can do together what none of us can do alone. Together by God’s grace we can forgive others as God has forgiven us. Together, not separate, we can love this church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as God loves this church, recklessly, extravagantly, without measuring what is deserved. Together we can be God’s twelfth chapter of Corinthians.”

The Rev. Donald J. McCoid

“Each day, and many times during the day, a prayer that was formed in the pages of the New Testament has been a centering prayer for me. ‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.’ ‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy’—the Jesus prayer, a prayer as we turn our lives to God. Mercy, that powerful word—we look to God and God looks to us. When we think of the ten lepers, or the blind beggar, or other persons in the New Testament, or people through the centuries—even church bodies—they all have brought broken lives in a particular time and have asked for the presence and mercy of God. We need to turn to Christ, because we know that he takes notice, that he has mercy, that we have the one presence that we alone need.

“We hold in common, the many people who are here gathered, a common confession of Jesus as Lord and Savior. How we will center our lives and the life of this church body in Jesus

is essential. We are facing major challenges to be sure. What will be the hermeneutic, the interpretation and application of Scripture, to our life together? How can we deal with the diversity of opinions and issues that challenge us? How can we pray for and find the unity of all?

“We hear about the ELCA’s future and the future that we will be approaching as we turn to a new century. We hear a lot of talk about seizing the future and adapting to a changing world and a changing society. Of course, our posture should always be to the future, because we know as we move to the future that there is one who will be there to embrace us. But, we must be planted in Word and Sacrament, and that cannot simply be a term that is isolated to Sunday morning. It must be a ministry and a way of life within our church.

“We must be planted in our Lutheran Confessions. Why? Because they are inspired gifts of God with Word and tradition and theological integrity, we will be best able to serve God and the Church and the future. Oh, yes, we will need to develop programs and budgets and positions. We will need to make statements and take action. We will need to touch the world in which we live with care and love, and always with eyes of compassion that see need. However, will it be clear that what we will be doing is grounded in Word and Sacrament and the Confessions of the Church? Will it be clear to everyone who joins together that we are moving and with whom we are moving forward?

“Our church needs the clarity, not uncertainty. Our church needs direction and not an attempt to embrace all agendas. We have the treasures of Word and Sacrament and a theology that will be adequate to meet the concerns or challenges that we will face—Word and Sacrament ministry, Law and Gospel, two kingdom ethic, justification by grace through faith, a piety that emphasizes being as well as doing, compassion that sees need and acts. These are the treasures that we bring together from our heritage and the early years of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as we look to the future.

“I have always felt that my call was to parish ministry. I did not seek the call to be a synod bishop, but it was my good pleasure to say, ‘yes’ to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod to a third term. This is not an office that I seek. I am open to the Spirit and to the Church’s will, but I want to say that if I am chosen, or if I am not chosen, I will support, love, and work for this church, committed to Word and Sacrament, a theology that is Christ-centered in all things. ‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon us. Look to us as we look to you and all that we are and all that we do.’”

The Rev. Dennis A. Anderson

“Sisters and brothers in Christ. Tuesday, my wife and I observed the 58th anniversary of my baptism. In those 58 years of ministry as a baptized Christian, I have come to know that there is an awful lot that I do not know. But, this I do know: That God’s love in Jesus Christ has been graciously washed over me and I am radically committed to God’s mission in Christ through the Church. And that is the only reason I am here this day. I began my ordained ministry as a pastor-developer in a double car garage, with five cows grazing on five acres of Texas land. In my ministries from congregations in city and town, mission board staff, twelve years as a synodical bishop, and now as a seminary president, the focus has been on God’s mission outreach in Jesus Christ.

“And so I begin my remarks with these words from 1 Peter: ‘You, you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you might proclaim the mighty

acts of the one who called you out of darkness into marvelous light. Once you were no people, but now, now you are God's people.' Now, you are God's people, in order that you might proclaim.

"I believe, in order that we might more effectively proclaim, we as a church and individuals are called to increased confessional clarity in our witness to the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Several months ago, one of our nieces told us that she was trying to explain the meaning of Christmas and Easter during this past year to a Japanese boyfriend who had never known Jesus Christ, had not been in the Church. She said, 'You know, it is really a wild thing. A wild thing this birth and death and resurrection.' Yes, the Gospel is a wild thing and to proclaim it to those who stand outside of the Church, it means that we are recalled to increased confessional clarity.

"H. Richard Niebuhr said, 'There come those times of social disturbance when the Church must refocus on its identity and its mission.' And this is such a time. The teaching ministry of the Church must be reclaimed. For Scripture and theology are not one category of information alongside of many others, but the foundation by which we make decisions. To more effectively proclaim, we are called to community built in Christ. To unity in Christ in a super-individualized, consumerized society, we must focus on community. We are more than individuals, but we are gathered together in Christ in a diversity that does not divide, but enriches.

"We are called to be increasingly adaptive and faithful in order to proclaim to a whole new generation—a global, electronic generation—of God's children. We are called to more effectively focus our resources and to clarify the roles and functions of the Church beyond the congregation. We are called to increased collegiality and to sharing of decision-making within the life of this church. I pray that the Holy Spirit be with us and guide us as we call a new leader for this church. Amen."

The Rev. H. George Anderson

"Fellow Christians, Dennis Anderson and I seem to be looking more and more like each other, the older we get. I have the honor of being the sixth in a line of seven, and last night I thought that batting order was going to be really tough. But, you know, it is wonderful to hear the diversity of voices and the quality of dedication that we have heard in these speakers. And I, for one, am confident that God will continue to do great things through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—not just through any one person, but through each one of us and through the congregations and agencies that we represent.

"We hear a lot today about conflict and tension in the Church. But, the tensions we face and feel are tensions that are common to all of society. It is not because we have let society into the Church that we feel this way. It is because our destiny as a church is to be in the world, to suffer the pain of the world, so that we can also be a sign of hope, a sign that the reconciliation of Christ is still possible even in a divided world. And that is what Paul said when he first talked to Christians. When he wrote to the Galatians and told them that indeed there were differences of Jew and Greek, male and female, bond and free, but the hope always has been that out of that diversity, God can create a sign of hope and reconciliation.

"Now to perform that mission today, in this world, we have to support each other. I heard a pastor say not long ago, 'I feel like I am out there all by myself and everybody is shooting at me.' And I thought as I was sitting there, 'That's the way I feel, too, in my job.' And I suppose all of us, in a sense, feel that way. Friends, it is time for us to recognize that we do need each

other. To trust each other and to earn one another's trust. We need a churchwide conversation to talk about how we can support each other's ministries as each of us tries to work to mend God's world wherever we are.

"And about that world, some people say, 'Well, it is a secular world today. It is really tough to get the message out.' Nothing could be further from the truth. When a NASA ground controller can admit in an interview that he always wears his lucky blue socks on the day of launch, because, as he says, 'On a day like that you need all the help you can get.' There is a world out there that is hungry for something and they have not found it yet. People have always been hungry for security, for freedom, for love. The problem in our world is that they are eating spiritual junk food, including secularism, in an effort to satisfy that hunger, and the tragedy is that they are still hungry.

"Yes, the Church has indeed a word, some food, for this generation. As Lutheran Christians, we have a sort of special diet, some vitamins, that we can offer. First of all, our message about a God who loves us before we know God's name and, before we can call on God's name, God calls us by name. I was adopted as a child and for me, somehow, baptism and the unconditional love of God have always been linked together, because my whole life, in a sense, has been a life of gratitude for someone's unexpected and undeserved love to me. But, this gift of baptism is another gift we offer, because it is also a symbol for the Christian life. In a culture that is so achievement-oriented, we have the opportunity to say, no, the pattern of baptism says we daily die and rise again through the power of God.

"As a college president, people say I probably have no need to confess my sins, because they are enumerated every week in the student newspaper. In fact, I do need daily chapel and I find there God's help. And that is the final thing we have to offer—that this is God's world, God's future, and we do our best, but we lay it in God's hands and say, 'God, build on what is good, build over what is bad.' It is in that faith in God and confidence and trust that I have the courage to go forward in this election process. If we can walk together, if we can trust in God, and if we can seize the opportunity the Spirit gives us, the future of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be a great and a good one."

The Rev. Richard J. Foss

"It is really hard not to laugh at myself. I know with every fiber of my being that God will guide this assembly to call the bishop that God wants, and yet when I walk up here, all I can think is, 'Man, I hope they like me and I hope they think this Rick Foss is wonderful.' I must be a good Lutheran—that is simul justus et peccator, simultaneously sinner and saint. It keeps popping up no matter how hard I try and how much I grow.

"I am a pastor. For 21 years I have been a parish pastor in the LCA, ALC, ELCA; small town, large city; only pastor, associate pastor, senior pastor; and it has been uniformly delightful. The last three years I have served as a synod bishop, but I have to confess that I just simply see it as a 100,000-member congregation with a lot of great colleagues. And it has been a whole lot more fulfilling and fun than you all told me it could be. I have been blessed. I have great parents, church, and community. I grew up in a little country church, and church college. God gently nudged me out of several other careers I thought I wanted into the ministry. I have a wonderful wife, Nancy, who is a professor of French at one of our church colleges—Concordia. She and I have six children in various stages of young adulthood; we are never bored.

"I am good at a lot of things, I am not good at some other things. There are probably

better theologians and scholars and administrators, and there have been in every congregation I have served, but I have surely loved working with them. I am pretty good at building a team, pretty good with people. I think I was born collegial and collaborative. I do almost nothing in isolation, which means I get more credit than I deserve, because when you have good people around, they make one look good.

“This is God’s church, God’s beloved Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As members of it, we especially and desperately need to learn to know and trust one another better than we yet have. Sometimes I think it is like going on a trip as a family. When you have this wonderful trip planned and you suddenly realize that you did not give the kids time to get in the car. And without knowing that, I think we have done that in the first years and we are just getting the kids and the pets and the luggage into the car. And that is good and I sense that at this assembly.

“I think that the heart of the church, if this is the body of Christ, then I believe that the muscle mass and the life blood is the congregation, where two or three, or two or three hundred, or two or three thousand are gathered to worship and be sent out in mission. It is really tempting to do a two-minute drill and give you a plan or vision for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. But, the truth is that I would not be much different, if I were bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, than I am as bishop of the Eastern North Dakota Synod or a pastor in the parish. And, if you want to know what I tend to be like, you should ask someone who has been around me, because whatever I say will not make much difference.

“But, I did learn from my daughter years ago what it is all about. It was Saturday; it was February in Fargo [North Dakota]; we had five children then between diapers and junior high. Nancy was tired, the congregation council had been irritating that week, and the kids were noisy, and I wanted out of the house. So, I did what every normal American husband did, I pretended to be helpful. I said, ‘Nancy, do we need some things at the hardware store? And the grocery store? And the gas station? I’d be happy to go.’ She smiled. She knew what I was doing. She said, ‘Okay, go.’ And I slipped out the door and just as I got to the car, I heard the door slam and a little voice said, ‘I want to go, too.’ I didn’t want her to go. She was five. So, I turned around (and this is not good parenting) and I said, ‘You do not want to go, you don’t even know where you would be going.’ ‘Yes, I do.’ ‘No, you don’t.’ ‘Yes, I do.’ ‘Where would you be going?’ ‘I would be going with you.’ ‘Oh.’ I was thinking about the details, she wanted to be with the one who loved her. That is what this church is about.

“I do not know what God has in mind for tomorrow and I do not think you do either. But, I believe God will lead us and, if we walk it with our Lord, we will be just fine. God be with us all.”

Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to stand and to express thanks to the seven nominees for sharing their vision for mission. He announced that the third ballot would be cast at 10:30 a.m.

Proposed Social Statement on Peace

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 792-802; continued from Minutes, page 13; continued on Minutes, pages 260-265, 356-374.

At its April 1995 meeting, the Church Council received from the board of the Division

for Church in Society the text of the proposed social statement, “For Peace in God’s World,” which had been developed by a task force appointed by the board. The proposed statement, which was developed in accordance with procedures adopted by the 1989 Churchwide Assembly, was reproduced from 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 793-802.

Having reviewed this statement, the Church Council recommended that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly adopt “For Peace in God’s World” as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and approve the following implementing resolutions:

Recommendation of
the Church Council:

1. To adopt “For Peace in God’s World” as a social statement of this church to be used in accordance with the understanding outlined in “Social Statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Principles and Procedures,” which was adopted at the 1989 Churchwide Assembly (CA89.3.14).
2. To call on members of this church to renew our prayer for peace, our identity as a community for peace, and our study of the scriptural witness to the God of Peace, using this statement to help them form their judgments and carry out their commitment to live a faith active for peace.
3. To call on our congregations and professional leaders to give renewed attention to how our liturgy, preaching, hymnody, and prayers embody God’s will for peace and our calling for peace.
4. To commend the education, service, and advocacy ministries of this church in their work for peace on our behalf; to direct churchwide units to review their programs and major program directions in light of this social statement with the intention of strengthening this church’s witness to global peace; and to call upon members to support these ministries.

5. To direct the Division for Church in Society, in cooperation with other units, particularly the Division for Congregational Ministries, to provide leadership, consultation, and educational and worship resources for congregations on the basis of this statement.

6. To call upon members to give generously to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its World Hunger Appeal, so that the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, and our partner ecumenical agencies might do more in helping to alleviate the causes and consequences of war, to resolve conflicts, and to build peace; and to call upon members to participate actively in these ministries.

7. To call upon the educational institutions of this church—day schools, colleges, seminaries, centers of continuing education, and camps—to review their programs in light of this statement, so as to further the study of peace and global affairs.

8. To call upon the members and leaders of this church to support our youth in their struggle to define their identity and vocation as present and future peacemakers, and to call upon pastors and educators to encourage our youth to consider various forms of volunteer service that contribute to peace.

9. To share this social statement with other churches of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, and our other ecumenical partners as a sign of our commitment to work together for peace with justice.

10. To send this social statement to the President of the United States, to our elected representatives in the United States Senate and House of Representatives, to the United States Secretary of State, and to the Secretary General of the United Nations as a sign of our commitment to work with them for a more peaceful world.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Ingrid Christiansen, chair of the board of the Division for Church in Society, to introduce the proposed document. He also invited the Rev. Charles S. Miller Jr., executive director of the Division for Church in Society, and other members of the staff, to be present on the platform to provide background information for “this very significant, very important” proposed social statement on peace.

Ms. Christiansen stated that the board “unanimously and enthusiastically approved the proposed statement, ‘For Peace in God’s World.’ It is the board’s hope that the assembly will vote to approve this social statement and that it will then become a widely used document across this church and among individuals and families, congregations, and the various institutions of this church.” She expressed gratitude to the task force that had worked for three years preparing the proposed statement and called upon the members of the task force to come to the dais to be recognized. “All the task force members have served our church well. Their experience, their knowledge, their commitment to peace, and their love of the Church are evident in the faithful and comprehensive statement they have prepared. We are grateful to them,” she said.

Members of the Task Force on Peace were: Ms. Ruby Anderson (Sacramento, Calif.); Mr. Ralston H. Deffenbaugh Jr. (New York, N.Y.); the Rev. Daniel W. Erlander (Tacoma, Wash.); Ms. Carol Rae Hansen (Flagstaff, Ariz.); Mr. Lucian Heichler (Frederick, Md.); the Rev. Carol A. Jensen (Philadelphia, Pa.); Ms. Katherine M. Kidd (Bridgeport, Conn.); Ms. Carol Schersten LaHurd (St. Paul, Minn.); the Rev. Paul V. Martinson (St. Paul, Minn.); the Rev. Carl H. Mau Jr. (Redondo, Wash.); Mr. Michael Moller (Philadelphia, Pa.); Ms. Betty Olson (Lincoln, Nebr.); the Rev. Jose David Rodriguez Sr. (Catano, P.R.); Mr. William Tuttle (Fairfax, Va.); Ms. Deborah Yandala (Akron, Ohio); and the Rev. John R. Stumme and the Rev. Larry J. Jorgenson (Division for Church in Society staff, Chicago, Ill.).

Serving as staff consultants were: the Rev. Mark B. Brown, ELCA Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs (Washington, D.C.); Ms. Belletech Deressa, ELCA Division for Global Mission (Chicago, Ill.); Mr. Dennis Frado, Lutheran Office for World Community (New York, N.Y.); the Rev. Lloyd W. Lyngdal, ELCA assistant to the bishop for federal chaplaincies (Washington, D.C.); Ms. Jean Martensen, ELCA Division for Church in Society, peace education (Chicago, Ill.); and Ms. Joan Pope (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Chicago, Ill.). Ms. Martha Cortez and the Rev. Stuart W. Wright served as administrative staff.

Ms. Kidd, Pastor Martinson, Pastor Miller, Pastor Stumme, and Mr. Frado were asked to remain on the platform during the presentation of the social statement. Ms. Christiansen commented, "One of the keys to the success of a task force is its leadership. The Task Force on Peace selected two outstanding persons as its co-chairs. One was the Rev. Carl H. Mau Jr., former general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, and the other was Ms. Katherine M. Kidd, director of global studies, Sacred Heart University in Connecticut. For three years, the two worked hand-in-hand coordinating the work of the task force. Carl was unable to attend the last meeting because of illness and shortly afterward he died. Throughout this process, which was one of his last services to his church, Carl was a vigorous, wise, and enthusiastic participant. The gifts of Carl and Kate complemented each other very well. We are grateful for their leadership of a task force that has prepared a strong statement on peace for our church." Ms. Christiansen then called upon Ms. Kidd to introduce the proposed social statement on "Peace in God's World."

In introducing the statement, Ms. Kidd stated, "In our consideration of the social statement for 'Peace in God's World,' this assembly is calling upon our church to dedicate itself anew to work for peace. Adoption of this statement will signal our commitment to global peace and will indicate that peacemaking is a vital element of our calling to make Christ known to the nations. Lutherans in the United States have a legacy of publicly addressing issues of peace and war that goes back more than 70 years. This statement builds on that legacy, and calls us to strengthen our commitment to peacemaking as we enter a new millennium. This assembly is considering our church's call for peace during the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II and nearly six years after the end of the Cold War. The statement searches for what will make for peace in this new era of international relations.

"When many are looking inward, this statement makes clear that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will continue to look outward in its life and mission. Our concern for peace and justice in the United States goes hand-in-hand with the concern for peace and justice in other nations and among nations." Ms. Kidd alluded to war and violence in several places in the world, as well as violence in the United States, and suggested that guidance for addressing the dilemmas of war and violence were offered in the statement. She said, "Yet, for the first time, a Lutheran church body in the United States is considering a statement about peace at a time when we are not involved in or facing the immediate aftermath or threat of worldwide conflict. The statement, therefore, focuses more on building and keeping peace and less on war and the tools of war than earlier statements of our predecessor churches."

Ms. Kidd then explained the process used to develop the proposed statement. She noted that members of the task force had lived in East Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe and "have been involved in peacemaking in these places." The proposed statement included no formulas or simple answers in the quest for peace; we must be persistent in our calling as peacemakers, she said. "This statement, we hope, will provide a point of reference and a framework for some years to come as we continue to work for peace in God's world." Peace is

God's gift and our task, she concluded.

Bishop Chilstrom outlined the process for disposition of this item of business, noting that the assembly would consider two things: (1) the recommendation of the Church Council to adopt "For Peace in God's World" as printed on page 792 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2; and (2) the statement itself (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 793-802). To begin the process, the assembly considered the matter as a "committee of the whole," meaning that neither motions nor amendments would be entertained. This was to be a time to "talk among the family," he stated. Following general discussion, the assembly would move through the statement page by page, finally returning to the implementing resolution recommended by the Church Council. Bishop Chilstrom reminded voting members who had submitted amendments before the deadline that, in order to put their amendments before the assembly, they must proceed to a microphone and move such amendments when the pertinent section was before the assembly for discussion.

The Rev. Mark W. Pries [Southeastern Iowa Synod] inquired about the difference between a social statement and a social teaching statement. The Rev. Charles S. Miller Jr., executive director of the Division for Church in Society, responded, "The policy and procedures document adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 1989 distinguishes between a social teaching statement and a social practice statement. Basically, the difference is that a social practice statement, when one is proposed, is developed in less time and may, if necessary, be adopted by the Church Council. The expectation is that whether a social statement is for teaching or practice purposes it will be a theological document that is morally persuasive and helpful to this church in guiding its institutional life. So, in that respect there is no difference. Because of the little difference between the two, it has been increasingly our practice not to use the distinction 'teaching' or 'practice,' but to refer to the proposed statements simply as social statements of this church."

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] commented, "I come to the reading of this document as currently a pastor of the church, formerly an officer in the United States Air Force, and as one who regards himself as having fought in the Cold War for four years. This document says what I, as a Christian living in the United States of America today, want to say about peace. . . . I think it is an excellent document and I hope that it will be passed in largely the form in which it is now."

The Rev. Gary K. Olson [Saint Paul Area Synod] stated that he believed it vital that a statement on peace be adopted, although he had concern that the proposed statement [as written] did not reflect the passion of the committee members themselves and, therefore, would not motivate the rest of this church's members. He also inquired whether a study document would accompany the statement and observed, "that might help us in congregations to pursue this matter with more vigor and passion, and be motivated to take some action in the area of peace." Pastor Miller indicated that, if the statement were to be adopted, materials would be prepared to assist congregations to study the document.

Ms. Sandra Samuel [Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod] observed that peace should not be sacrificed for justice. She said, "When I read this document I was concerned about issues of justice. . . . We need to be aware of not sacrificing justice for peace. I was comforted this morning when I heard that there is no true peace without justice."

Ms. Faith Ashton [North Carolina Synod] said, "Just a few years ago, I was in Japan and stood in the museum at Hiroshima and witnessed the destruction of the atomic bomb. I really

appreciate that the statement addresses the issue of war and certainly at this time of the 50th anniversary of that attack, I would like to assume that we will pass this statement.”

Ms. Arline E. Shannon [Lower Susquehanna Synod] stated, “As a mother, I saw a son who had been brought up in the Lutheran church having a great deal of difficulty as he had to register for the draft and not having good direction from his church. I will be happy to have this as a basis for our understanding of our search for peace.”

Mr. David Gosewich [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke in support of the document, but added, “I have questions I would like to have addressed in the document. The context in which we live is a context of ‘take away the pain’—aspirin, whatever it might be. The context of codependency, of making peace at all costs.” He stated that he would like to have addressed such scriptural accounts as those in which Jesus said, “I come not to bring peace, but a sword” and “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” “I think we need to have an acknowledgment that we are in a battle and we need to express what kind of battle that is, whom we are fighting, and what we are fighting. . . . We are Christians in a battle with sin in the world and we struggle in battle for peace,” he observed.

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] noted, “Something that I learned too late in the process of the Gulf War was that the burden of proof for a Lutheran Christian does not rest with the one who disagreed with government policy, but rather the burden of proof lies always with those who wage war.”

Ms. Laura C. Bourdo [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] asked that members of the assembly look at 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 800, lines 39-48, the paragraph referring to support of economic conversion. Bishop Chilstrom requested that she hold her remarks until that page was under consideration.

Ms. Barbara Bauer [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] recommended that the enabling resolution be printed with the statement in the future, in order that the reader might understand “why and how we intend to use this statement as well as what we are trying to say.”

The Rev. Barbara K. Lundblad [Metropolitan New York Synod] asked Pastor Miller about budget and staffing for fulfilling the document’s implementing resolution. Pastor Miller responded, “The work of advocacy has not been diminished at all through the budget cuts that we have had to manage. Through our office at the United Nations, the Lutheran Office for World Community, and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs at Washington, D.C., we have every intention of maintaining a vigorous presence of advocacy in both the international and domestic arena as it relates to peacemaking.” He also stated that a full-time staff position in peace education within the Division for Church in Society had been eliminated, but that staff funding existed for a half-time, contracted position in the area of social justice education, including but not limited to peace education. That person would serve as a broker of information and a clearinghouse of resources. Pastor Miller noted that he expected that the position would be filled by the end of the 1995 calendar year.

Ms. Katherine Mukumoto [Southeast Michigan Synod] stated, “This is a very important and very nice piece of work. When we pass it, if that be the case, let us not just have a vote and say, ‘Okay, my duty is done.’ Each one of us has to work on this as individuals. Do not pass it as just a proposal; it is a life’s work.”

Ms. Patti Morlock [Southern Ohio Synod] inquired whether a study guide would be developed and opportunity provided for congregations to study the document, if it were to be adopted. She said, “In our congregation, we just finished a biblical study on peace. When these

documents came to me to read and study, I shared some of that with the group. They were encouraged by the fact that we as a church are prepared to make such a statement, but they would like the opportunity to study that more in depth.” Pastor Miller acknowledged that it was the division’s intention to develop such materials in cooperation with the Division for Congregational Ministries, in order to equip members of congregations to study and utilize the social statement.

Mr. Calvin K. Claus [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] stated, “This is an exciting moment in my life. I was in the 96th Infantry Division on the island of Okinawa in the last great battle and I am convinced that war is insanity. I am so pleased that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has come forth with a statement of this kind.” He added, “I have spent the last 50 years asking forgiveness for the people I might have killed in my war effort. I was only 18 or 19 years old. There were no 50- or 60-year-old men in battle; they were the ones who called the shots. I was not even old enough to vote as to whether I should be there.” Mr. Claus said that he was deeply grateful that this church was considering adoption of a statement that would help him to “face what few years I have left.”

Ms. Mary Jane Schieve [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] commented, “As an ecumenical peace facilitator, I would like to tell you how important such statements are in the context of our group. We rely on our various judicatories to provide this kind of information and study, and we have the kind of trust relationship that we can disseminate this information among our other judicatories.”

The Rev. Natanael F. Lizarazo [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] observed that the United Nations had identified his native country, Colombia, as the third most violent country in the world. He reflected, “In my experience of the Lutheran church presence in advocacy for peace, I know that, in many places where the Lutheran church has decided to speak and to accompany the struggle of those of us who live in such situations, that presence makes a difference. We think of Namibia, South Africa, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and many other places.” He strongly urged that the statement be made known to the United States government.

Bishop Chilstrom declared that the time allotted for discussion as a “committee of the whole” had expired and called for consideration of the document page by page.

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Pacifica Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-838; No-14; Abstain-10

Carried: To adopt en bloc amendments 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 15 of the “Amendments and Substitutions to the Social Statement on Peace,” distributed to the voting members, as recommended by the Division for Church in Society, namely:

3. To amend page 794, lines 55-56, as follows:

. . . Corinthians 1:10-17) and human differences in nationality, class, race, gender, and culture frequently outweigh our . . .

5. To amend page 796, line 56, by adding a new sentence:

International trafficking in illegal drugs contributes to violence in all parts of the world.

7. To amend page 797, line 43, by inserting the word, “the,” after the word, “without.”

9. To amend page 799, line 3, by adding:

We urge our congregations to promote understanding through people-to-people exchanges.

10. To amend page 799, at line 45, by adding a new footnote at the end:

See the ELCA message on “Community Violence.”

11. To amend page 799, line 92, by inserting:

. . . nations. Fiscal policy, business practices, investment policies, and . . .

12. To amend page 800, lines 9-10, by striking the word, “relief,” and replacing it with the word, “management”:

among nations, protect the environment, provide debt relief management, check abuse by multinational companies, and

13. To amend page 800, line 12, by adding the following:

. . . opportunities to foster capital investment and to profit through fair and open trade.
and

15. To amend page 800, line 78 by adding the words:

. . . organizations, has an obligation to respond and a right to intervene, with military . . .

The Rev. Dorene C. King [Montana Synod] moved adoption of amendment six on page two of “Amendments and Substitutions to the Social Statement on Peace.”

Moved;

Seconded: To adopt amendment six on page two of “Amendments and Substitutions to the Social Statement on Peace.”

6. On page 796, to delete lines 68 through the middle of line 80 (i.e., to the end of the sentence, “. . . these two dynamics.”)

~~The tension-filled interplay of these two dynamics—here called integration and particularity—shape today’s quest for peace. Integration promises broader global community; particularity promises deeper personal community. Integration threatens to bring inequality and domination by unaccountable power; particularity threatens to bring fragmentation and violent conflict by groups that deny the humanity of those who differ from them. Recognizing both promise and threat, we seek an earthly peace that affirms unity in our diversity.~~

~~Good and evil are intricately interwoven in the interplay of these two dynamics.~~

Pastor King spoke to the motion, stating, “I find confusing the use of the word, ‘integration,’ in this paragraph. In particular, the sentence that begins on line 72, uses the word, ‘integration,’ in a negative fashion.”

Pastor Miller stated that the division recommended that the foregoing amendment not be adopted, because “the existing sentences are integral to this section’s argument and fit with the rest of the statement.” He then called upon the Rev. John R. Stumme, associate director for studies in the Division for Church and Society, to make additional comments. Pastor Stumme said, “In this section of the statement we are describing the context and using the word, ‘integration,’ which, I believe, appears the first time in line 53, to indicate the interconnectedness of our world. Then, we describe that in tension with the particularity or the emphasis on that which defines a person in a person’s finitude. In talking about integration in the paragraph that is under discussion, we want to say that there are good and bad aspects to integration—that it is not all good—and to adopt an attitude that both affirms and criticizes, that sees promise, but also threat in this development.”

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] suggested that the

choice of the word, “integration,” was perhaps the difficulty rather, than the concept per se. He said, “The word, ‘integration,’ makes us think about social policy within the United States as regards school integration, for example. Maybe that word is part of the issue; maybe we could find a synonym that might work better.”

Bishop Howard E. Wennes [Grand Canyon Synod] said that he supported the amendment, because he found the paragraph to be confusing. He suggested to Pastor Stumme, “If you do not want the paragraph removed, then perhaps we should not act on this amendment at this time, but see if the committee could draft substitute sentences that would bring some clarity to the tension that you would like to have us understand.”

The Rev. George W. Forell [Southeastern Iowa Synod] spoke against the amendment. He stated, “It sounds so confusing, because the issue is so confusing, and I think it has to be addressed. It addresses issues that are acute right now in places like Yugoslavia. I think it would be a big mistake to drop this particular item.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-148; No-708; Abstain-37

Defeated: To adopt amendment six on page two of “Amendments and Substitutions to the Social Statement on Peace.”

6. On page 796, to delete lines 68 through the middle of line 80 (i.e., to the end of the sentence, “. . . these two dynamics.”)

~~The tension-filled interplay of these two dynamics here called integration and particularity—shape today’s quest for peace. Integration promises broader global community; particularity promises deeper personal community. Integration threatens to bring inequality and domination by unaccountable power; particularity threatens to bring fragmentation and violent conflict by groups that deny the humanity of those who differ from them. Recognizing both promise and threat, we seek an earthly peace that affirms unity in our diversity.~~

~~———Good and evil are intricately interwoven in the interplay of these two dynamics~~

Mr. Jurgen Almlie [Upstate New York Synod] sought to amend the document by striking lines 93 and 94 on page 800, and lines 1 and 2 on page 801. He suggested the deletion, because there was no enforcement behind the International Criminal Court and, therefore, no effect on the people who commit such crimes.

Bishop Chilstrom inquired of the assembly, whether the amendment would be considered. Objection was voiced. He then put the question to the assembly:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-344; No-550; Abstain-241

Defeated: To consider the motion offered by Mr. Jurgen Almlie [Upstate New York Synod].

Ms. Laura C. Bourdo [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] sought to move the following amendment:

To insert after line 49, page 800, the sentence,

We encourage the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that serve these populations to participate in ministries of reconciliation and support to persons in economic and

professional transition.

Bishop Chilstrom asked Ms. Bourdo to state her reason for proposing the addition. She replied, “As written, beginning on line 44, ‘Where reductions’—and they are referring here to the responsibility of our government to begin to shift funds from military appropriations into other programs—‘occur, communities, businesses, and governments on all levels have responsibility to develop strategies that contribute to the well-being of those who bear the greatest burden of this economic conversion.’ As the wife of a retired military man, I support reductions in armed forces, but I also know how it affects the lives of the people who serve our country in the military. I would like to see the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make a concrete commitment to the economic and psychological needs of these people in transition.”

Bishop Chilstrom asked the members of the assembly whether they wished to consider this amendment. Objection was voiced. Bishop Chilstrom put the question before the assembly:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-634; No-274; Abstain-19

Carried: To consider the amendment offered by Ms. Laura C. Bourdo
[Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod].

Ms. Bourdo then moved the amendment:

Moved;

Seconded: To insert after the sentence ending in line 48 and within the same paragraph at the bottom of the first column on page 800 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, the sentence, We encourage congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that serve these populations to participate in ministries of reconciliation and support to persons in economic and professional transition.

Pastor Miller stated that the division supported the amendment, but asked the mover, whether the words, “of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” might be omitted. She consented to the omission as a friendly amendment.

Ms. Norah Bringer [Southwestern Washington Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, stating, “As the daughter of a man who has served in the United States Air Force for almost 30 years and as well a member of a community that supports a major Air Force base and a major Army post, and is employed by Boeing [aerospace manufacturer] and also has several Navy bases in Western Washington, I would like to support this amendment, because we have a very large number of people who are experiencing this economic transition. It is causing a lot of strife in our area and in other areas around the country. It is very important that we reach out to this large number of people who are going through this transition.”

Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod] also spoke in support and commented, “I work in the aerospace industry at Rockwell International. In the ten years I have worked at Rockwell I have seen about 8,000 people laid off because of the demise of different governmental programs. I am very much in support of this amendment. I think we need to be there in prayerful support of those who are suffering economic hardship because of the transitions.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-937; No-26; Abstain-5

Carried: To insert after the sentence ending in line 48 and within the same paragraph at the bottom of the first column on page 800 in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, the sentence,

We encourage the congregations that serve these populations to participate in ministries of reconciliation and support to persons in economic and professional transition.

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] sought to amend the document by changing the phrase, “provide debt relief,” which had been amended to read, “provide debt management” by the en bloc action to read, “provide assistance with debt management” on page 800, lines 9 and 10, in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-612; No-302; Abstain-25

Carried: To consider the amendment offered by the Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod].

Pastor Weston then moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the document, by changing the phrase, “provide debt relief,” which had been amended to read, “provide debt management” by the en bloc action to read, “provide assistance with debt management” on page 800, lines 9 and 10, in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2.

Pastor Miller stated that the division raised no objection and would considered it to be friendly amendment.

The Rev. Fred Hasecke [Northwestern Ohio Synod] spoke against the amendment, because the change would be redundant. He said, “Line eight begins with ‘help to increase partnership’ and then goes on. . . . I suggest that help is presumed for all those categories.”

The Rev. John H. P. Reumann [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] inquired whether the amendment represented a change in content. He commented, “You have agreed to change the words, ‘debt relief,’ to ‘debt management.’ That has now embroiled us in the question of what the verb should be. My question . . . [concerns the] change in content from ‘debt relief,’ which could involve North Atlantic banks forgiving the debts of Southern Hemisphere countries, to ‘debt management,’ a way in which an international banking apparatus or organization would put in stringent regulations for a country to find ways to pay those debts. In accepting the amendment, was there a change in content that has now caused us to have to change the verb as well?”

Pastor John Stumme responded, “We would understand the term, ‘management,’ to be a broader concept that includes relief, if needed, as well as other means to deal with debt. . . . We have supported the word, ‘management,’ for that reason.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-615; No-335; Abstain-18

Carried: To amend the document, by changing the phrase, “provide debt relief,” which had been amended to read, “provide debt management” by the en bloc action to read, “provide assistance with debt management” on page 800, lines 9 and 10, in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2.

The Rev. Dennis S. Ritter [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved adoption of amendment 14 on page four of “Amendments and Substitutions to the Social Statement on Peace.”

Moved;

Seconded: To insert on page 800, line 32 (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2), after “individuals, communities, and nations”:

Aid should be withheld from governments whose rulers have enriched themselves at the expense of their people, those who use aid to profit personally, and those governments that traffic in illegal drugs.

Pastor Ritter spoke to the motion, saying, “I see this sentence as adding to the strength of the document and I am perplexed by the seeming naivete of the Division for Church in Society’s comments that ‘it is too sweeping and attempts to penalize rulers to the detriment of citizens who could benefit from the aid and perhaps even use some of that assistance to rid themselves of those rulers.’ If we are talking about corrupt rulers, they tend to take great care that the aid we send overseas does not get to those individuals who could use it against them and, in fact, we have that corroboration from our own overseas missionaries and others who are involved in relief aid through various means—that government aid goes not to the people who are in need in corrupt countries, but to those who are in power. So, it seems to me, we are not listening to our own people.”

Pastor Miller responded, “As I have listened to the task force discuss this proposed amendment, they have shared their own histories as individual members living in a variety of countries across the globe and certainly among those situations where there were rulers who were far from scrupulous, [and] they were able to indicate instances where relief and development were occurring through aid from the United States government. Such aid occurred in spite of the unscrupulous activities of those rulers and remained unencumbered from the activities of those rulers. To that end then, we felt that this proposed amendment was simply too sweeping in terms of our advocacy for tying the hands of aid from this government toward all governments where such rulers may exist.”

The Rev. Barbara J. Condon [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] spoke in support of the amendment, stating, “I appreciate the sentiment of the committee in terms of the input from the people who have lived in those countries, but I also think we do need to send a message to the government. It has been our experience here in this country in watching where the tax dollars have gone to aid the rulers and sometimes not the people.”

Mr. A. Dean Buchanan [Southern California (West) Synod] also spoke in support of the amendment and commented, “I believe that aid that does not pose any conditions is an error. We must become more sophisticated in our aid. We must make limited resources count and not disperse willy-nilly as has happened so often in the past. I also have lived in a foreign country as a missionary (in East Africa) and I can assure you that not everyone is so open to seeing money

being washed down the drain through the eyes and works of corrupt rulers.”

Bishop Chilstrom called for the orders of the day.

The Rev. James Stein [Greater Milwaukee Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the agenda, in order to provide 20 minutes prior to the third ballot for bishop for voting members of this assembly to discuss among themselves the excellent presentations made by the seven nominees this morning.

Pastor Stein spoke to the motion, saying, “The presentations this morning were so important and so well done that we need some time to digest them among ourselves before we go to the third ballot. We may not have this chance again.”

Bishop Mark W. Menees [North Carolina Synod] spoke against the motion, because he perceived that it is impossible to do such processing as a committee of the whole. “We can do it among ourselves individually, we do it in caucuses and groups that have already met in some instances, but I do not know what process could possibly be pulled off in a 20-minute period to allow that to happen,” he commented.

Mr. Charles Kurfess [Northwestern Ohio Synod] spoke in support of the motion, stating, “As we face the great responsibility of the election of our bishop, we each need to determine our own individual vote after prayerful consideration. We want to be open to the Holy Spirit. I do not mean to be facetious, but I do not expect the Holy Spirit to sit on my shoulder and whisper a name into my ear. So, in considering my own decision, as I think we all ought to, we want to do it in consultation with other members of the assembly who share that same commitment to seek God’s will. I am confident the Holy Spirit may work through us, as well as to us. Adoption of this motion will provide us, even though in a very limited way, this opportunity. Nothing that this assembly will do is more important than the election of our new bishop.”

An unidentified voting member called the question.

Moved;

Seconded: To move the previous question.

An unidentified voting member rose to a point of order and inquired whether the motion intended the assembly to recess to discuss the presentations, or whether discussion would occur as in a committee of the whole. Bishop Chilstrom read the motion and ruled that, if the motion were to be adopted, the assembly would be in recess for 20 minutes.

The Rev. David R. Wietelmann [Northwestern Ohio Synod] rose to a point of order, noting that the person who had moved the previous question had held a red card. Bishop Chilstrom ruled that holding a red card and calling the previous question violated the Rules of Organization and Procedure adopted by the assembly.

The Rev. Carl A. Jensen [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod], holding a white card, then called the previous question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-706; No-295; Abstain-24

Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-455; No-554; Abstain-9

Defeated: To amend the agenda in order to provide 20 minutes prior to the third ballot for bishop for voting members of this assembly to discuss among themselves the excellent presentations made by the seven nominees this morning.

Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to stand and to sing the hymn, “Word our God, Come Down on Earth.”

Elections: Third Ballot for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, pages 39, 53-55, 64-65, 95-96, 105-113; continued on Minutes, pages 160-174, 253-254, 265.

Bishop Chilstrom reiterated the rules of order governing the third ballot. A two-thirds majority vote would be necessary for election; the electronic voting terminals would be used; the names of nominees would appear on the video screens, in descending order according to the number of votes received on the second ballot.

The results would be reported by the chair of the Elections Committee only after the committee had verified that the votes were tabulated properly. Bishop Chilstrom cautioned that no election would occur until all results had been read and he had declared the nominee to be elected.

Bishop Mark B. Herbener [North Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] requested that the names of the nominees be read, due to glare on the video screens. The auditorium lights were dimmed to allow the voting members to see clearly the names posted on the video screens.

Bishop Chilstrom then read the names listed on the third ballot:

1. H. George Anderson
2. April C. Ulring Larson
3. Donald J. McCoid
4. David L. Tiede
5. Dennis A. Anderson
6. Richard J. Foss
7. Joseph W. Ellwanger

The Rev. Gwendolyn S. King [New England Synod] inquired, “When we have used the machines in the past we have had ten seconds to vote. Will that be the amount of time on the machines for the vote at this point?” Bishop Chilstrom responded that additional time would be available for this vote.

Bishop Chilstrom led the assembly in prayer prior to the casting of ballots. Subsequently, he declared the third ballot for bishop to be closed.

Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, reported the results of the third ballot:

Number of ballots cast	1,037	
Number of illegal ballots cast		-0-
Number of legal (valid) ballots cast	1,037	
Number of votes necessary for election	692	

Mr. Hardy stated that no election had occurred. The results of the ballot were:

H. George Anderson	317	
April C. Ullring Larson	193	
Richard J. Foss		132
Dennis A. Anderson	129	
Donald J. McCoid	114	
David L. Tiede		98
Joseph W. Ellwanger	54	

The “Inquiry” Process

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 709-715; continued from Minutes, pages 101-103.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, director of the Department for Research and Evaluation. Mr. Inskeep read representative comments that had been submitted by voting members during the previous plenary session regarding their “Hopes for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.” Such hopes included: “I hope the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be known as a church that nurtures life graciously.” “I hope the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be a faithful church and people will be faithful to the church with patience and prayer.” “I hope pastors and lay leaders will become co-equal partners as stewards of the authority and power of the Gospel.” “I hope funds are found to finance theological education fully in this church and that the church is strong when our children and grandchildren are adults.” “I would like to see our people be more enthusiastic about their faith and excited about their ability to proclaim the Gospel.”

Mr. Inskeep commented, “I hope you enjoyed your required dreaming time. Too often we get so caught up in the challenge and details of the present that we forget to reflect without fear or anxiety about the future.” He then invited assembly members to divide into small groups for further discussion, stating, “In these groups we would like you to use your creativity and imagination. Pretend—and this is your task—that it is the Churchwide Assembly of a.d. 2005, only ten years away. And thinking about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in [a.d.] 2005, we would like to know what you are excited about. Where has God called us and where is God still calling us? Like a traveler to a far-away country, we would like you to write back a postcard that tells us what you are seeing in your visit to the church of [a.d.] 2005.”

Following the time allotted for small-group discussion, Mr. Inskeep invited members to turn in “postcards” at the doors of the assembly hall. He announced that the “hopes and dreams” cards submitted the previous night were on display, and that the postcards submitted today would be displayed similarly after the close of this plenary session. Mr. Inskeep thanked assembly members for their participation in the “Inquiry” process.

Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to stand to sing the hymn, “God, Whose Almighty Word.”

Report of the Memorials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued from Minutes, pages 65-90; continued on Minutes, pages 250-253, 374-427, 452-463, 586-616, 637-644, 660-661.

Bishop Chilstrom recognized the Rev. Donald M. Hallberg, co-chair of the Memorials Committee. Pastor Hallberg acknowledged by name the members of the Memorials Committee on behalf of his co-chair, the Rev. Nadine F. Lehr, and himself. He then enumerated the memorials that had been removed for individual consideration from the en bloc resolution for disposition of synodical memorials: Category 1: Habitat for Humanity; Category 12: Governance—Part 3, Representational Principles; Category 15: Advocacy with the U.S. Government—Part, 2, Aid to Cuba; and Category 16: Welcoming Gay and Lesbian People. He noted that Category 11: Calendar of Commemorations, also had been removed from the en bloc resolution, but was not yet ready for presentation by the Memorials Committee.

Pastor Lehr then presented the following memorials for individual consideration by assembly members.

Category 20: Extremist Groups

A. Montana Synod (1F) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the activities of extremist groups have been on the rise, including the stockpiling of arms, the distribution of racist literature, the intimidation of public officials, and the subversion of the democratic process; and

Whereas, undergirding the goals and activities of such groups is a racist ideology—known as Christian Identity—which teaches that those of the White race are the chosen people of God; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America stands or falls on the proclamation of the Gospel of justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ to all people of all races; and

Whereas, extremist groups proclaim a different Gospel, contrary to the Gospel we proclaim; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America clearly denounce the misuse of scripture by extremist groups, such as the Militia of Montana, the Freemen, the Constitutionals, and the County Movement; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod urge those who hold the teaching office in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—bishops, pastors, and teachers—to clearly expose this misuse of Holy Scripture by similar groups throughout the United States; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to ask the appropriate divisions and offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide its membership with resource materials and educational opportunities which address the racist theology, history, purposes, and tactics of such extremist groups.

B. Montana Synod (1F) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, acts of community violence and terrorism are on the rise, dominating media coverage in recent months; and

Whereas, identified movements on the territory of the Montana Synod advocate violent resistance in face of governmental agencies; and

Whereas, the Christian faith calls believers to ventures of peacemaking, including helping the neighbor in every need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod encourage its congregations to address issues of peace and violence through programs of education and study (such as the draft of the proposed

ELCA social statement, “Peace, God’s Gift, Our Calling;” “Christian Witness for Humanity,” a program ministry of the Montana Association of Churches; and “No Hate Allowed,” a resource of the ELCA Commission for Multicultural Ministries); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod go on record in its support of governmental employees and law enforcement officers who serve the common good; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Montana Synod memorialize the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to encourage the congregations of this church to address issues of peace and violence through programs of education and study and to go on record in its support of governmental employees and law enforcement officers who serve the common good.

C. Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, God commanded the Israelites in Exodus 23:9 not to oppress the resident alien for they themselves were once resident aliens in the land of Egypt; and

Whereas, the psalmist in Psalm 83 cries out to the Lord against those who would conspire to wipe out his chosen people, Israel; and

Whereas, the prophet Amos speaks the word of the Lord when he says, “Hate evil, love good, and establish justice in the gate” (Amos 5:5); and

Whereas, the Lord requires of us that we “Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8); and

Whereas, in Matthew 5 our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that the peacemakers shall be called the children of God, and we are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us; and

Whereas, in John’s Gospel Jesus announces that he came to bring abundant life to his people (John 10:10); and

Whereas, the apostle Paul declares in Galatians 3:28 that in Christ Jesus there is no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the activities, writings, ideology, or theology of groups such as the Aryan Nation, Posse Comitatus, Ku Klux Klan, Christian Identity Movement, or any other group which espouses violence, hatred, prejudice, or discrimination against any persons or groups is contrary to faith in Jesus Christ, the clear teachings of Scripture, and the confessions of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that groups that promote the violent overthrow of the duly elected government of the United States in the name of Jesus Christ also act contrary to faith in Jesus Christ, the clear teaching of Scripture and the Confessions of the church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its member congregations pray for any and all individuals and groups who promote hatred and violence, that they may repent of their sin and live in peace and concord with all persons around them; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the synod and its congregations prayerfully support pastors, lay people, and community leaders who confront, challenge, and oppose any such group or ideas which profess to be Christian, and to engage actively their communities with a true witness to the Christian Gospel; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly direct the bishop of this synod to draft an open letter detailing the contents of this resolution, to be distributed to media outlets within the geographical boundaries of the synod, and [that] this resolution be forwarded to the Churchwide Assembly of

the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

BACKGROUND

The 1993 Churchwide Assembly acted (CA93.6.10) to refer a series of synod memorials on community violence

“ . . . to the Division for Church in Society, instructing it about the urgency of developing a ‘Message’ on the subjects of guns, community violence, and alternatives to violence for possible adoption by the ELCA Church Council at its spring 1994 meeting; and
“To request that this ‘Message’ be used as the basis for a process of deliberation throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on the subject of guns, community violence, and alternatives to violence, and proposed legislation; and to suggest that this ‘Message’ may be used in preparation for possible action on this matter by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

A message on “Community Violence” was approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in April 1994 and distributed through the Action Packet to all congregations and rostered persons. The ELCA Church Council called on members of this church to consider how they might become more involved in countering the reality and fear of violence in their communities. Concerning the specific issue of support for governmental employees and law enforcement officers, that message states: “We are nourished and strengthened to make peace and to embrace: . . . those who protect and defend society, enforce laws, settle disputes, and maintain domestic tranquility. They need to be supported as they live out their vocation for the sake of the common good.”

In addition, the proposed social statement, “For Peace in God’s World,” which addresses issues raised in the Montana Synod memorial, comes before the 1995 Churchwide Assembly for consideration and possible adoption as a social statement of this church.

The 1993 Churchwide Assembly adopted another relevant social statement, “Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture,” with the intent that it be the basis for education and action among members and throughout the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and that it be implemented specifically through such measures as:

- (a) the development of resources specific to this statement (directed to the Commission for Multicultural Ministry and the Division for Congregational Ministries);
- (b) leaders committed to carrying out these challenges (directed to the Office of the Bishop, synodical bishops and officers, Cabinet of Executives, Division for Ministry, Division for Outreach, congregations, pastors, and congregation councils);
- (c) the programming, resource development, publications, institutions, and partnerships of this church (directed to the Division for Congregational Ministries, Division for Church in Society, Division for Global Mission, Division for Higher Education and Schools, Division for Ministry, Division for Outreach, Department for Ecumenical Affairs, Department for Communication, Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Lutheran, and Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America); [and]
- (d) focused advocacy on these matters in ELCA public policy and corporate social responsibility work (directed to the Division for Church in Society) (CA93.7.43).

This social statement, including the above implementation provisions, addresses the concerns regarding racism that were expressed in the memorials of the Montana Synod and the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

There are numerous resources currently available on the underlying issues addressed in these memorials. A congregational resource for action against racial hate crimes, “No Hate Allowed,” has been developed by the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and is available in English and Spanish from Augsburg Fortress, Publishers. While additional educational resources providing information about the racist theology, history, purposes, and tactics of extremist groups are not presently available through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the commission has developed a bibliography of resources from other organizations working on the problem of hate groups.

Related resources focused on youth, which address race, ethnicity, inclusiveness, and peacemaking from a proactive youth leadership perspective, include: “Open Hearts,” a 22-page booklet on inclusive youth ministry in the congregation; “Can’t Do It Alone,” a six-part video for youth; “Youth in Peacemaking,” a 60-page resource produced jointly with the Presbyterian Church (USA); and Youth Talk of the Lutheran Youth Organization [LYO]. The LYO Program Planning Guide, which is distributed to every congregation, usually has one section on combating violence, addressing racism, or celebrating diversity. The 1994-1995 issue, “Have You Not Heard,” has a program topic on “The Voice of Violence.” In addition, churchwide, regional, and synodical youth gatherings regularly do workshops on such issues as inclusiveness, violence, and sometimes on specific hate groups or cults.

Other resource materials and educational opportunities that address racism include: an “Adult Forum on Racism;” “Who Is My Neighbor? Living as God’s People” (Unit 6 of the CrossSigns series); a congregational study tool based on the ELCA’s social statement, “Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture”; and a workshop for congregational leaders, “Racism in the Church: Challenge and Opportunity.” These materials are available through the Division for Congregational Ministries or Augsburg Fortress, Publishers. In addition, the Social Ministry for Congregations program of the Division for Congregational Ministries, in partnership with the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, has developed a resource packet for congregations to assist them to deal with issues of racism, multiculturalism, and inclusiveness in their own context and in the wider church.

Pastor Lehr read the recommendation of the Memorials Committee related to Category 20: Extremist Groups, as printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 951-952. The committee’s recommendation was adopted without further discussion as follows:

Assembly

Action Yes-704; No-17; Abstain-23

CA95.3.5 To affirm the memorials of the Montana and Northwest-ern Pennsylvania synods on peace and violence, misuse of Scripture, and hate groups;

To denounce hate, violence, and intolerance, in all forms, including acts directed at religious groups, at the government, or at those least able to defend themselves;

To reject the blasphemous use of the name of Christ as a device for those who distort Scripture to further political and personal views which are contrary to the call of our Lord for compassion, tolerance, and love;

To encourage the use of the teaching offices of pastor, bishop, and teacher to preach the Gospel, teach the Scriptures, and publicly challenge the misuse of God’s Word when it is used to promote hate, bigotry, and violence in any form;

To call on members and congregations

- to pray and support all people who confront, challenge, and oppose hate groups;
 - to continue to study issues of peace and violence, and to engage actively in their communities with a true witness to the Gospel;
 - to pray for the victims of violence and for the perpetrators of violence; and
 - to support governmental employees and law enforcement officers who serve the common good;
- and

To request the Division for Congregational Ministries, the Division for Church in Society, and the Commission for Multicultural Ministries to continue the development and promotion of resource materials that equip the people of God to challenge intolerance, hate, and violence, particularly when advocated under the guise of religion and Scripture.

Category 15: U.S. Government, Part 1,
U.S. Army School of the Americas
Northeastern Minnesota Synod (3E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the Congress of the United States of America is now attempting to reduce federal spending, requiring that choices be made regarding program funding; and

Whereas, since the end of the “Cold War,” much information heretofore unknown or unsubstantiated regarding the military activities of many Central and Latin American countries has now come to light; and

Whereas, it has been established that the U.S. Army School of the Americas, located in Fort Benning, Georgia, has trained many of the elite Central and Latin American military leaders and units responsible for numerous assassinations, “disappearances,” torture, and mass terror, including (but by no means limited to):

- the assassinations of Archbishop Oscar Romero (three of the four officers involved were trained at the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Ga.), the four North American religious workers (three of the five officers so trained), the six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter in El Salvador (El Salvador’s top unit: 19 of the 26 officers so trained);
 - the mass murder campaign, called the “dirty war,” in Argentina resulting in an estimated 30,000 murders and disappearances and tortures (the general in charge);
 - the mass murder campaign in Guatemala resulting in an estimated 200,000 murders and disappearances (the general in charge);
 - the “El Mazote” massacre in El Salvador in which the entire village of over 900 villagers—men, women and children—were exterminated by the Salvadoran military (10 of the 12 officers in charge);
 - 49 of the Salvadoran officers cited by the U.N. Human Rights Commission as principals in “death squad” activity;
 - military dictators known for human rights abuses internationally from Bolivia, Honduras, Ecuador, and Argentina;
 - the death squad activity in Honduras (four of the five officers in charge);
 - the human rights abuses in Colombia (half of the officers cited); and
 - murders of nine university students and teachers in Peru (all three officers in charge);
- and

Whereas, several of the military leaders implicated in the above-mentioned activities are pictured in the School of the Americas “Hall of Fame” as outstanding graduates, one having been

invited back to speak to graduating classes, thereafter being implicated in human rights abuses; and

Whereas, since the Oklahoma City bombing, the American public has become particularly mindful of the dangers extremism joined with violence presents; and

Whereas, tax dollars, approximately \$3 million per year, collected from church members are being used to fund the School of the Americas and, accordingly, to support a “counterinsurgency” strategy, which has often seen its graduates target the poor, human rights advocates, church workers, and reformers; and

Whereas, the above mentioned activities are diametrically opposed to the way of Christ and his mission in the world; and

Whereas, in numerous places where the Church has sought to aid the poor, its workers have also suffered at the hands of these military leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America communicate to the congressional representatives from Minnesota its desire that funding for the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, be cut; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to pass a similar resolution communicating this to all U.S. congressional representatives.

BACKGROUND

The 1989 Churchwide Assembly resolution on Central America committed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to “press for an end to United States military aid and for the cessation of all destabilizing military involvement in the region by countries outside the region” (CA89.4.21).

Subsequently, the Church Council affirmed “A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns: Issues of Justice and Peace” (CC89.11.184), which had been recommended by the [former ELCA] Commission for Church in Society [subsequently, Division for Church in Society] in November 1989. That document included among the goals and objectives to be pursued:

1. Work for justice and peace in the region:
 - 1.3 end all U.S. war-related aid to the region, both to governments and irregular forces, and oppose militarization of those countries not currently at war;
 - 1.5 support sustainable and equitable development, which is environmentally responsible and economically viable, as well as suitable to the needs of the poor majority, expressed through democratic participation;
2. Promote and develop mutually supportive relationships:
 - 2.1 listen and respond to the voices from the churches in the region;
3. Protect and support human rights, including those of refugees, immigrants, and displaced persons:
 - 3.1 promote respect for the observance of international conventions and protocols on human rights and the conduct of war, as well as the Cartagena declaration on refugees;
 - 3.2 monitor human rights violations in the region and advocate on behalf of the victims

with the appropriate authorities in the U.S. and abroad;

4. Educate the church and society about the Central American and Caribbean region:

4.1 assist pastors and congregations to become involved in ministries of service and social justice on behalf of the poor majority in the region;

4.2 facilitate joint prayer, experiential learning through visits to and from the region, and cross-cultural worship between churches in the U.S. and those in the region;

4.3 assist pastors and congregations to become involved in programs of advocacy and education in this country.

The Division for Church in Society, in particular, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, has shared information with church members and congregations that have expressed an interest in the U.S. Army School of the Americas. The division recommends the following response to the memorial of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod.

Pastor Lehr read the recommendation of the Memorials Committee related to Category 15: U.S. Government, Part 1, U.S. Army School of the Americas, as printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 943. The committee's recommendation was adopted without further discussion as follows:

Assembly

Action Yes-677; No-68; Abstain-37

CA95.3.6 To call upon the United States government to eliminate funding for the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, and to direct funds to programs that strengthen democratization and respect for human rights and provide support for victims of violence in Central America;

To encourage members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to pray about and study this issue, and to contact their U.S. senators and representatives in support of the previous resolve; and

To convey this action to the Northeastern Minnesota Synod as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the synod's memorial on this subject.

Category 2: Guatemala

A. Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, in excess of 140,000 civilians have been killed or have "disappeared" due to political violence in Guatemala; political killings and human rights abuses continue in spite of the move to a democratically elected civilian government; and

Whereas, the military-intelligence structure is responsible for many of the human rights abuses; that same military intelligence structure prevents effective investigation and prosecution of those crimes through intimidation and retaliation against the judiciary and the civil police force; and

Whereas, the government of the United States, through its Central Intelligence Agency, is to a large degree responsible for the creation and proliferation of the military intelligence structure in Guatemala, including training, finance, and payment to individuals; and

Whereas, one key to stability, peace, and the cessation of human rights abuses in Guatemala is the removal of the military from internal intelligence and police functions; and

Whereas, the opportunity exists currently, through the ongoing peace talks, particularly the talks entitled "The Strengthening of Civil Society and the Role of the Military in a

Democratic Society,” for a resolution of the human rights crisis in Guatemala; and

Whereas, we are informed by the Scriptures that “blessed are the peacemakers,” and also instructed that the Church should “work for peace and reconciliation among all nations”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod in assembly memorialize the 1995 biennial Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to:

1. Commend Guatemala and the peace process to this church in prayer, and encourage congregations and synods to become advocates in support of the peace process; this advocacy shall include activity pressuring the governments of Guatemala and the United States to facilitate an end to the abuses and atrocities so commonplace in Guatemala through letter-writing, resolutions, and financial support for human rights organizations;
2. Commend the Division for Global Mission to communicate this advocacy to the people of Guatemala and to the participants in the peace talks; and
3. Encourage, through like methods, the exposure and publication of all involvement by the United States government, directly or indirectly, in the internal affairs of Guatemala, and also to make public any and all information available to it, or information of which it may through reasonable diligence be made aware, concerning human rights abuses in Guatemala.

B. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, more than 140,000 civilians have been killed or have disappeared since the outbreak of Guatemala’s civil war in 1962; and

Whereas, independent human rights monitors such as Amnesty International, the Guatemala Human Rights Commission/U.S.A., Human Rights Watch, and others have repeatedly cited Guatemala’s military and paramilitary forces for their systematic campaign of terror and repression against the civilian population; and

Whereas, despite this record of massive human rights violations, Guatemalan military and intelligence personnel have been trained and funded by U.S. taxpayers, both overtly through U.S. military aid programs and covertly through the Central Intelligence Agency; and

Whereas, political killings, disappearances, torture, and other human rights violations continue today in Guatemala, despite the adoption of a “Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights” on March 29, 1994, and the presence of an official “U.N. Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala” (MINUGUA) since September 1994; and

Whereas, comprehensive peace negotiations between the Guatemalan government and the Guatemala National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) offer hope for bringing an end to the longest and bloodiest civil war in Central America; and

Whereas, Guatemalan church leaders, together with the leadership of a broad cross section of civilian groups, have publicly stated that a just and lasting peace in Guatemala requires significant reductions in both the size and functions of Guatemala’s army and intelligence units, and have presented concrete peace proposals for the transfer of power from military to civilian institutions; and

Whereas, these consensus proposals for the demilitarization of Guatemalan society have been presented by the “Assembly of Civil Sectors” to both sides in the Guatemalan peace talks, now entering their final, critical phase under U.N. mediation; and

Whereas, we are informed by the Scriptures that “blessed are the peacemakers,” and also

instructed that the Church should “work for peace and reconciliation among all nations”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in its 1995 assembly call upon all synod leaders, pastors, and congregations to actively support the Guatemalan peace process through:

1. Prayers for the successful conclusion of U.N.-mediated peace talks, for an end to human rights violations and for the beginning of true peace and reconciliation in Guatemala after more than three decades of bloody civil war;
2. Contacts with appropriate government officials expressing our concern for the Guatemalan people and our strong support for the U.S. contribution to the U.N. mission in Guatemala, MINUGUA, which is charged with mediating the final phase of the peace talks and with monitoring overall compliance with the peace accords; [and]
3. The adding of our voices to those of independent human rights monitors and others who are advocating full public disclosure regarding U.S. knowledge of and complicity in human rights violations by virtue of our direct and indirect support for known human rights violators within Guatemalan military, paramilitary, and intelligence units; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to encourage all churchwide units, synods, and congregations to support the Guatemalan peace process by:

1. Supporting in prayer and action the ongoing efforts of the Lutheran World Federation, the Lutheran Office for World Community, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, and other church agencies to move the Guatemalan peace process forward and to guarantee full implementation of the peace accords that emerge from the negotiating process;
2. Advocating, through the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs and other appropriate channels, that the United States continue its support to the U.N. mission in Guatemala, MINUGUA, which has been charged with mediating the final phase of the peace talks and with monitoring overall compliance with the peace accords;
3. Adding the voice of this church to those of independent human rights monitors and others who are calling for full public disclosure regarding U.S. knowledge of and complicity in human rights violations by virtue of our direct and indirect support for known human rights violators with Guatemalan military, paramilitary, and intelligence units.

BACKGROUND

At its November 1989 meeting, the Church Council affirmed “A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns: Issues of Justice and Peace,” (CC89.11.184), which had been endorsed by the board of the Commission for Church in Society earlier that year. Among the goals and objectives to be pursued are the following:

1. Work for justice and peace in the region:
 - 1.1 support regional initiatives for a negotiated solution to the conflicts;
 - 1.2 develop and support public policies that encourage dialogue and negotiation to resolve these conflicts;
 - 1.3 end all U.S. war-related aid to the region, both to governments and irregular forces, and oppose militarization of those countries not currently at war;
2. . . .
3. Protect and support human rights, including those of refugees, immigrants, and displaced

persons:

3.1 promote respect for and the observance of international conventions and protocols on human rights and the conduct of war as well as the Cartagena declaration on refugees;

3.2 monitor human rights violations in the region and advocate on behalf of victims with the appropriate authorities in the U.S. and abroad;

4. Educate the church and society about the Central American and Caribbean region:

4.1 assist pastors and congregations to become involved in ministries of service and social justice on behalf of the poor majority in the region;

4.2 facilitate joint prayer, experiential learning through visits to and from the region, and cross-cultural worship between churches in the U.S. and those in the region.

The Division for Church in Society—in particular, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs—has shared information with church members and congregations that have expressed interest in Central America. Among the topics covered have been proposed legislation on military and development assistance to the region, as well as appeals with regard to specific human-rights abuses.

The Lutheran World Federation, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and the World Council of Churches have been partners with the Latin American Conference of Churches in assisting in the return of refugees from and resettlement of displaced persons in Guatemala since 1992. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) also has been deeply involved, since 1989, in efforts to encourage the peace process in Guatemala. The LWF-initiated discussions between the government of Guatemala and the insurgency movement, known as the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity, led to an agreement in 1990 at Oslo, Norway.

In pursuit of peace, the Lutheran World Federation has continued to provide meeting places—Madrid, Mexico City, Puebla (Mexico), Ottawa, Quito (Ecuador), and Washington, D.C.—over the past several years to help maintain the momentum of the process. The federation has been seen by both parties as an impartial agent for peace, which has benefited the process.

In 1992, the United Nations and interested countries (the so-called “Group of Friends” of the U.N. secretary general) took on a greater role, utilizing much of the groundwork laid through the LWF’s mediation efforts. In 1994, the U.N.’s role as mediator was institutionalized. The [ELCA] Lutheran Office for World Community has maintained contact with United Nations and other governmental officials involved in these discussions since 1991.

Pastor Lehr read the recommendation of the Memorials Committee related to Category 2: Guatemala, as printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 892. The committee’s recommendation was adopted without further discussion as follows:

Assembly

Action Yes-760; No-25; Abstain-23

CA95.3.7 To affirm the concerns expressed in the memorials of the Arkansas-Oklahoma and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods concerning the situation in Guatemala; and

To encourage churchwide units, synods, and congregations and their members to support the Guatemalan peace process by:

1. Supporting in prayer and action the ongoing efforts of the Lutheran World Federation, the Lutheran Office for World Community, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, and other church agencies to move the Guatemalan peace process forward and to guarantee full implementation of the peace accords that emerge from the negotiating process;

2. Advocating, through the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs and other appropriate channels, that the United States continue its support to the U.N. Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala, which has been charged with mediating the final phase of the peace talks and with monitoring overall compliance with the peace accords; and
3. Adding the voice of this church to those of independent human rights monitors and others who are calling for full public disclosure regarding U.S. knowledge of and complicity in human rights violations by direct and indirect support for known human rights violators with Guatemalan military, paramilitary, and intelligence units.

Category 10: Women Bishops

A. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, this church rejoices in the decision to ordain women and in 1995 is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Lutheran women in North America; and

Whereas, women represent 9.7 percent (1,687) of the ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of August 1994 and the Rev. April Ullring Larson is the only woman bishop; and

Whereas, this church is comprised of 52 percent female members and 48 percent male members, and the Conference of Bishops is comprised of one male churchwide bishop, one male churchwide secretary, 64 male synod bishops, and one female synod bishop; and

Whereas, the Conference of Bishops has influence in shaping the church, and women's voices, experience, and wisdom have been under-represented in its meetings; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that congregations and individuals seek and nominate qualified women for bishops; and be it further

RESOLVED, that beginning in 1997, just as synod bishops serve as advisory members to the Church Council, nine representative women—one from each region, lay or ordained—be selected by the bishops of the region to serve two-year terms as advisory members to the Conference of Bishops until 10 percent of the bishops are women; and be it further

RESOLVED, that synod assemblies memorialize this resolution to the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

B. Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, this church rejoices in the decision to ordain women and in 1995 is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Lutheran women in North America; and

Whereas, women represent 9.7 percent (1,687) of the ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of August 1994, and the Rev. April Ullring Larson is the only woman bishop; and

Whereas, the baptized membership of this church is comprised of 52 percent female members and 48 percent male members, and the Conference of Bishops is comprised of one male churchwide bishop, one male churchwide secretary, 64 male synod bishops, and one female synod bishop; and

Whereas, the Conference of Bishops has influence in shaping the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

Whereas, women's voices, experience, and wisdom would be an asset to the Conference of Bishops; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly memorialize the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to consider encouraging synods intentionally to seek ordained women to be candidates for synod bishops.

BACKGROUND

The Memorials Committee grouped together these two related memorials which, in different ways, reflect an underlying concern about the small number of women who are currently serving as bishops in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. (Only two of the sixty-five synodical bishops are women.)

The committee recommends affirmation of the memorial of the Saint Paul Area Synod, which encourages this church to seek ordained women to be nominees for bishop. It recommends that the Churchwide Assembly not approve the proposal of the Minneapolis Area Synod to create a category of women advisory members of the Conference of Bishops. The following issues were raised during the committee's discussion of the implications of this proposal:

- The role of women as advisors as opposed to full voting members of the Conference of Bishops raises significant questions in terms of the effectiveness of this strategy for providing representation for women.
- The situation is not analogous to the Church Council, since the ELCA's governing documents do not permit synod bishops to be voting members of the Church Council, while permitting them an advisory role; women who are elected bishop will, by virtue of their office, be part of the Conference of Bishops.
- Others in this church might have a similar need for representation in the Conference of Bishops (e.g., persons of color or persons whose primary language is other than English); persons in specialized ministries, representatives of agencies and institutions of this church, and others might also desire to be present as advisors when the conference meets.
- The possibility exists that having women serving in such an advisory capacity may distract the church's attention from the need to elect women to serve as bishops, with full participation in the life and work of the Conference of Bishops.

The Memorials Committee recommends that rather than move in the direction suggested by the Minneapolis Area Synod, the Churchwide Assembly should strongly encourage the consideration of women as nominees for bishop. The committee notes that a reflection piece, "Choosing a Bishop," was issued by the Commission for Women in 1993 for use by synods preparing for bishops' elections. An expanded version of this document, incorporating sections on the churchwide bishop's election, was distributed by the Church Council in December 1994 and has been widely utilized throughout this church. Both reflection pieces encourage that the search for those considered to have the gifts and graces to serve as bishop be broad and inclusive. The language of the documents is intentionally inclusive and attempts to remind the reader that both female and male pastors are eligible to serve as bishops.

If the proposed recommendation is adopted, the Department for Synodical Relations will continue to work closely with the Commission for Women and other appropriate partners in encouraging the use of "Choosing a Bishop" in all synods preparing to elect bishops. As it is called upon for consultation with synods regarding election processes and procedures, it will encourage synods to explore avenues that may assist in lifting up potential female nominees for bishop.

Pastor Lehr read the recommendation of the Memorials Committee related to Category 10: Women Bishops, as printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 927:

Moved;

Seconded: To encourage this church and its synods to identify and consider ordained women for election to the office of bishop, in response to the memorial of the Saint Paul Area and Minneapolis Area synods; and
To decline to act on the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod to establish women advisory members of the Conference of Bishops.

The Rev. Susan L. Engh [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke against the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, which declined to act on the memorial to establish women advisory members to the Conference of Bishops. She asked why the committee urged the assembly not to vote on this issue.

Pastor Lehr asked that one of the bishops who was serving as a member of the committee respond to the question. Bishop Mark R. Ramseth [Montana Synod], a member of the Memorials Committee, explained the rationale of the committee, noting that the conversation had focused on the question of how persons become members of the conference. "Bishops are elected directly from the grass roots of each synod; they come to us out of the congregations of this church. It did not seem that it would be appropriate for this church to develop some process to name persons who would then serve as advisory members to that body," he said.

Pastor Engh responded, "We have advisory members to a number of our governing bodies. The church may not be ready to elect as many women as some of us would like to have elected to the office of bishop, but I think we need to have those voices there."

Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod] spoke against the recommendation, stating, "I respect the spirit of this resolution, but I have a problem with the negative second paragraph. I think the first paragraph affirms enough the position of this church. To put a negative in is not the spirit that we should have."

Mr. Douglas Reeves [Rocky Mountain Synod], a member of the Memorials Committee, indicated that the committee did not want to deny women a voice, but felt strongly that the more appropriate voice for women would be as bishops and not as advisory members.

Mr. Charles Kurfess [Northwestern Ohio Synod] asked of the Memorials Committee with respect to the first paragraph of the recommendation, "In light of this church's commitment, apparently, to the ecclesiastical ballot as the mode of election of bishops, how is it suggested that a synod might implement the recommendation set forth in that paragraph?"

Pastor Lehr replied, "We are suggesting that women be sought out in much the same way that men are presently sought out. I do not think we read the memorials received to indicate that some sort of strategic process be put in place in order to implement that. We simply wished to affirm the intent of people to think about this issue and to raise up those names in the course of the present process."

The Rev. Terrence G. Baeder [Northern Illinois Synod] moved the following substitution:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the second "resolved" paragraph of the memorial from the Minneapolis Area Synod, "That beginning in 1997, just as synod bishops serve as advisory

members to the Church Council, nine representative women (one from each region, lay or ordained) be selected by the bishops of the region to serve two-year terms as advisory members to the Conference of Bishops until 10 percent of the bishops are women,” for the second paragraph of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, “To decline to act on the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod to establish women advisory members of the Conference of Bishops.”

Pastor Baeder spoke to the motion, stating, “The resolution [from the Minneapolis Area Synod] is calling for essentially an advisory committee. I think that is appropriate and I think it would be helpful.”

Bishop Chilstrom reminded assembly members that both the main motion and the substitute motion were before the assembly. He cautioned that the substitute motion would have significant budget implications and that, if carried, would be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel, which would in turn refer the matter to the Church Council for consideration of budgetary implications.

Bishop E. LeRoy Riley Jr. [New Jersey Synod] spoke against the amendment on the basis that “the Commission for Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is advisory to all program units of the church, including the Conference of Bishops. I believe that this would simply duplicate the efforts of the Commission for Women in large measure.”

Mr. John G. Satter [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] inquired whether the motion might more appropriately be considered as an amendment, rather than as a substitution. Following consultation with the parliamentarian, Bishop Chilstrom concurred that the motion be treated as an amendment.

The Rev. Douglas E. Johnson [Lower Susquehanna Synod] spoke against the amendment, and stated, “Our understanding of the office of bishop is that our bishops are elected under the guidance of the [Holy] Spirit by our synods. When they gather as a Conference of Bishops, they gather there for a unique sort of discernment under the guidance of that Spirit. It seems to me that it makes it a unique group. If we advocate for having women as advisory members to the Conference of Bishops, there would be a logic in extending that to all the various representational principles we have. We would soon have a group that might indeed have good discussion, but it would be [engaged in] something very different than the kind of discernment the Conference of Bishops currently does.”

The Rev. Susan K. Folks [Eastern North Dakota Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “The Memorials Committee has made a good point and I want to underscore that the intent of [the recommendation of the Memorials Committee] was to make sure that we did indeed encourage synods to be voting for women for bishop and [the issue of an advisory group to the Conference of Bishops] would make it a lot easier to put the point aside.”

Ms. Diane Melbye [Western North Dakota Synod], a member of the Memorials Committee, commented, “Our intent was clearly to make sure that women were engaged in full participation and elected, if they had the qualifications, as bishops. We saw this procedure [advisory to the Conference of Bishops] as keeping [women] in an inactive position and, therefore, I speak against the proposed amendment.”

Mr. Reid Christopherson [South Dakota Synod] asked about the makeup of the Conference of Bishops and what advisory groups may exist now. Bishop Chilstrom asked Secretary Lowell G. Almen to respond. Secretary Almen indicated that the Conference of

Bishops includes the 65 synodical bishops, plus the bishop of this church and the secretary of this church. He added, "Meeting with the Conference of Bishops as resource persons at various times would be assistants to the bishop [of this church] and others. As such, there are not direct advisory members of the Conference of Bishops. However, as has been pointed out, the role of the Commission for Women in the churchwide organization includes the providing of advice to all units of this church, and that would include the Conference of Bishops."

Bishop George P. Mocko [Delaware-Maryland Synod] spoke against the amendment. He summarized reasons why the Conference of Bishops opposed the memorial, stating, "First, the cost that has been mentioned of nine more members; second, the duplication, as Bishop Riley has pointed out; third, I would add accountability (To whom would these women be accountable?); and fourth, where would this end (Would not other groups then come forward and also want to be advisory members?)."

Bishop Paul M. Werger [Southeastern Iowa Synod] called the question on all matters pending:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-584; No-284; Abstain-24
Defeated: To close debate on all matters before the house.

The Rev. Kathleen Reed [New England Synod] stated, "I would like to challenge the notion that having an advisory group in the room increases the number of voices. I generally do not support advisory groups that are without particular expertise in certain matters. I would look instead for commitment on the part of our new ELCA bishop to encourage all bishops to bring as many voices into the room as the matter before the bishops would require."

The Rev. Paul M. Kopka [Southeast Michigan Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-909; No-27; Abstain-6
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-122; No-803; Abstain-16
Defeated: To substitute the second "resolved" paragraph of the memorial from the Minneapolis Area Synod, "That beginning in 1997, just as synod bishops serve as advisory members to the Church Council, nine representative women (one from each region, lay or ordained) be selected by the bishops of the region to serve two-year terms as advisory members to the Conference of Bishops until 10 percent of the bishops are women," for the second paragraph of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, "To decline to act on the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod to establish women advisory members of the Conference of Bishops."

Mr. Charles Kurfess [Northwestern Ohio Synod] moved the following amendment:

Moved;
Seconded: To delete the phrase, "this church and its synods," from the first line of the

recommendation of the Memorials Committee and to substitute the following: “members of synod assemblies.”

Ms. Elaine Anderson [Minneapolis Area Synod] moved to divide the question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-306; No-565; Abstain-51

Defeated: To divide the question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-563; No-348; Abstain-20

Carried: To delete the phrase, “this church and its synods” from the first line of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee and to substitute the following: “members of synod assemblies.”

Assembly

Action Yes-765; No-146; Abstain-12

CA95.3.8 To encourage members of synod assemblies to identify and consider ordained women for election to the office of bishop, in response to the memorial of the Saint Paul Area and Minneapolis Area synods; and

To decline to act on the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod to establish women advisory members of the Conference of Bishops.

Category 18: Multicultural Welcoming Video

Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has defined itself as an evangelically inclusive church; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to promote that inclusive image to the world that is unfamiliar with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its stance to welcome all people without regard to race or gender; and

Whereas, an effective means of reaching people of all races is through the media; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to direct the Department for Communication, in consultation with the Division for Outreach and the Commission for Multicultural Ministries, to develop video advertisements emphasizing the ELCA congregations as welcoming places for all people; these videos would be made available to local congregations, conferences, and synods to be aired on local television stations with sponsorship to be paid by the congregation, cluster, conference, or synod.

BACKGROUND

The Department for Communication has produced two such video ads early in 1995, one set in an urban area, one in a rural. Both are intentionally multicultural in content and were publicized in the May/June 1995 issue of Seeds for the Parish. Plans for the future include the production of at least two additional video spots, which will be completed in early 1996. These videos also will be available to congregations, conferences, and synods through the ELCA

Distribution Service.

In addition, the Division for Outreach, Division for Congregational Ministries, and Department for Communication are in the process of developing a welcome video for use by congregations in their outreach ministries.

The Rev. Donald M. Hallberg read the recommendation of the Memorials Committee related to Category 18, Multicultural Welcoming Video, as printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 948:

Moved;

Seconded: To transmit information [provided by the Memorials Committee] to the Indiana-Kentucky Synod as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the synod's memorial on a multicultural welcoming video.

In response to the memorial, a brief welcoming video was shown to the assembly.

Assembly

Action Voice Vote

CA95.3.9 To transmit information [provided by the Memorials Committee] to the Indiana-Kentucky Synod as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the synod's memorial on a multicultural welcoming video.

Announcements

Secretary Almen informed voting members of arrangements for review group luncheons, which were to be held following this plenary session. He clarified that review groups are not legislative in nature, but provide an opportunity to learn about the work of churchwide units.

Secretary Almen then reiterated deadlines for submission of bylaw and constitutional amendments. He stated that the mosaic displayed at the front of the assembly hall was created by Mr. David J. Hetland of Fargo, North Dakota, who also had designed the backdrop for the dais. Secretary Almen asked voting members to use the assembly evaluation forms provided throughout the assembly and stated that the forms would be collected at the end of the assembly.

Secretary Almen reported that Rosalea Sondahl, daughter of the Rev. C. Althea Sondahl [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod], was killed in an automobile accident on Wednesday, August 16, 1995. The family would be remembered in prayer during midday worship.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. John S. Hillmer [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] to lead the order for Midday Worship. The lesson, Acts 4:13-31, was read by Ms. Eva Salolainen [Metropolitan Chicago Synod]. The Bible study was led by the Rev. Barbara Berry-Bailey [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod]. Midday worship concluded with the singing of "You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore."

Plenary Session Four ended at 12:30 p.m.

Plenary Session Five
Friday, August 18, 1995
2:30 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called Plenary Session Five to order at 2:30 p.m. on Friday afternoon, August 18, 1995. He expressed welcome to the assembly members and to the persons viewing the assembly on cable television. Bishop Chilstrom invited the assembly to begin the session by singing the hymn, “I Love to Tell the Story.”

Organization of the Assembly

Bishop Chilstrom announced that “while it has not been an issue, on some close votes, the votes to abstain have been counted in the percentages by our electronic voting device” He instructed voting members who wished to abstain to refrain from recording their abstention by means of the electronic voting system, to write their abstention on paper, and to give it to one of the pages for manual tally. “In that way we will make sure we have the correct percentages of affirmative and negative votes,” he said.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes, pages 11-12, 35, 41, 91, 105; continued on Minutes, pages 253, 257, 619; Minutes

Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. David J. Hardy to describe two problems related to the election for bishop and the Elections Committee's recommendation for a resolution.

Mr. Hardy explained, "Most of you, I am sure, think that I am going to confess my error of short-changing Bishop April C. Uring Larson by one vote. At least 500 of you have already told me that." (Note: The results as previously reported in these minutes were correct.) He continued, "This morning's credential report certified 1,026 voting members. In the subsequent third ballot for bishop, the votes cast were 1,037 ballots." The discrepancy, he noted, was discovered shortly after the vote total for the third ballot had been announced. He then stated, "We have, in the last several hours, been doing an intensive audit of the Credentials Committee's records. At this point, it appears that the Credentials Committee's report submitted this morning was in error. We are 99-plus percent certain that there are only six persons who could be registered as voting members who have not appeared. On that basis, the correct number of voting members would be 1,047. However, our physical count of completed registration cards that were processed is 1,030." He commented that it was possible that some of the registration cards had not been processed.

Mr. Hardy then outlined the plan of the Elections Committee to verify the correct number of eligible voters. He said, "This will require some work on the part of each of the 65 synodical bishops. . . . Synodical bishops, please turn to the list of your respective synod on pages 567-579 of the replacement pages of Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, which is the roll of assembly members." He then asked the bishops to do four things: (1) go through the list of the voting members of their synod and where there had been a subsequent substitution, strike the name of the person who was not present and write next to it the name of the person who should properly be registered; (2) if a person authorized to be a voting member from their synod was absent, strike the name and after it indicate, "n/s" (no-show); (3) after the name and number of their synod, record the number of persons who thusly were registered; and (4) affix their signature to the sheet as certification of the accuracy of the audit.

The bishops were asked to bring the completed sheets to Mr. Phillip H. Harris, ELCA associate general counsel, or to the Rev. David L. Alderfer, vice chair of the Elections Committee, so that the verification could be completed. Mr. Hardy asked that all tellers serving on the Elections Committee gather at the front of the assembly hall to assist in resolving the situation.

While the compilation was being completed, Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to "look around near you, look at a face of someone you have not met before, and get acquainted for about five minutes."

Bishop Chilstrom subsequently called upon Mr. Hardy to present the corrected credentials report. Mr. Hardy announced that the synodical bishops had certified that the correct total of registered voting members was 1,045. He said, "Counting back from the other direction, we have established, I believe with utter certainty that there are at least four who never registered. That brings our maximum of 1,053 down to 1,049. The number at 1,045 is a minimum and may still go up as we are trying to identify totally even that minor discrepancy of four. But, this, as an amended report from the Credentials Committee, would establish a greater number of persons registered as of this morning than voted in the third ballot."

Bishop Chilstrom subsequently declared, "On the basis of this evidence that there are more voting members registered than the number of votes cast in ballot number three for the

bishop, I declare ballot number three valid.”

The Rev. Dennis R. King [Southern Ohio Synod] appealed the ruling of the chair.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-841; No-124

Carried: To sustain the ruling of the chair.

Mr. Hardy reported to the assembly, “I want to report that we found four more. We forgot to add in the officers, so we are at 1,049.” Applause followed the announcement. Bishop Chilstrom then quipped, “They always told me I would be soon forgotten, but I did not think it would be this soon.”

Elections:

Nominees for Bishop Respond to Questions

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, pages 39, 53-55, 64-65, 95-96, 105-113, 137-138; continued on Minutes, pages 253-254, 265.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the next portion of the agenda and said, “We have an opportunity now to get to know those three persons [the final three nominees for bishop]: the Rev. H. George Anderson, Bishop April C. Ulring Larson, and Bishop Richard J. Foss. As I reminded you the other day, the process this afternoon is going to be handled by members of the Executive Committee of the Church Council.”

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Deborah S. Yandala, a member of the Executive Committee of the ELCA Church Council, who was to serve as the moderator for the question and answer session. Speaking on behalf of the Executive Committee, she stated, “I am privileged to represent the Executive Committee of the Church Council and serve as the moderator for the question and answer session for the three nominees who received the most votes on the third ballot. Voting members of the assembly were given the opportunity to submit potential questions, with a deadline set at the close of last evening’s plenary session. Eighty-two questions were received in all. Members of the Executive Committee reviewed those suggested questions and have shaped eight questions that we believe to be representative of the concerns expressed. A complete list of all questions submitted will be given to the newly elected bishop. Each nominee will be given a maximum of three minutes to answer each question. . . .

“The order of nominees in this question and answer session has been determined by lot. The nominees have not been given the questions in advance. In order to be fair to all nominees, the other nominees will not be present in the assembly [hall] while a nominee responds to the questions. Please, do not applaud at any time during the responses during this session—either after questions or answers or at the close of one nominee’s answering. At the conclusion of the session we will bring all three nominees on stage to receive the applause of the assembly.”

Bishop Robert W. Kelley [Northeastern Ohio Synod] objected to the process, stating, “I would question the validity of a process that excludes the other two from hearing answers of one nominee. I find that neither helpful nor healthy and I would like this group to say whether they affirm that or not affirm it.”

Bishop Chilstrom invited a response from the Executive Committee. Ms. Yandala explained the rationale for the process, stating, “The reason the Executive Committee, with the approval of the Church Council, decided to go in this direction was the feeling that it would give

each nominee a chance to individually answer all of the questions. They would not feel the need to worry about whether they were repeating what somebody else has said or work off of what somebody else has said, but rather could independently answer the same set of questions.”

Bishop Kelley proposed the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To allow all three nominees to be present for the entire question and answer session, and to ask the nominees to respond to questions in rotation so that each nominee would be permitted to answer some questions first.

Bishop Kelley spoke to his motion and said, “I think this would allow for a healthy interaction, which would be helpful to the assembly.”

Mr. William E. Diehl, [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod], a voting member of the assembly and a member of the Executive Committee of the Church Council, spoke against the motion, stating, “Those of you who have participated in a debate recognize that it is very difficult to say something new and fresh when the person in front of you has said exactly what you wanted to say. For that reason, we feel it is not fair to the persons who are second and third in speaking to hear the presentation of someone ahead of them. . . . We felt it would be much better to do it in the way in which we have designed this process.”

Speaking against the motion, Ms. Kathryn F. Kees [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] concurred with Mr. Diehl and added, “At lunch time, I was privileged to join the Youth Convocation for a brief session with the three nominees and what the Church Council feared was indeed what did happen. It was a wonderful time and they shared some wonderful ideas, but . . . they all did in fact agree with each other on a lot of the answers and we did feel that what the first person had said was the freshest thing. So, I think the [process approved by the Church Council] is the appropriate one in these circumstances.” The Youth Convocation was being held concurrently with the Churchwide Assembly.

Bishop James E. Sudbrock [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke in favor of the motion. He said, “Many of us in this room have participated in a similar kind of process where we have had to listen to not only one other but six other nominees. I would speak strongly in favor of the motion, so that all three would be present.”

Ms. Dorothy Jacobs [Southwestern Texas Synod] spoke against the motion. She observed that the process recommended by the Church Council had “worked very well” when her synod recently elected a bishop and said, “If you can get Texans to agree on something like that, it ought to be a good thing.”

Speaking in favor of the motion, Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl [Saint Paul Area Synod] said, “I strongly affirm the motion. I think, when the order of the respondents is altered so that each one gets a chance to be the first, then second, then third, for each of the questions, the fairness argument disappears. I think it makes a much better situation for dialogue and discussion so that they do not have to be sitting wondering what somebody else answered on that question.”

Mr. Bill Ehlke [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke in opposition to the motion, and said, “I think it is only fair that each one be given the opportunity to speak on what they believe and not have someone else before them making the statement that they might make.”

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson (New Jersey Synod) called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-936; No-82
Carried: To move the previous question.

The Rev. Gwendolyn S. King [New England Synod] inquired, “We have been told that eight questions had been prepared. Is there a possibility of a ninth question to be prepared? . . . We are looking for fairness in the process.” She was observing that, were a rotation to be used, the number of questions would need to be divisible by three. Bishop Chilstrom stated that such would be possible.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-259; No-739
Defeated: To allow all three nominees to be present for the entire question and answer session, and to ask the nominees to respond to questions in rotation so that each nominee would be permitted to answer some questions first.

Ms. Yandala posed to each of the three nominees seriatim the following set of eight questions, noting that each nominee would be given three minutes to respond to each of the questions:

1. Please, share with us your vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both short-term and long-term, and the gifts you will bring to the Office of Bishop to help us to realize that vision.
2. It is no secret that many urban and rural congregations are struggling. How can our church continue to minister in those settings?
3. How do you understand the responsibilities of the bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of this church, especially in light of the proposed ecumenical decisions facing this church in the coming biennium?
4. What is the appropriate role of this church in social and political issues?
5. The draft sexuality statements have generated much concern and controversy in this church on a number of issues, especially homosexuality. How would you provide leadership for this church as we address these issues?
6. As we move into the 21st century, we live in an increasingly diverse and changing culture. How can we increase the biblical literacy and theological understanding of the people of this church for their own growth in faith and for their witness to others?
7. The constitution of this church commits the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to help members “see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling.” In what ways can the bishop of this church help to make this real in the lives of our people—in their jobs, their homes, their communities, and their congregations?
8. What are your sources of personal renewal?

The verbatim answers of each of the nominees follow:

The Rev. H. George Anderson,
President of Luther College (Decorah, Iowa)
Question 1.

Please, share with us your vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both

short-term and long-term, and the gifts you will bring to the Office of Bishop to help us to realize that vision.

“It seems to me that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a church that is beginning, just beginning, to realize the potential it has. I sat here and listened to the debate on peace today and the kinds of persons who stood up [and] the backgrounds they brought to that discussion, amazed me. I thought to myself, ‘What a great opportunity we have here to tap the resources of many, many people in this church who have had life experiences that go far beyond mine or any single person here.’ My vision would be that we find a way to listen to those voices, to engage those resources. We are getting to a point where we have a lot of people and we lament that we are getting to be an older church. Why not look at ways to involve those older members of our church in a more profound and active way as we have done through Mission Builders and others?

“There are voices that we do need to hear. It seems to me that the way to get that to happen is to find out first that we all really have the same basic belief in Jesus Christ and the same basic confidence and devotion to this church. You can be a lot more free in letting other people express their opinions if you know from the beginning that you and they share a common basis of faith. I think we have lived too much on the basis of second-hand reports and all the rest, and not enough on knowing first-hand the kind of people we are. So, communication would be another very important thing for me—ways to make it possible for the whole church to speak to the whole church in better ways. We are going to have those opportunities through the communication media ahead for us. Long-term, I would say that the next five or six years are going to be years of building that kind of direction, focus and consensus working together.

“I have had a good deal of experience at a college, where there are a lot of constituencies, and I have discovered that, if you listen first and then say, ‘It sounds to me like this is the way we want to go,’ and build that consensus, you can move. Consensus can mean dead center—staying still—but it can also mean the opportunity first to agree and then to move forward. That would be my hope both for the short-term and then moving into plans the whole church believes in the long-term.

Question 2.

It is no secret that many urban and rural congregations are struggling. How can our church continue to minister in those settings?

“I think our church is trying very hard to support and to work with both rural and urban congregations. In my years at the seminary as a professor, I spent many years as long-term supply for rural congregations and I have still the kind of relationship with those rural churches that many of our pastors have with first parishes. When I go back to South Carolina, I see and visit those people. I think our church has to respect the tradition and the dedication of those congregations just as it respects the hopes and the needs of urban congregations. Then, it has to work with those people to find ways for them to do the kind of ministry they are able to do with the resources they have, and, in some cases, support them with additional resources when that particular ministry or that particular congregation conforms to or is in line with larger ministries that the church wishes to increase, such as, for example, multicultural ministries in cities [or] sometimes keeping rural congregations strong, because it is clear that towns are moving their direction or there may be new economic development and the congregation will be important.

“I have also worked with a lot of congregations in the process of closing. One of the

things we do at Luther College is have congregational heritage workshops for congregations that are celebrating major anniversaries. One of our efforts there has been, when a congregation gets to a point where it must close, to help it find a way to recognize the ministry it has done, to celebrate it, and in some way to share with the whole church the results, the life, and the contributions that the congregation has had in its history.”

Question 3.

How do you understand the responsibilities of the bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of this church, especially in light of the proposed ecumenical decisions facing this church in the coming biennium?

“Of course, I have had a lot of experience in the area of ecumenical relations. It has been one of the ways in which this church has called on me, particularly in relation to the Roman Catholic Church. I believe the chief ecumenical officer of this church has two main functions. One is to be the representative of this church to the ecumene, to the world community of Christians, and to Lutherans overseas. But, there is also an internal mission, and that is to help this church find its mind and move forward in ecumenical relationships.

“We are now going to be in a process, which I think you were alluding to, of considering three possible initiatives in the next biennium. I see [that] the role of the bishop of this church is to make sure that that process—which we call reception (That is the word that the Lutheran church has taken to describe the process.)—that that process of discussion of interchange of ideas, of investigation of possibilities and implications, is carried on at the most thorough and honest and clear and theologically responsible level. We do not have a pope in the Lutheran church who makes those decisions for us; it ultimately comes down to an assembly like this, which is going to have to help guide the direction this church will take.”

Question 4.

What is the appropriate role of this church in social and political issues?

“We spend a lot of time as Lutherans concerned about our theological position and discussing theological matters. We also have to remember that, when Jesus is portrayed as the judge at the end of the world, the question that he is asking of those who come before him is not whether they believed everything in the Augsburg Confession, but how they dealt with the poor, the hungry, the naked.

“Theology is the way we decide how we can best use the resources of the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ, as a way of ministering to the world. Theology is the way we have of looking at our heritage and finding in it what it gives us to do—to say how we should understand the neighbor, for example; how we should understand our own prejudices toward other people, for example. And, as we understand ourselves as saint and sinner, perhaps we no longer look at ourselves as dispensing good things to these poor unfortunates, but see ourselves also as beggars before God. So, I see our responsibility to the social world and social issues that are ahead of us as integral to our Christian faith, but constantly to be informed by our understanding of how God wishes God’s people to work in this ministry of mercy.”

Question 5.

The draft sexuality statements have generated much concern and controversy in this church on a number of issues, especially homosexuality. How would you provide leadership for

this church as we address these issues?

“First of all, the bishop has not yet been elected and this assembly is going to review matters that the Church Council is taking up in regard to the next steps on the statement about sexuality—the whole statement. But, I think it is clear from progress reports, which you have read, that there seems to be a consensus that in some areas this church is ready to speak. In other areas, there are fundamental issues that we have not yet resolved as a church.

“If we are a church grounded and centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ—as we have read it and understand it in Scripture—we need to take those words and that tradition and look at our present situation and our stance and decide how it applies. At present, we cannot do that as a church. We have not yet reached that consensus. I think, if we as Lutherans believe that Scripture is, in fact, the authoritative source and norm for faith and life as we say in our Statement of Faith—if we believe that—then we cannot avoid dealing with those issues where that Scripture comes to bear.

“Therefore, I would try to encourage continued deep discussion within our Lutheran family about this question, and particularly about the question of homosexuality, so that we can live into some way of understanding it. I would invite gay and lesbian Lutherans to be a part of that discussion, to share with us how they understand this Scripture, because for them, too, the authority of Scripture is still critical and important for all faith and life. I would see, perhaps, the opportunity to make some statements rather soon on pornography—perhaps on others—but we still have some really fundamental discussions to do as a church on the question of the authority of Scripture as it relates to homosexuality.”

Question 6.

As we move into the 21st century, we live in an increasingly diverse and changing culture. How can we increase the biblical literacy and theological understanding of the people of this church for their own growth in faith and for their witness to others?

“I think that is a really important question—and the question is not as important as the answer. How are we going to do that, because for me the question of evangelism or the question of stewardship is not a question of some new program? It is a question of whether or not we really believe that we have a story to tell to the nations—that the Christian message is true—and I would put that very directly. Do we really believe that the Christian message is true, that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, that there is new life in Christ, that God is still active in the world, that there is an answer to prayer? If we believe that is true, if we can work within our denomination to continue what we have heard from Bishop Chilstrom about being rooted and grounded in the Scriptures and the story of Jesus Christ, if we can do that, then we will have a word to say and we will want to do more in terms of stewardship and evangelism.

“My fear is that we are ourselves becoming spiritually weak on the inside, because we have not really confessed with all our heart and soul that Jesus Christ is Lord. I think, therefore, that we need to work through theological education, through our discussions among ourselves, through Bible study, which Bishop Chilstrom has been so good in leading us, in every way possible to deepen our understanding of God’s work in the world, and then to be the joyous and free servants and messengers that that commitment will give us. So, I think that is a critically important move and I believe that one of the ways to do this, one of the principal ways, is not just study, but also worship.

“If one has an experience of the presence and the grace of God in a meaningful worship

context, then one begins to understand—as the Orthodox speak of it—the Church as being a bit of heaven here on earth. If one then finds there the power of God, then one can also begin to find ways to incorporate that discovery in one’s daily life. I think worship is critical and we need to keep working on being better at our way of praising God.”

Question 7.

The constitution of this church commits the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to help members “see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling.” In what ways can the bishop of this church help to make this real in the lives of our people—in their jobs, their homes, their communities, and their congregations?

“Sometimes people ask me, ‘Well, have you had any parish experience?’ I would have to say, ‘Yes, all my life I have been a member of a parish.’ In fact, my daily life is probably more like the daily life of 99 and 44/100’s percent of the Lutheran church than is the life of pastors. I have worked with pastors as a seminary president, a professor, did a lot of work with them in terms of continuing education, have listened, have heard, have tried to understand and to help pastors be more effective, but I have in fact lived much of my life on the other side. I have lived my life working in a context where there was a budget to meet, there were concerns about marketing to take care of, co-workers, many difficult decisions, which I see as the way most people live their lives, if they are in the world of public commerce or work.

“I would say that my Christian faith has been a sustenance, as I tried to say in my brief earlier statement, and that being able to confess failure and then come back for forgiveness has been very important in that context. I think being a Christian in daily life is something that I have been trying to prepare students at Luther College to be for the last 14 years—and before that pastors in daily life as they became ministers of this church in various contexts.

“But, I also want to say a word about family, because I have been through a situation where I lost a spouse and became a single parent. I have discovered in that experience the precious gift of not only natural family, but also extended family through a congregation. I would say to pastors and church executives who are here, we all need to remember more fully the gift of family and as pastors, not forsake or limit or cut short our commitment to those whom God has given us in the family context. I think family is something we as a church also can hold up by example, not just by sending out bulletins or proclaiming that family life is important for national moral rectitude.”

Question 8.

What are your sources of personal renewal?

“I think I would start with my wife. I have a wife who is a very strong person in her understanding of the Christian faith and it is somewhat different from mine. She has opened up my mind to a lot of issues, particularly women’s concerns, in a way that has been very important for me to grow. She is also a visual artist and so I have learned more about the possibility of the use of the visual arts in church and in religious life than the Lutheran church yet has seemed to understand. Together, then, we find a resource in spiritual life through our participation in worship in the congregation and also in our own life at home as prayerful servants of God in our home. Our children are grown now. But, I just have to say that through these last days as we have been here struggling with this question of leadership, my wife has been indeed a spiritual resource to me that I would not want to ignore and I am glad to have the chance to say something

about that.

“Finally, I would say that I have found in colleagues the same kind of mind-stretching and faith-enriching resources. During the time that I was a single parent after the death of my wife, I felt overwhelmed, disappointed with God, I did not know how I was going to manage, it was a gift to be in a Christian worshipping community and to hear them pray and praise at a time when I was not yet able to do that. I will always be grateful for that kind of fellowship in the Gospel that Paul talked about, which for me has been more than some kind of slogan. It has been indeed a spiritual resource during very difficult times.”

Bishop Richard J. Foss,
Eastern North Dakota Synod

Question 1.

Please, share with us your vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both short-term and long-term, and the gifts you will bring to the Office of Bishop to help us to realize that vision.

“The vision of this church, of course, is very simply to follow the Jesus who said, ‘Follow me,’ and to live out the Gospel. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a part of God’s Church; it is young; we have deep roots and traditions and histories. My vision is not my vision. I do not know how one can forge a vision in isolation.

“As I talk with others of you in this church and as I pray and listen and read, it feels to me like God is gathering us up and sending us out. It feels like we have spent far too much time circling the wagons and shooting in at each other. It feels like we have struggled on young legs and tried to do many good things. My vision would be that, in the current jargon, the congregations would have the life that God pours into them, would have the opportunity to be unleashed, to be loosed, would have the sense of open exchange and energy that I believe God calls us to faithfully live out.

“I do not know what the rest of the questions are going to be, but I do want to say that what I would bring is me—what I would bring is that I thrive on working with people who are better than I. I prefer to work openly with as many cards face up as possible. I listen pretty well and I do not have a “Rick Foss vision” of this church. I do care deeply that we somehow—if any of you have read *The Way of the Wolf* and the Rag-Tag Army with little kids and puppy dogs floating around—we do follow our Lord together and I would bring the integrity and faithfulness that I have to bear on that.”

Question 2.

It is no secret that many urban and rural congregations are struggling. How can our church continue to minister in those settings?

“Rural and urban are different in some ways and very similar in others. In the last three years, I have spent more time as bishop with rural [congregations]. We have some delightful models—a parish with seven Lutheran and one Presbyterian [congregations] with multiple staff that has come together as a parish. We have three or four different unique models. We have moved from surviving to thriving as the mode and we have tried to figure out how to use the gifts given to serve the people in the area. It is a cliché, but you cannot do it the same way as you have done it, if things around you change.

“So, I guess I am not a strong advocate of a particular strategy that would be imposed or offered in each situation. If the Holy Spirit works, the Holy Spirit works among God’s people

and in those places, those in leadership need to have the trust and encouragement to let those people be free to do what works in that area. If I fall into a ditch, it is in giving too much freedom, rather than too much control. That is probably what I would do with the models available in those places.”

Question 3.

How do you understand the responsibilities of the bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of this church, especially in light of the proposed ecumenical decisions facing this church in the coming biennium?

“That will be problematic for me in terms of the proposed ecumenical statements, because at this point I would have a hard time voting for full communion as the term is defined, with interchangeability of clergy and joint common decision-making. If we are talking about altar and pulpit fellowship, I am delighted and would have been there long ago. I believe it simply means to work together as best one can, and to be fair and faithful and open with partners, so that where and when God wants us to be together, we can be together, and where and when we offer to one another our unique perspectives, we can do that.”

Question 4.

What is the appropriate role of this church in social and political issues?

“This church proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we do that, we cannot not be in the world in social issues and justice issues. But, if we do not do that at our core, then in any way we do interact with the world with social and justice issues is pretty much superfluous, irrelevant, and ineffective. So, I believe it is an inevitable and clear derivative of our response to follow our Lord, and whatever offshoot of that comes as a faithful response—we all know that you cannot have faith in Jesus without caring for God’s people. But, I see it as an inevitable and natural concomitant with our response of proclaiming the Gospel in all its fullness.”

Question 5.

The draft sexuality statements have generated much concern and controversy in this church on a number of issues, especially homosexuality. How would you provide leadership for this church as we address these issues?

“That is one of the most painful issues we have. All I can say is where I am at this point and, as you may know, I have been on the Consulting Panel [for the Division for Church in Society’s “Study of Human Sexuality”] to try to work with the leadership of this church. As a parish pastor and as bishop, I live with love and care for people of all descriptions, including those who would describe themselves as heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual. At this point, I am guided by, as Luther said, ‘Scripture and plain reason.’ At this point for me that would not include ordaining practicing gay and lesbian people. But, I do not think on this, or anything else, that it is my position to make ultimatums about what God would lead me to in the future.

“At this point, we have done a woefully poor job of hospitality and care to our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters, and when I say that I would not be able to, in good conscience, support the ordination of those people, I know keenly that that will feel again inhospitable. That is a dilemma that I do not see an easy way through and I think the suggestions to go back and live in God’s Word and God’s world and to try to let God lead us through is the only thing we can do. We are clearly not in a position to make final response in a way that is healthy and life-giving. I

trust God will lead us.”

Question 6.

As we move into the 21st century, we live in an increasingly diverse and changing culture. How can we increase the biblical literacy and theological understanding of the people of this church for their own growth in faith and for their witness to others?

“I hope literacy includes on-screen and on-line [communication] where my kids live a lot. It appears that has been a problem since the days of Corinth when Paul could not believe they could not get it straight. I am not so sure our kids are our problem. I think our problem is us.

“I remember in my first parish, we had two mothers who came and said to me, ‘Why do we leave sex education to the schools? Why do not we do that in this church?’ I said, ‘That is a great question. I will ask on Sunday who wants to talk about that.’ So, I said, ‘Everyone who wants to talk about that meet Tuesday night.’ We had a group and we all agreed that we were not very good at helping our youngsters with sex, because we did not know how to deal with our own sexuality. So, the next Sunday I announced that anybody who wanted to figure out how to deal with their own sexuality should meet Tuesday night. And, we all met. And, we, in fact, had a weekend, which was very controversial at that time, but there was no complaint from anybody, because it was in response to saying, ‘We realize we are falling short and how can we help someone else?’

“I am afraid we tend to say our children do not know the Bible and I am afraid the problem is maybe that we do not. I would rather look in than out.”

Question 7.

The constitution of this church commits the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to help members “see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling.” In what ways can the bishop of this church help to make this real in the lives of our people—in their jobs, their homes, their communities, and their congregations?

“Cheerlead? That is what you do, right? All I know how to do with the people in the congregations, in the synod, the folks I know is to spend as much time as possible saying, ‘You are doing that? That is fantastic! Could I share that with so-and-so? Could you get together and figure out how to borrow from one another and to help each other connect and tell the positive stories?’ And it is amazing what happens then. I do not see how I can make it happen. I can catch it happening and say that is fantastic. And, I can share that.”

Question 8.

What are your sources of personal renewal?

“They will not be terribly unusual. The Scriptures, prayer—I tend to be a less sequential-structured person, so I tend to pray in odd times and places, as well as in structured ones.

“I read an awful lot. I like to read things that are different and unusual. I subscribe to the left-handed magazine even though nobody [in our home] is left-handed. It is different; it is fun to look at maps upside-down to see what you missed the first time. We get news magazines from foreign places.

“I am renewed and energized by working in community to do ministry. I love creative problem solving with people—with some of you. It seems to me that God has a marvelously

mysterious way of working in our lives.

“This is the last question, right? Can’t end with a whimper! How much time do I have to think? You are all great, thanks! That was a long walk, be nice to April [Bishop April C. Ulring Larson] when she comes out.”

Bishop April C. Ulring Larson

LaCrosse Area Synod

Question 1.

Please, share with us your vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both short-term and long-term, and the gifts you will bring to the Office of Bishop to help us to realize that vision.

“My long-term and my short-term vision probably in some ways would be the same. I keep looking for a church that will look like heaven—that will be filled up with all the colors of this globe. I keep looking for a church that looks like our society—instead of being middle-class, it would be filled up with people that sometimes many of us are not so comfortable with, because we are not comfortable with how we even have conversation. I am not sure we are comfortable with our own class and societies. I think that would maybe be my first—you asked—‘vision,’ and I think maybe I am dreaming, because we are very much locked in our middle-class culture. But, that would be at the heart and the core.

“The other piece that I keep looking for and longing for is more children everywhere. And, that is one of the reasons I love Global Mission Events. I always think they kind of point us toward what we should be more often—how it would be, if almost every time this church gathered together that we saw all generations.

“[What] ‘gifts’ I would bring? I would say what everybody in this room has. The gift that we share of passionate love for this church is my first and the core gift that I bring.”

Question 2.

It is no secret that many urban and rural congregations are struggling. How can our church continue to minister in those settings?

“That is a wonderful question—not because I have the answer, but because I did most of my parish ministry in rural and small-town ministries. I always thought while I was doing rural ministry that one of the great differences between the rural ministry that my husband, Judd, and I did and the small town ministry that we did for 11 years—which was very different from my grandfather’s and even my uncle’s—was that, particularly when my grandfather was doing rural ministry, if you look around, all the town churches have been mothered by the rural churches. In those days, the rural churches were the heart and the rock, and now many times you really deal with grief and loss and dying as these wonderful communities are really coming apart.

“So I think there is a lot in common between rural and urban ministry. We need to connect these folks more often to each other and now this church in the last few years has been doing it. I really support that. One of the things is to realize that it is a mission field; it is not like it was 20 years ago. We are definitely dealing with on-going destruction of community life and loss and grief.”

Question 3.

How do you understand the responsibilities of the bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of this church, especially in light of the proposed ecumenical decisions facing this church in the

coming biennium?

“This is a question that is a love for me—I think, because I started out in music teaching at a [Roman] Catholic grade school. Even though I grew up in a Lutheran community that was about 7,000 Lutherans and about 6,000 people in the community, I really grew and was touched by my Roman Catholic friends and sisters that I got to know. That relationship grew with the experience of the Franciscan sisters in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod office where I served as assistant to the bishop.

“I think we continue the role that has been so effectively carried out by our predecessor body bishops and Bishop Chilstrom. He has put that at the very front of the burner. We have these dialogues going on; we have these commitments coming up in 1997, which we have to make decisions about. I am committed as I think any of our bishops in this church are. All of our bishops are committed to ecumenism and to the unity of the Christian church. So, I think you continue what has been labored on for more than two decades—solidly labored on.”

Question 4.

What is the appropriate role of this church in social and political issues?

“I was trying to sneak into that a little bit today in my short speech. This wonderful tension that we have as Christians—and, of course, two-thirds of the world are Christian brothers and sisters—all over the globe cannot figure out why those of us who live in the Northern Hemisphere have problems with this discussion—that we sometimes wonder if we are too politically active in this church. Are there too many political things going on in this church? Our brothers and sisters from all over the globe say to us, ‘This is an impossible discussion and only you people in the Northern Hemisphere want to have this discussion. It is impossible for us to separate word and deed. They go side by side and you cannot have one without the other.’

“I think that the texts in Luke, Matthew, Mark, and John are filled with this, but just recently, in these last few Sundays, we have been dealing with some of these texts that are so sharp to this issue—the story of the Good Samaritan—of course, only Jesus is the Good Samaritan finally for us; and, what it means to be a neighbor and who is our neighbor—[Jesus] turns right around and says at the same time, ‘but Mary has chosen the good portion’: sitting at the feet of Jesus. So, these marvelous texts parallel filling out that understanding of the law of God as serving with heart, strength, mind, soul, and loving your neighbor as yourself.

“So Luke places it well. And then, all the way through Luke—that is what we are in this year, Pericope C, so that is where my mind is, on Luke—but, all the way through Luke, Luke is constantly switching things around, turning things upside down, and saying to us that those who think they are outside are really in—those who think they are inside are outside—until we all realize that we are beggars before the throne of God. When we all realize that we are truly outside, then we can hear the Good News of Jesus Christ, which says, ‘Come on in.’”

Question 5.

The draft sexuality statements have generated much concern and controversy in this church on a number of issues, especially homosexuality. How would you provide leadership for this church as we address these issues?

“Thank you for that question. One of the things that has made me sad in this church has been that no church has finer, more highly trained seminary faculty than the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I think we should ask our exceedingly well-trained and brilliant faculty of

our seminaries to take this biblical question, which we continue to argue about in this church, and first address that, strive to come to consensus, and after they have striven to come to that consensus, bring that consensus to this church. Then, we go from there to address the other kinds of issues that are burning in our hearts.

“Let me say one more thing on this issue. I will say what I said in one of my congregations the Sunday after the first draft of the human sexuality [statement] hit the press. I was in a congregation that has for many years had very deep conflict around the issue of homosexuality and there were about 50 people in the adult forum. There was a lot of anger in that church and I said to them something that I personally feel very strongly, ‘I have looked and looked and studied the Scriptures, and I know that homosexuality is a huge problem for our society, for us as Christians, for us as Lutherans, for us as people who take our faith seriously. But, there is another issue that is all over Scripture. I hardly find homosexuality in Scripture. I do not think God cares much about this issue. I think we care a lot, all of us, but I do not think God cares nearly as much. God cares a lot about the poor. It is filled up in Scripture! And we hardly ever [take that matter seriously]—in fact, we almost pay our pastors almost decent salaries to water down this text on the poor, so that we can feel more comfortable in our society with that issue, which is a passion for God.”

Question 6.

As we move into the 21st century, we live in an increasingly diverse and changing culture. How can we increase the biblical literacy and theological understanding of the people of this church for their own growth in faith and for their witness to others?

“Another great question. I think one of the absolutely fun ways to increase biblical literacy is to really struggle with preaching the text. If we lay out what is in the text, rather than what we have heard is said in the text, or rather than what we wish were said in the text, and lay out the text, then our people often go home and read it, because they are quite disturbed by our preaching. In fact, one of the nicest compliments I had—I have had it in several parishes, but I remember it distinctly in the first parish—I remember one of the wonderful members of our church saying, ‘You make me so mad in your preaching and I always go home and read that text, because I know you are totally wrong. And, you are right. It is in there; it is in there!’

“I think maybe we need to start taking a look at what we have heard about texts and what we read into texts, and start looking at the text and trust the people of God to hear the Word of life, to be changed by the power of God, and because of that living Word, to live differently. What would happen in this church, if we who, without our choice, have been so deeply embraced by the radical, reckless grace of God, if we believed it and lived that way?”

Question 7.

The constitution of this church commits the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to help members “see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling.” In what ways can the bishop of this church help to make this real in the lives of our people—in their jobs, their homes, their communities, and their congregations?

“Another wonderful question. Considering how messed up our God is, it probably is not just our imagination that the leader takes the towel and washes those under him—the disciples’ feet—and that we also, those of us lay leaders and church leaders (clergy), are called to take up the towel and wash the feet of those we serve. So, the Church is really upside down. Bishops are

here to always point to the unity of the Church and always to reach out that ecumenical hand and arm.

“But, also what is on my mind—and I bet it is on 64 other bishops’ minds every morning when they wake up—[is what] I am thinking about every morning. What can I do today that will empower the pastors of the congregations, so that they will empower the people in their parishes who are the front line bearers and proclaimers and preachers and healers of the Good News of Jesus Christ in their daily life, in their families, in their communities, in their neighborhoods, and in their vocations and their work? What can we do—we, who appear in little boxes and structures and signs to be in positions of authority, who are really underneath lifting up our congregations and our pastors—and they are lifting up the missionaries of Jesus Christ sent out with that marvelous, redeeming, extravagant God—God’s grace and love for each and every person in this society and on this globe.”

Question 8.

What are your sources of personal renewal?

“Just recently, it is finding Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl in the bathroom. [Pastor DeGroot-Nesdahl had recently been elected by the South Dakota Synod as its bishop, historically the second woman within this church body to serve as a synodical bishop.] Thank you, South Dakota [Synod]!

“Personal renewal? I do not mean to keep bringing this up, but I am going to start with the summer. The summer for me, the renewal and the hope for this church, begins in our family—Judd, Katie, Amy, Benjamin, and I, trying to make sure that we attend one of the Global Mission Events, because it is the closest experience we have to the global Church. It gives me a taste of heaven. That is a big, huge place of personal renewal for our entire family—a hope of the Church to come. There we find grandparents and babies and single people and people who are on one far end of the political spectrum in this church and on, what some people would call, the conservative end. There we all are together, because we really are together. Because God is so much bigger than any little piece of viewpoint on social activities of this church, and social justice, or even how we view Scripture, somehow we see how big our God is. That is a core place for me.

“Other personal renewal? I think like every other person, and certainly pastor and bishop in this church, the heart of a place of restoration for me is my beloved family. Judd and I have been married for 23 years and we have twin daughters and a son, which we do not deserve, but they are a tremendous joy. That is a place of great restoration for Judd and me and our three children—certainly for me.

“The heart of restoration is the weekly gathering of the people of God. It is very difficult for me to miss a Sunday. I need and hunger for the body of Christ. I hunger for the body of Christ, the table of our Lord, the bread and the wine, and I hunger for the body of Christ in my neighbor.”

This concluded the questioning of the nominees. Ms. Yandala invited the nominees to return to the stage for acknowledgment by the members of the Churchwide Assembly. Bishop Chilstrom announced that the fourth ballot for bishop would be cast at 5:00 p.m.

Report of the Treasurer

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 613-649.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. Richard L. McAuliffe, treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to report on the financial status of the churchwide organization. Treasurer McAuliffe said, "The churchwide organization completed fiscal years 1993 and 1994 with an excess of income over expense in its current budgeted operation." He then interpreted several graphics, which showed favorable balances of income over expenses for the past two fiscal years, and noted that "improvements at the bottom line are a function of both revenue improvement and expenditure reduction. Income available for current operations increased from \$75,313,000 in 1993 to \$76,238,000 in 1994, a favorable increase of \$925,000, while expenses in 1994 were lower than 1993 by about \$1,200,000. It is important to operate at a surplus, thereby building modest cash reserves in order to have some flexibility to support new mission opportunities and to deal with emergencies without reducing other programs. In addition, modest reserves will allow us to continue to avoid paying interest on borrowed funds during seasonal declines in income."

"Mission support, that is, income from congregations through synods, which represent about 82 percent of current revenues available for current expenses, has been flat to down slightly in recent years. It is interesting to note that parochial statistics from 1994 suggest that regular giving by individuals to congregations increased by about \$35,000,000 to \$1,236,000,000 last year. Of this increase, congregations utilized [the entire] amount for operations, building repairs and improvements, local benevolence, and other miscellaneous expenses, with none of the increased \$35,000,000 in a total sense finding its way to the 65 synods and the churchwide organization, and their respective ministries."

Citing various other sources of operating income, Treasurer McAuliffe observed, "No part of the current operating revenue and expense are contributions to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, which increased in 1994 to about \$11,500,000—an increase of \$142,000 from 1993 and \$100,000 in excess of its goal. In addition, \$2,400,000 was received in disaster response funds with larger designees being relief related to Rwanda and the Los Angeles earthquake," he said.

"So, how are we doing in fiscal year 1995?" Treasurer McAuliffe asked. "For the five months ending June 30, 1995, income available to cover current budgeted expenses increased \$1,400,000 from the similar period last year. Expenses for this period were somewhat lower than those incurred last year, with a resulting improvement in the overall results. However, timing differences often account for periodic fluctuations and that usual theological caution of 'it's not over until it's over' should be conveyed. . . ."

"World Hunger Appeal receipts for the first five months of this fiscal year totaled \$3,185,000, an increase of almost \$500,000 over the similar period last year—good news, indeed! Disaster Relief income this year now approximates \$423,000 with major designees being relief related to the Oklahoma City bombing and the Japan earthquake.

"Finally, if one were to ask me to summarize my personal feelings about the financial status of the churchwide organization, I would use the word, 'improving.' Mission support, while increased for the five-month period is where our focus must continue to be. We need to continue to operate modestly in the black and build increased flexibility into our finances. I, as I am sure do you, look forward to increased resources, in order to expand our work together."

Exhibit A, Part 1

Financial Statements 1993-1994

[[Insert audit report for fiscal 1993 on this and the blank pages that follow.]]

Exhibit A, Part 2
Financial Statements 1994-1995

[[Insert audit report for fiscal 1995 on this and the blank pages that follow.]]

Exhibit B

Report of the Mission Investment Fund

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 634-650.

Treasurer McAuliffe then introduced the Rev. Arnold O. Pierson, vice president for marketing of the ELCA Mission Investment Fund, who appeared initially by means of a videotaped presentation. Pastor Pierson stated, “When we first gathered at a Churchwide Assembly in Chicago in 1989, Mission Investment dollars totaled \$64 million dollars. [When the Churchwide Assembly met] in Orlando in 1991, this figure had reached \$84 million. When we met in Kansas City in 1993, the fund had climbed to \$112 million. Today in 1995, when we are meeting in Minneapolis, the fund has grown to more than \$138 million, a growth of 23 percent since our last assembly.

“But, much more important than the monetary growth of this fund is the ministry that has been accomplished because of it. In 1989, only 16 new loans were made available for congregations through the Mission Investment Fund. This year we anticipate making more than 140 new loans to congregations for the building of new churches and the expanding of existing facilities, in order to make Christ known throughout our land. . . . Where does all this money come from for the expansion for Word and Sacrament [ministry] throughout our land? Of the \$138 million invested in the fund, more than 60 percent comes from our congregational endowment and savings. Today, one out of every four ELCA congregations is an investor in the

Mission Investment Fund. And, you as individuals are important as well. Currently, we have two percent of ELCA households as investors in this fund. . . . The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA provides an opportunity for us all to earn a competitive rate of interest and to help new and developing congregations at the same time. This fund truly is ‘Mission with Interest.’”

Appendix A, Part 1
Financial Statements 1993-1994

[[Insert audit report for fiscal 1993 on this and the blank pages that follow.]]

Appendix A, Part 2
Financial Statements 1994-1995

[[Insert audit report for fiscal 1994 on this and the blank pages that follow.]]

Report of the Memorials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued from Minutes, pages 65-90, 139-157; continued on Minutes, pages 374-427, 452-463, 586-616, 637-644, 660-661.

Category 1: Habitat for Humanity

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Nadine F. Lehr, co-chair of the Memorials Committee, to continue the committee's report. Pastor Lehr announced that the Memorials Committee's recommendation regarding Habitat for Humanity had been removed from the en bloc resolution for separate consideration. She then moved adoption of the recommendation as it appeared on page 889 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, noting that many congregations "make housing an important part of their ministries."

Rocky Mountain Synod (2E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, our Lord has called us to help our neighbor in need; and
Whereas, we have many neighbors in need of adequate housing; and
Whereas, Habitat for Humanity International is an ecumenical Christian ministry
dedicated to solving this problem; and
Whereas, the Church is spiritually renewed and revitalized by service to its neighbors;
and

Whereas, solving the problem of inadequate housing would also help to solve such
related problems as crime, feminization of poverty, cities in crisis and racism; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America declare itself a “covenant synod” with Habitat for Humanity International; and be it
further

RESOLVED, that pursuant to this covenant relationship all parishes of the Rocky
Mountain Synod be encouraged to covenant with their local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity
International; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod observe the third Sunday in September as
World Day of Prayer for Human Habitat; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod encourage its parishes to help start a
Habitat for Humanity International affiliate if none presently exists in their locale; and be it
further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America be memorialized to similarly declare itself in covenant with Habitat for Humanity
International.

BACKGROUND

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its predecessor church bodies have
been deeply committed to working for adequate housing for low-income persons in our society.
Many of this church’s social ministry organizations are developers and providers of such
housing. ELCA congregations, as well, have been involved in all facets of housing development
and have provided transitional housing to homeless families and victims of domestic violence.
Congregations and social ministry organizations also have developed permanent low-income
housing; some have started community development programs of their own.

The mission and reputation of Habitat for Humanity International is held in high esteem
by many people involved in housing issues, as one response to this church’s commitment in this
area. ELCA members, congregations, synods, and church-related institutions have had very
positive working relationships with Habitat. The Division for Congregational Ministries and the
Division for Church in Society provide advice to those in synods and congregations who are
interested in exploring the Habitat model for developing housing.

Therefore, this church’s prayers for Habitat for Humanity and commitment to a working
relationship with Habitat are appropriate. Likewise our prayers for and commitment to this
church’s many other efforts of providing low-income housing are important.

The meaning of the “covenant” language included in the memorial of the Rocky
Mountain Synod may not be clear to all within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
“partnership” or “working relationship” language may be generally more acceptable.

Assuming the intent of the final “Resolved” paragraph is to establish a formal working

relationship of the ELCA churchwide organization with Habitat for Humanity International, such an action could be referred to the Division for Church in Society for implementation. A written description of the proposed relationship could be brought to the Church Council within one year for its ratification. Such a written agreement has the advantage of addressing the issue of limitations on fund-raising by Habitat for Humanity within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The one-year period for writing the agreement permits involvement of the Association of Lutheran Social Ministry Organizations in the discussion.

Moved;

Seconded: To express this church's appreciation for the work of Habitat for Humanity International and for the work of those individuals, congregations, agencies, and institutions that have worked in various ways to provide affordable housing;

To refer the resolution of the Rocky Mountain Synod on the development of a formal relationship between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Habitat for Humanity International to the Division for Church in Society; and

To request the Division for Church in Society to submit a report on this matter and any appropriate recommendations to the Church Council at its November 1996 meeting.

The Rev. Peter A. Pettit [Pacifica Synod] moved to amend the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the second and third paragraphs of the recommendation by substituting the following:

To declare this church to be in covenant with Habitat for Humanity International, according to the terms of Habitat's covenant partner program, pledging to pray on behalf of Habitat's work and ministry during the 1996-1997 biennium; and

To direct the Division for Church in Society to recommend to the Church Council at its November 1996 meeting the specific form that this covenant shall take during the 1998-1999 biennium.

Pastor Pettit spoke to the motion, "In our own congregation we are a covenant congregation with Habitat for Humanity at Hope Lutheran Church in Riverside, Calif. We have found that the flexibility of Habitat's covenant partner program is remarkable. It seems to me that, given the covenant language of Habitat's own program, we can enter into this agreement with Habitat affirming that this church sees a vital partnership with efforts such as Habitat in providing affordable housing. . . . It seems to me that this is not an overly courageous position that I am asking the church to take, but that we declare ourselves to be in covenant."

The Rev. James S. Lindgren [Nebraska Synod] supported the amendment and noted, "Being a covenant congregation according to Habitat for Humanity simply means that a congregation, or in our case a church body, would prayerfully be a part of supporting the work that they are doing, would have perhaps projects that they would establish for working with projects of Habitat for Humanity, and also would contribute in financial terms to projects. That is what a covenant congregation would be asked to do."

Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment,

noting that his synod had adopted a similar resolution and that there is great flexibility in developing a covenant relationship.

Mr. Roy Davis [Sierra Pacific Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-826; No-37
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-727; No-180
Carried: To amend the second and third paragraphs of the recommendation by substituting the following:

To declare this church to be in covenant with Habitat for Humanity International, according to the terms of Habitat's covenant partner program, pledging to pray on behalf of Habitat's work and ministry during the 1996-1997 biennium; and

To direct the Division for Church in Society to recommend to the Church Council at its November 1996 meeting the specific form that this covenant shall take during the 1998-1999 biennium.

Assembly

Action Yes-861; No-72

CA95.3.10 To express this church's appreciation for the work of Habitat for Humanity International, and for the work of those individuals, congregations, agencies, and institutions that have worked in various ways to provide affordable housing;

To declare this church to be in covenant with Habitat for Humanity International, according to the terms of Habitat's covenant partner program, pledging to pray on behalf of Habitat's work and ministry during the 1996-1997 biennium; and

To direct the Division for Church in Society to recommend to the Church Council at its November 1996 meeting the specific form that this covenant shall take during the 1998-1999 biennium.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes, pages 11-12, 35, 41, 91, 105, 159-160; continued on Minutes, pages 257, 619; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Credentials Committee, who reported that the current number of voting members registered totaled 1,049. He requested the cooperation of voting members seated next to a vacant chair, in order to assure no unauthorized use of the electronic voting terminals. Members of the Elections Committee would be stationed by the four synods whose voting members had not yet all registered.

Elections: Fourth Ballot for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, pages 39, 53-55, 64-65, 95-96, 105-113, 137-138, 160-174; continued on Minutes, page 265.

The Rev. Walter R. Bouman [Northeastern Ohio Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-186; No-832

Defeated: To recess for 15 minutes for prayer and conversation.

Bishop Chilstrom explained that, for election on the fourth ballot, it would be necessary for a nominee to receive at least 60 percent of the votes cast. The names of the three nominees appeared on the video screens and voting members were instructed to vote using the electronic voting system. Bishop Chilstrom led the assembly in prayer prior to the casting of ballots.

Subsequently, Mr. Hardy read the results of the balloting:

Number of ballots cast	1,038	
Number of illegal ballots cast		-0-
Number of legal (valid) ballots	1,038	
Number of votes necessary for election	623	
1. H. George Anderson	533	
2. April C. Ulring Larson	310	
3. Richard J. Foss		195

Bishop Chilstrom declared that no election had occurred. He announced that the names of Pastor Anderson and Bishop Larson would appear on a fifth ballot to be cast at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 19.

Elections: First Ballot for Vice President

Reference: Continued on Minutes, pages 258-260, 279, 295-296.

Bishop Chilstrom said, "The vice president's is a very important position in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I say this as one who works very closely with this officer. The vice president must be a layperson, and as such occupies the highest elected lay position in our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is the responsibility of the vice president to chair the Church Council. That entails an enormous amount of care and work, because the council oversees and guides the work of this church between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. The position of vice president is not a paid position and to do this work requires a good deal of time and tremendous dedication. The vice president also has a part in the leadership team of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and we look to this person to give counsel and advice as we shape the church's decisions between assemblies. And, of course, the vice president at times represents our church in various settings, both ecumenical and local." Lay persons who hold voting membership in an ELCA congregation were eligible for nomination, he said.

Bishop Chilstrom noted that although the term of the vice president was at that time four years, "constitutional amendments coming before this assembly, if approved, would lengthen the term to six years." He then reviewed the process for election of the vice president.

Prior to instructing that the ballots be cast, Bishop Chilstrom led the assembly in prayer. Subsequently, he declared balloting to be closed.

An unidentified voting member moved the following:

Assembly

Action Yes-730; No-138

CA95.3.11 To post the results of the first ballot for vice president in the assembly hotels.

Report on Ministry of the Baptized

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 789-791.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Joseph M. Wagner, executive director of the Division for Ministry, to introduce a report on the ministry of all the baptized. Pastor Wagner observed that the report addressed “the foundation ministry in which all of us participate as Christ’s baptized people, the ministries which we carry out each day in the work and witness of our daily lives. . . . It is a progress report on two recommendations adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. The first recommendation of that assembly pointed toward fuller integration of the ministry of the baptized into the life of this church. The second recommendation called for focused theological study and reflection on the ministry of the baptized in the world and how accountability for daily-life ministries can be promoted. The Division for Ministry and the Division for Congregational Ministries worked cooperatively on these assignments for the past two years.”

Pastor Wagner introduced Mr. Nelvin Vos (Maxatawny, Pa.), a member of the board of the Division for Ministry, whom he described as “a pioneer thinker and writer in the field of daily-life ministries.” Mr. Vos said that he was “excited about the doors and windows that this report opens into the ELCA’s future. I also am most grateful to be among those of you whose own stories of faithful living offer energy and inspiration to this assembly.”

He introduced a videotaped presentation, which examined the question, “Is the church, as we know it, ready, willing, and able to unleash the potential power of all of these ministries [clergy and laity], especially the ministries of lay members?” The video featured conversations with Lutherans in congregations, church-related organizations, church programs, and in the secular work place.

Mr. Vos welcomed Ms. Paula Kadel (Lower Gwynedd, Pa.) to the podium and identified her as the writer and editor of the printed material, “Living Faithfully.” Mr. Vos and Ms. Kadel spoke in dialogue about the project. She stated, “One old bias that is addressed in this title [‘Living Faithfully’] is the idea that somehow laity and clergy hold different views about living as God’s people. To the contrary, we found that laity and clergy work at this matter of living faithfully together and in similar ways. Faithful living is not easy, as though there ever were a time when God’s people somehow found it a simple matter. . . . We found that ‘faithful living’ was a way to describe a fundamental understanding of the purpose of this church.”

Ms. Kadel described the process of creating the document and noted that those who conducted interviews for the report grew in their understanding of living faithfully. She commented that she is excited about the material in the report, “perhaps because of the stories and perhaps because of some of the threads that seem to weave themselves into the stories. First, it is apparent that worship and prayer life are important ways people are equipped and strengthened for ministry in daily life. Second, we found that people consistently value the support they receive from small groups of fellow believers, whether formal parts of congregations or institutions, or informal relationships, in which they can be personally discussed. Sadly, though, we found that many members of this church still do not understand what ministry in daily life is or how it can add meaning to their sense of faithful living or their congregation’s purpose.”

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

Voice Vote

CA95.3.12 To receive the progress report of the Division for Ministry on matters related to the ministry of the baptized;

To affirm the plans of the Division for Ministry, in consultation with the Division for Congregational Ministries, to continue and to deepen the churchwide conversation on matters related to the ministry of the baptized during the 1996-1997 biennium; and

To request that the Division for Ministry bring a report and possible recommendations on this matter to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly.

Bishop Chilstrom addressed the assembly and said, "We are coming to the end of a very strenuous day and I want to thank you for your good spirit and your cooperation during the day."

Recess

Secretary Lowell G. Almen announced the arrangements for the dinner that was to follow at 7:00 p.m. He also reminded voting members of the deadline for submission of business items not germane to the agenda, reiterated that no printed materials were to be distributed at the assembly without authorization of the secretary, and asked that all persons delivering prepared remarks submit a written copy to the secretary's deputy seated at the front of the assembly hall.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl [Saint Paul Area Synod] to offer the closing prayer.

The assembly recessed at 5:58 p.m.

Plenary Session Six
Saturday, August 19, 1995
8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called Plenary Session Six to order on Saturday, August 19, 1995, at 8:31 a.m. He extended a welcome to those watching the session on cable television. He invited the assembly and persons watching on television to attend the Festival Gathering held in the Minneapolis Target Center on Saturday, August 19, at 7:30 p.m.

Opening Hymn and Prayer

Ms. Patsy Gottschalk [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod], a member of the Church Council, served as worship leader for morning worship. Mr. Scott Weidler, associate director for worship and music in the Division for Congregational Ministries, served as song leader, opening the worship with, “Come, All You People.”

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes, pages 11-12, 35, 41, 91, 105, 159-160, 253; continued on Minutes, page 619; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Secretary Lowell G. Almen, reporting on behalf of the Credentials Committee, announced that the number of registered voting members remained 1,049. He stated, “Any substitution for voting members who must depart will be noted in the permanent minutes of the assembly.”

Organization of the Assembly

Bishop Chilstrom announced additions to the agenda for Plenary Session Six; the fifth ballot for the office of bishop would occur at 9:15 a.m. and the second ballot for vice president at 10:20 a.m.

Bishop Jon S. Enslin [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved that the closing time for Plenary Session Seven be moved to 5:00 p.m. to allow more time for travel to the Target Center for Festival Gathering activities during the evening.

Moved;

Seconded: To recess Plenary Session Seven at 5:00 p.m.

Bishop Enslin spoke to the motion and said, “It is my feeling that the event tonight will be one of the highlights of our gathering here in the Twin Cities and I note that we are scheduled to close at 6:00 p.m. and the buses pick us up at 6:30 p.m., and there is no provision for a meal. So I would rather guarantee that the voting members at this assembly might be able to rejoice in that event and not refuse to attend in order to eat. If the press of business is such that we cannot

close at 5:00 p.m., then we can always extend the time.”

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-789; No-163

Carried: To recess Plenary Session Seven at 5:00 p.m.

Elections: Report of First Ballot for Vice President

Reference: Continued from Minutes, page 254; continued on Minutes, pages 279, 294-296.

Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, reported results of the first ballot for vice president. No election occurred. He stated that a correction needed to be made to the report posted during the prior evening. Three votes were cast for Edward Hunsinger and three votes for Eddie Hunsinger, as indicated in the following report.

Number of ballots cast	997	
Number of illegal ballots cast		13
Number of legal (valid) ballots cast	984	
Number of votes necessary for election	738	

Mr. Hardy read the names and number of votes cast for those persons who had received eight or more votes. Bishop Chilstrom asked whether there was objection to dispensing with the reading of the remainder of the names. Because objections were voiced, Mr. Hardy continued with the reading of the report.

An unidentified voting member moved to dispense with the reading of the names since a written report had been distributed previously to voting members.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-950; No-19

Carried: To dispense with the reading of the election report.

Bishop Chilstrom reiterated that the second ballot for vice president would be at 10:20 a.m. He advised that nominees, who wished to withdraw, were to do so prior to that time.

Social Statement on Peace (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 792-802; continued from Minutes, pages 13, 113-137; continued on Minutes, pages 356-374.

Bishop Chilstrom announced that deliberation of the proposed social statement on peace would now resume. He called attention to page 800, line 32 in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, and amendment 14 (page 4 of “Amendments and Substitutions to the Social Statement on Peace”). The amendment, which had been moved previously during Plenary Session Four (see pages 135-136 of these minutes), was again before the assembly for its consideration:

Moved;

Seconded: To insert on page 800, line 32 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, after “individuals, communities, and nations” the following:

Aid should be withheld from governments whose rulers have enriched themselves at the expense of their people, those who use aid to profit personally, and those governments that traffic

in illegal drugs.

The Rev. Albert R. Ahlstrom [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke against the amendment, because, he observed, “The preceding sentence precludes the amended sentence being relevant, because it does say, ‘aid should be provided in ways that promote human rights and builds self-reliant individuals, communities, and nations.’ My second point is that under this amendment, can we remember a time in recent history when benevolent countries would thereby be discouraged from giving such aid to the United States?”

The Rev. Carol A. Jensen [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the motion by substitution of the following:

To insert on page 800, line 36, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, after the words, “birth control,” the following:

Aid also should require accountability on behalf of recipient governments.

Pastor Jensen spoke to the motion, stating, “I am also a member of the peace task force that wrote the statement. I think that this amendment is more in keeping with the tone of the statement to state positively what it is that we want, rather than speaking in more negative or punitive tones. What we want is accountability of political leaders to their people and to the donors of the aid. . . . We need to be aware of the shortcomings of our own political leaders who, though democratically elected, have profited from time to time personally from public office. I think the main point is that it is better to speak about requiring accountability, which is also part of what our advocates in Washington [D.C.] work on. . . . On page 801, line 65-89, there is a section specifically on advocating participatory and accountable political structures so this would be a link into that later section.” She concluded, “In terms of the reference to the drug trade that is at the end of that proposed amendment, number 14, we have already amended the statement in our en bloc motion to include reference to the drug trade in amendment number 5.”

The Rev. S. Craig Bollinger [North Carolina Synod] spoke against the original amendment, stating, “I think it is important that our government hold accountable governments that are corrupt or are misusing aid for the sake of consistent foreign policy. However, I also agree that we cannot, in human rights, deny the needs of people simply because their governments are absorbing the dollars or whatever we put toward the aid.”

The Rev. Robert C. (“Rick”) Barger [Rocky Mountain Synod] spoke against the proposed substitute. He said, “Specifically, about aid to governments whose rulers have enriched themselves at the expense of their people and who use aid to profit personally—this is not theory for me. I lived in Iran in the late 1970s and lived in and out of Baghdad in the early 1980s. [We had] a policy of throwing money at Iran. . . . We saw what happened after that. Now, as we gather here this morning, troops are again gathering in the Middle East. When Iran fell, we rushed to embrace Saddam Hussein—threw money at him. He enriched himself at the expense of the people, and we see where that got us.”

The Rev. Petunia M. Chung-Gré [Florida-Bahamas Synod] cautioned assembly members to think carefully about this matter and observed, “I speak as one who was born and grew up in a developing country for 42 years. I know personally what government aid can do. It is all absorbed by the politicians who are unscrupulous. They can hire their own people to bid for this money and no one who really, really needs the money is allowed even to get near the

funds. . . . The money can be routed through other means—the churches and other organizations, but certainly not to politicians.”

The Rev. Eleanor M. Hunsberger [Saint Paul Area Synod] said that she could vote for neither the amendment, nor the proposed substitute. She said, “I do not think it was the intention of the people who came up with the substitute motion, but the countries, which would be affected by this, all just happen to be countries where there are people of color. I understand and I am sympathetic with the [previous speaker]; I understand how dictatorial governments are ruthless and somehow taking the funds; and the people who are so deserving of them are not getting them. . . . I just want us to keep in mind that that will not apply to any countries where there are Northern European people.”

Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod] spoke in support of the original amendment (number 14). He commented, “I reflect on the person who spoke regarding Iran and now reflect on the Philippines when we remember how much our government supported and uplifted Ferdinand Marcos, who was clearly profiting against his people and the poverty was so wide-spread.”

Mr. William Styles [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke in favor of the proposed substitute motion, stating, “I would agree that the wording is perhaps somewhat vague. However, I think the end result of the initial amendment would be to eliminate all aid, the reason being that governments are frequently sinful and evil and hence the gist of the original amendment would be to eliminate all aid. I do not think that is our intent. I think the substitute amendment would give us the flexibility we need to balance our judgment as to whether the governments we are dealing with are sufficiently good and reliable that the aid can get where it needs to go and help the people it needs to help.”

The Rev. Natanael F. Lizarazo [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke in favor of the proposed substitute motion. He said, “I am from Colombia. Perhaps some of you know Colombia is one of those places in this hemisphere that is referred to as the ‘El Salvador of the ‘90s.’ A lot of military aid especially goes to Colombia and there is no sense of accountability. Thus has been created the most severe crisis in human rights in Colombia. I urge this assembly to make accountable the governments that receive aid.”

Ms. Faith Ashton [North Carolina Synod] sought to offer a friendly emendation to the original amendment, whereby the following would be added: “Aid should be channeled through other human service organizations, which can better administer the aid directly to the needs, and out of the hands of questionable governments or leaders.” The Rev. Charles S. Miller Jr., executive director of the Division for Church in Society, advised that the proposal could not be considered a friendly amendment, since the proposed emendation differed significantly from the text of the original amendment. Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the emendation offered by Ms. Ashton was out of order at this time, but could be introduced later as a separate amendment. He stated, “We can only handle one amendment to an amendment at a time.”

Ms. Susan Rodine [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] then spoke in favor of the spirit of the substitute motion, and commented, “I think there are two issues at hand here. One is whether or not we believe in principle that we ought to be careful about the accountability of the governments to which we are directing the aid; but, [secondly] also the integrity of the document. I appreciate the point of the person who was involved in the writing of this document, which was to say, this is a positive paragraph and it is meant to be stated in positive terms. Amendment number 14 directs that into a negative argument.”

Mr. Douglas Reeves [Rocky Mountain Synod] spoke against both the amendment and the substitute, stating, "We are not creating foreign policy in this body, nor are we taking specific actions with respect to individual experiences of individual countries in the past or future. Rather, what we are about is establishing a teaching document that must have broad applicability [and] that must be carefully thought out. About the only thing more dangerous than doing that in the committee is doing it in assembly. I think there is a certain level of trust that we must invest in the committee that has labored for years in this process. My trust is in those long and thoughtful deliberations."

Bishop James E. Sudbrock [Metropolitan New York Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-933; No-53
Carried: To move the previous question.

Bishop Chilstrom called for the vote on the substitute motion.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-653; No-314
Carried: To amend the motion by substitution of the following:
To insert on page 800, line 36, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, after the words, "birth control," the following:

~~Aid also should require accountability on behalf of recipient governments.~~

Mr. Thomas L. Ohl [Upper Susquehanna Synod] inquired about the source of such aid. The Rev. John R. Stumme, associate director for studies in the ELCA Division for Church in Society, responding on behalf of the task force, observed that the paragraph prior to the one under discussion "makes it clear that we are talking about the United States government principally. These principles would also apply to aid in other situations."

Bishop Chilstrom called for the vote on the amendment.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-677; No-285
Carried: To insert on page 800, line 36, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, after the words, "birth control," the following:

~~Aid also should require accountability on behalf of recipient governments.~~

The Rev. S. Craig Bollinger [North Carolina Synod] sought to offer an amendment not submitted prior to the deadline. Bishop Chilstrom asked that the motion be read so that the assembly could decide whether or not to consider the motion. Pastor Bollinger proposed that the following sentence be inserted on page 800, line 32, after the words, ". . . individuals, communities, and nations": "In situations where governments whose rulers have enriched themselves at the expense of their people, those who use aid to profit personally, and those governments that traffic in illegal drugs, aid should be channeled through other human service organizations, which can better administer the aid directly to the needs and out of the hands of questionable governments or leaders."

Bishop Chilstrom ruled the proposed amendment to be out of order, because it was

essentially similar to amendment 14, which the assembly previously had rejected. Pastor Bollinger appealed the decision of the chair. The decision of the chair was upheld.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-659; No-323

Carried: To sustain the decision of the chair.

Bishop Chilstrom called for consideration of the Church Council's recommendation on the proposed social statement on peace (page 792, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2).

Mr. Ralston H. Deffenbaugh Jr. [New Jersey Synod] moved that the recommendation be considered en bloc (as a whole).

Moved;

Seconded: To consider the recommendation of the Church Council en bloc.

Bishop Richard F. Banskemer [Virginia Synod] spoke against the motion, saying, "There are people waiting to try to make motions that have been printed on the white sheets and they will not have that opportunity, if this en bloc [procedure] is passed."

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-603; No-387

Carried: To consider the recommendation of the Church Council en bloc.

Ms. Adrienne Lumpkin [Virginia Synod] moved to add a new paragraph 4., which would add Dietrich Bonhoeffer to the listing of teachers and martyrs in future editions of Lutheran Book of Worship.

Moved;

Seconded: To add the following implementing resolution as a new resolved paragraph 4, and to renumber existing resolutions 4-10 appropriately:

4. To urge those who have responsibility for the Lutheran Calendar for North America to amend it so that the pacifist Dietrich Bonhoeffer is listed as a teacher and martyr;

and

If feasible, to change future printings of Lutheran Book of Worship so that they reflect this new listing.

Ms. Lumpkin spoke to the motion, stating, "This change would be consistent with the description of the Church as a 'servant presence.' . . . Certainly, Bonhoeffer's participation in the assassination of Hitler was an act in a sinful world that would be seen by him as an expression of his Christian faith and not merely a political act. Finally, in the German evangelical calendar of names, Bonhoeffer is listed as a martyr in the Church's struggle. The embodiment in our liturgy of God's will for peace would certainly be enhanced by the recognition of Dietrich Bonhoeffer rightly placed as a martyr in the struggle for justice. At present, he is the only person given a red liturgical color not listed as a martyr. This is unfortunate for a church that has often been charged with being quietistic."

Pastor Miller, speaking on behalf of the task force, indicated that "there was not an

objection to the substance of the proposed amendment, but rather to the concern that we feel it does not fit the genre of implementing resolutions that are found in the Church Council's action. We intend to have those actions embodied in the printed copies of the social statement when it is adopted in the future. This one calls for some specific action that seems instead better handled by referral to an appropriate churchwide unit."

The Rev. John H. P. Reumann [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, "In addition to the genre question, in light of Bonhoeffer's life—and I speak as one from a seminary where the Bonhoeffer Institute is located, translating his works into English—whether he can be described as a pacifist at the end of his life or a person moved by the cause of justice to indeed violent participation in defense of justice is one question. He is already in our list and what we need to do is lift him up as a model of where deeply involved Lutheran faith can lead one amid the corruptions of the real world. I do not think, though, that inserting this at this point will be helpful. What we need to do is pay attention to the man and his teachings as a model."

Bishop Chilstrom called for the orders of the day.

Elections:

Fifth Ballot and Report for Bishop

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 586-588; continued from Minutes, pages 39, 53-55, 64-65, 95-96, 105-113, 137-138, 160-174, 253-254.

Bishop Chilstrom reminded assembly members that on this ballot a majority of the votes cast would result in an election. The names of the two nominees, the Rev. H. George Anderson and the Rev. April C. Ulring Larson, were projected on the video screens. He then led the assembly in prayer prior to calling for ballots to be cast by means of the electronic voting system.

Subsequently, Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, reported the results.

Number of ballots cast	1,032	
Number of illegal ballots cast		-0-
Number of legal (valid) ballots cast	1,032	
Number of votes necessary for election (majority)	517	
Number of votes received		
1. H. George Anderson	698	
2. April Ulring Larson	334	

Assembly

Action

CA95.4.13 To elect the Rev. H. George Anderson (Decorah, Iowa) to a six-year term as bishop of this church.

Bishop Chilstrom declared the Rev. H. George Anderson to be elected bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Following prolonged applause and a standing ovation, Bishop Chilstrom congratulated Bishop-Elect Anderson and his spouse, Jutta Fischer Anderson, and pledged the prayers of this church for both of them. Bishop Chilstrom addressed the assembly, stating, "I must say to you

that, in my judgment, you could not have selected anyone with so broad and deep experience in the life of the Church, not just the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, but the Church—the whole Church. George has been a faithful Christian, a baptized child of God, a pastor, a professor, a teacher of pastors, head of one of our seminaries, and now head of one of our magnificent colleges. He has given himself unselfishly to go to every corner of this church as a Bible teacher and as a preacher. I have watched him walk through the valley and emerge. I rejoice with the partner God has given him in Jutta.”

Bishop Chilstrom then addressed Bishop-Elect Anderson and stated, “These folks, George, and those they represent, are going to give you the gift that you will find most important for one in this office—their prayers. I want to pledge to you from Corinne and me that you will be in our prayers every day, both of you.”

Bishop-Elect Anderson received the applause of the assembly and expressed appreciation, stating, “Thanks to all of you for your offers of prayer during this lengthy process. However, the need for prayer has really just begun. As in any spiritual task, we must commit ourselves to the power of God or it is all going to come to nothing. I, therefore, ask for your prayers as I also will pray for you.

“I take very seriously and very humbly the trust that you have placed in me. The more I learn of you as individuals, the more of you that I have met and spoken to in terms of your own life and your own Christian discipleship, the prouder I am to be your partner in the Gospel.

“Before I go any further, I want to recognize the investment that Bishop Chilstrom has made in the shaping of this church. I have found him to be a patient, gentle, spiritual man—qualities that have been sorely needed and, I think, often sorely tried in the years in which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has grown from infancy through adolescence. In the same breath, I also must mention Pastor Corinne Chilstrom who has shared his burdens and stalwartly shouldered some of her own. I believe I am only the first of many successors who will look back and bless the Chilstroms for the foundations that they have laid.

“In the days ahead, my most important job is going to be to listen as I learn from the judgment and experience of leaders past and present in all areas of this church. I am going to continue to pay close attention to the findings of the ‘Inquiry’ process as it goes forward, and I am certainly going to recommend that it move into a congregational phase. In the meantime, I invite any of you to write or e-mail your thoughts to me. My address is Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, and the e-mail address is on the [video] screen. I am serious about that. I seek your counsel, your experience, and guidance. My wife, Jutta, hopes also to find ways in which her gifts can be of service to you.

“As to the future, God has promised that as long as the earth endures, the Church will be here. Our only task is to be sure that we are God’s Church and not just dressed up to look like it. The future is not our enemy. It still belongs to God untouched by human hands. It is God’s way of opening up the present to new possibilities. So, let us commit ourselves in our generation to sustaining the song of praise that all creation is yet meant to become.”

Bishop-Elect Anderson then asked assembly members to join him in singing the hymn, “Holy God, We Praise Your Name.”

Mission Prayers

Bishop Chilstrom explained that during the course of this assembly prayers, words of encouragement, and greetings from one congregation in each of the 65 synods would be heard.

He said, “These prayers will reflect the specific mission focus of a congregation and I invite all of us here who are the church in assembly to join in those prayers.” He then invited the members of ten congregations, who were serving as assembly voting members, to lead the assembly in prayer.

Mr. Vincent Tocktoo Sr., Shishmaref Lutheran Church, Shishmaref, Alaska [Alaska Synod] stated, “Greetings from the Shishmaref Lutheran Church in Northwestern Alaska. First of all, I want to congratulate our new Bishop Anderson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I am going to pray in English and then translate into my own language.”

Creator God, we pray for the Alaska native congregations of the Seward Peninsula in Alaska and for all Native American ministries throughout the ELCA. Continue to bring us faithful leaders to raise up the talented people from our own congregations and provide for us a vision for ministry and mission in our own communities. In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

Ms. Ruth Beagles, Lord God of Sabaoth Lutheran Church (261 years old), Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands [Caribbean Synod], also congratulated Bishop-Elect Anderson and offered the following petitions:

Lord God of our salvation, give wisdom and guidance to leaders and people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa as our congregation and synod develop a partnership with our companion synod. Lord, we ask you to place your guiding hand on the bishops of the ELCA as they dialogue, listen, and expand their vision of the Church. Protect and guide our bishops as they are sensitized to and unite in developing an interactive relationship on such issues as justice. We pray for safe travel for all bishops in September 1995, especially our bishop, Gregory Villilón. May they return home safely with an abundance of rich experiences. We ask in your name. Amen.

Mr. Eric Paul Kane, Holy Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania [Slovak Zion Synod], offered congratulations to Bishop-Elect Anderson and prayed,

For God’s people in Eastern Europe and especially for sisters and brothers in Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Silicia, and Vojvodina. For Professor Paul Hinlickey and all of our missionary volunteers in the Slovak Republic, that they may be faithful witnesses to the Gospel of your love. Amen.

Ms. Lylie Standingwater, Bethany Lutheran Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma [Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod], stated, “We bring you greetings from Bethany Lutheran Church in Tulsa. Good day, Bishop Chilstrom. Hello, Bishop-Elect Anderson.”

Holy Father in Heaven, look upon your children. Father, we praise you, we honor you, we glorify you. We praise you by going out into our communities and around the world, proclaiming your Son, Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior. We honor you by devoting our time, gifts, and talents, by our prayers and our mission of sharing the Good News of your Son. We glorify you, Father, as we seek justice for the oppressed, as we seek peace and reconciliation, and as we give comfort and solace to the suffering. We ask blessings for our special ministries which are the Lutheran Social Services and the Oakes Indian Center. We pray for support for the ministry and outreach programs. Blessed Father, we ask you to give us courage, strength, and energy as we all go out into the world to share the Good News and the good deed. Amen.

Ms. Gloria Salazar, St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Oakland, Maryland [West

Virginia-Western Maryland Synod], greeted Bishop-Elect Anderson on behalf of her congregation and offered the following petitions:

Dear God, you created a rainbow of humanity. Teach us to realize your presence in all of your world and enable us with your unending love to accept our colorful diversity. With you always by our sides, we will break open the jar and not be afraid. Amen.

Mr. Joe McMahon, Georgetown Lutheran Church, Washington, D.C. [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod], brought “Greetings to our bishop-elect from all in our synod, and grateful thanks to Bishop Chilstrom and to the Rev. Corinne Chilstrom.”

Oh, Lord, you have blessed Georgetown Lutheran’s ministry for 226 challenging years—a ministry striving to be Gospel-driven and open to all—a community that prayerfully voted unanimously to be a reconciled in Christ congregation so that even lesbians and gays, sisters and brothers, know that they have a spiritual home and shelter from the hatred and discrimination which they face daily even in this church and for which we ask your forgiveness. With thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit, we try so hard to be your daughters and sons, truly celebrating the richness of the wondrous diversity of your creation, all of which we are committed to sustain and uphold as the little Christs you have called us to be. Lord, thank you for these 226 years. May they serve as a foundation for the next 226 years yet ahead. In your Son’s holy name, we pray. Amen.

The Rev. John H. Twiton, Fagernes Lutheran Church, First Lutheran Church, and Zion Lutheran Church, Blair, Wisconsin [La Crosse Area Synod], brought greetings from his congregations and offered thanksgiving:

We thank you, dear God, for the ministry of the whole ELCA and particularly for the leadership, ministry, and vision that our bishop, April Larson, has brought to our synod and to this whole church. We thank you that she will be able to return home with us again. We thank you as well for the ministry of our brothers and sisters in Christ in our companion synod, the Central Synod of Ethiopia. Daily we thank you for the ongoing ministries of the many small town and country churches that dot the hillsides of our synods, for the love that those people have for their church and for their Lord. We ask that you would continue to bless them, their pastors, their congregations, and all their leaders with your courage and strength to face this new day. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Mr. Peter O. Johnson, Trinity Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, Michigan [Northern Great Lakes Synod], offered the following petitions:

God, our Creator, Father of all people, we thank you for our salvation in your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Help us as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to be missionary people. I pray for my own congregation, Trinity Lutheran in Ishpeming, Michigan. Bless our outreach efforts through the Ericksons our missionary partners in Papua New Guinea, and the annual hunger walk of our conference. I pray for the efforts of our Sunday School in sponsoring a foster child in Colombia. In your name we pray. Amen.

Mr. Jack Johnson, Trinity Lutheran Church, Vancouver, Washington [Southwestern Washington Synod], prayed:

Our gracious heavenly Father, continue to stir up a kind and generous spirit in our ELCA

churches in Southwestern Washington and elsewhere which are committed to the grass-roots mission partnership we call Tanzania Connections. At the same time we give you thanks and praise for these Tanzanian brothers and sisters in Christ who by their lives have so much to teach us about living out our own faith. We pray for the power and presence of the Holy Spirit that this long distance relationship continue to grow and flourish that in both locations we might be inspired to proclaim and live out the Gospel in our respective communities. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ms. Phyllis Johnson, Tabor Lutheran Church, Kane, Pennsylvania [North-western Pennsylvania Synod], offered the petitions:

Our heavenly Father, in the gift of your Son you have given us love, hope, and salvation. We rejoice daily in this gift as we serve you. You have exhorted us to spread the Gospel to those who do not as yet know you. We ask you now to aid us and empower us in our individual vision for mission and in our efforts as a church to bring the light, the truth, the power of your message to a world so in need of your mercy and grace. We name before you in this place our mission partner church, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Erie, Pennsylvania; our prayer partner church, Grace Lutheran Church, Farrell, Pennsylvania, and our missionary in Senegal, Viking Dietrich. May your vision for mission be our vision for mission. In the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bishop Chilstrom thanked the presenters of the "Mission Moments," stating, "[They] give us sharp and vivid reminders of whom we are as a family of congregations across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with great variety."

Representational Principles

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 745-783.

Bishop Chilstrom referred assembly members to the recommendation of the Church Council (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 746) related to this church's representational principles. He stated, "As Vice President Magnus reported to you, this action emerged after extensive discussion among the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, the seminaries of our church, the Commission for Women, and the Commission for Multicultural Ministries—a discussion that was mandated by our last Churchwide Assembly in 1993. The Church Council is recommending the reaffirmation of our representational principles, while recommending that for the election of congregational voting members to synod assemblies new flexibility be given to the synods to deal with specific difficulties that might arise. Should the assembly agree with this proposal, we will also be voting to change the language of our ELCA constitution to provide such flexibility to synods and congregations. Those changes are found on pages 853-854 of your assembly materials (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2). We will proceed to this proposal after we have completed action on the Church Council's general resolution." Bishop Chilstrom then called upon Vice President Kathy J. Magnus for additional comments.

Vice President Magnus briefly outlined the process that the Church Council had used to review ELCA representational principles in accordance with action taken by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. She said, "In response to eleven synods memorializing this church to reconsider the representational principles, the 1993 assembly voted to instruct the Church

Council to consult with the Conference of Bishops and to establish a process for reflection by the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, the Commission for Women, the Commission for Multicultural Ministries, and the seminary faculties, and to report back to this [1995] assembly with any recommendations.

“In January 1994, the Executive Committee [of the Church Council] developed a time line and process for reflection. That March, the Conference of Bishops and the two commissions provided advice on the proposed process. In April 1994, the Executive Committee brought the process before the full council. The plan that was adopted by the council included processes for reflection within the organization and the [ethnic] communities. Last October [1994], the results of the reflection were submitted to the Executive Committee, which then reviewed the information and recommendations, and developed an initial report for the Church Council’s consideration last November [1994].

“The council received a significant amount of material in a pre-meeting mailing from the Conference of Bishops and the two commissions. The council then spent time in small groups discussing the input. All of the bodies with whom we consulted recommended the continuation of these principles. The Conference of Bishops, as Bishop Chilstrom said, encouraged the council to maintain the present representational principles with a revision to allow synods limited exception from the present formula for male and female representation at synod assemblies. The constitutional revisions are before you. The study done by the seminary faculties was completed in the early winter of 1995 and their advice was presented to the Conference of Bishops in March [1995] and to the Church Council in April [1995].

“The council voted in April [1995] to affirm the judgment that the current representational principles do not compromise the Gospel, but rather reflect an appropriate pattern for good order in the practice of this church’s ecclesiology and polity. It remains the fervent hope of the Church Council that legislative principles will not always be necessary to ensure participation by all persons. The recommendation is before you.”

MOVED;

SECONDED: To adopt the following resolution regarding the principles of representation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To receive with appreciation the theological study, analyses, historical review, and descriptions of experiences provided by the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, seminary faculties, Commission for Multicultural Ministries, Commission for Women, and others in regard to the representational principles applied to councils, boards, and committees throughout the synods and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To consider the discussion and materials an appropriate response to the resolution of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly that directed the Church Council “to establish a process for reflection” on the representational principles and recommendations to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly (CA93.7.46);

To affirm the judgment that the current representational principles do not compromise the Gospel but rather reflect an appropriate pattern for good order within the practice of this church’s ecclesiology and polity;

To recognize that the current representational principles are not an end in themselves but are a means appropriate to this time in this church’s history that have been chosen to allow for more complete and more inclusive participation by members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America in this church's decision-making processes;

To acknowledge the perceived need in various synods for greater flexibility in relation to the composition of voting membership from congregations in synod assemblies, with such appropriate flexibility being anticipated through constitutional and bylaw amendments;

To urge continued attention to community outreach and ministry by all congregations of this church so that each congregation may grow in awareness of being a mission center within its community as well as increase in commitment to the wider mission of this church throughout the respective synods and the churchwide ministries; and

To express gratitude for the salutary results that have emerged thus far through the practice of this church's representational principles.

Bishop Gregory J. Villalón [Caribbean Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation. He said, "I bring to you the voice of the Caribbean Synod— Lutherans that have been working and struggling in this church for many, many centuries. I bring to you the voice of many, many Hispanics—Lutheran Americans that are here living and working and struggling in the U.S. as members of our congregations. We have a long way to go and I think that this is a very important issue for us."

Bishop George P. Mocko [Delaware-Maryland Synod] stated, "As it came from our synod to ask for the exception concerning gender, I wish to make it clear that the reason for this was not to limit the participation of women, but we found, in an extensive survey involving some 47 hours of staff time, that were this provision removed, it would actually lead to increased participation of women, not a decrease. The original intent, of course, was to guarantee that participation. We think we have accomplished it and then some, and thus can remove it."

Bishop Richard J. Foss [Eastern North Dakota Synod] spoke in favor of the Church Council's recommendation. He commented, "I think it is a very well thought out recommendation from the council. It keeps us going in the right direction to something that I hope will not be permanent either and provides a little flexibility for congregations."

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] offered an amendment deleting the word, "perceived," from paragraph five of the recommendation.

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the recommendation of the Church Council by deleting the word, "perceived," in paragraph five.

Ms. Dorothy Jacobs [Southwestern Texas Synod] spoke against the amendment. She said, "As one who has been involved in this struggle for keeping and setting up representational principles, I would speak against the amendment to take out the word, 'perceived.' That has been one of my constant reminders throughout all the sessions of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church and as eight years as vice president of the synod, that sometimes there is a perceived need that the rest of us feel are not really actual needs. While I will concede that there are synods in which there is a problem at certain times of the year to perhaps have one man and one women, I still am rather reluctant to give my whole-hearted support to even that concession. It has been my experience and that of other women that whenever one stops counting, the numbers for women and cultural minorities goes down in our representational principles. Therefore, I feel that I can support the recommendation of the Church Council with the word,

‘perceived,’ in it, but I do not support the deletion of that word.”

Moved;

Seconded: Yes-219; No-590

Defeated: To amend the recommendation of the Church Council by deleting the word, “perceived,” in paragraph 5.

The Rev. Todd B. C. Murken [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] requested that Vice President Magnus respond to his stated concern: “In the interest of clearing the air, there has been here a remarkable and—to me personally—very joyful emphasis on the strength we have in centering our lives in the Gospel. There is a concern held by some that the representational principles lead not only to representation from many different people, but even from different ideologies that might not be in conformity with the Gospel. I did not notice in the report that that question had been addressed, but I expect it was discussed and would like to have some reassurance on whether that had been a problem or not.”

Vice President Magnus responded, “It is my understanding that that has not been a problem with representational principles in this church. In order to serve as a voting member of a synod assembly or to serve on a committee or task force of this church, one is a voting member of a congregation of this church, which is rooted in the Gospel.”

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] offered the following amendment:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the Church Council’s recommendation by substituting for paragraph three, which begins, “To affirm . . .,” and paragraph four, which begins, “To recognize . . .,” the following:

To acknowledge that many in this church have serious concerns that the current representational principles may compromise the clarity with which we proclaim the Gospel;

To repent anew of our human tendencies toward racism and sexism, and confess that the enactment and enforcement of these principles have not achieved the goal of changing hearts and minds on a large scale;

To uphold the teaching and preaching ministries of this church as more appropriate tools for changing hearts and minds than the current representational principles;

To continue to study whether the representational principles are appropriate for this church in this time, and whether and how to change this church’s governing documents in light of these considerations.

Pastor Weston spoke to the amendment, stating, “I am concerned that these representational principles compromise the clarity with which we preach the Gospel, and in conversations I have had with colleagues in various forums, I know for a fact that I am not alone. I did not see anywhere in the text of the recommendation before us that these concerns are even acknowledged.”

The Rev. Jerene Houser [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “I have served on the nominating committee of our synod for the last two years. The first year I was asked to find for our Synod Council a female person of color, which in our synod is perceived as not an easy task. It took me five telephone calls. If the system had not been set up

to seek and find, the perceived notion that this was difficult would have remained. The impetus to make the calls would not have been there. At this point in our development, I believe strongly that it is important that we not continue to ask 20 percent of the people to do 80 percent of the work simply because they are the folks that we know. We need to continue to look and see who else is there.”

Mr. Harold Pahlmeyer [Western North Dakota Synod] commented, “There are many small churches in our synod that, in order to get the male/female ratio, we have to send husband and wife teams. Sometimes, if one or the other cannot go and we have to have equal representation of men and women, we either have to spend more money or have co-habitation.”

The Rev. Nancy I. Amacher [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against the amendment. She said, “The key word here is that we need to be intentional, and we are intentionally living out the Gospel when we seek out people who are not like us and who do not always think the same way we do. The process that the Church Council and the various (units) have undertaken is a wonderful process and we need to continue that.”

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] commented, “There may be debate in our church as to whether or not representational principles compromise the Gospel or do not, but there seems to be some strong arguments that they do not, particularly in the material that we have been presented. I hope that we can take a look at those things and continue to affirm that indeed from our understanding of this church, gathered here now, we understand that representational principles do not compromise the Gospel. Also I think a lot was said in the argument for this amendment that representational principles do not succeed in changing the hearts and minds of people. That may or may not be true. They may be a step towards doing that. But, what representational principles do is ensure justice, and they ensure that the diversity of voices in our church are heard and appreciated. For that we still continue to need representational principles.”

The Rev. Jack E. Eggleston [Southeast Michigan Synod] spoke against the amendment. He said, “We have had a long history in this church of representational principles and in some PCBs [predecessor church bodies] clergy were all at synod assemblies. There is a deep history to have representational principles and I think they serve this church well.”

Mr. Warren Pertee [Delaware-Maryland Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “As a member of a committee to start a new Lutheran church and a member of a committee for the Lutheran church, we wrestled with this same question. I am in favor of the principles of inclusivity, but I understand that there are some places where to come up with the exact representation of perhaps male/female or members of color or some language other than English, it may present a problem. I think in fairness, in a situation where that is [the case], we should not have a hard line. . . . But, I think we should hold those principles up when we make a selection and where it is possible to do that. Five or six telephone calls does not seem like too much to do. I think that the principles of inclusivity were basically principles as a guide. As a church, we have improved over the years quite a bit, so we must be doing something right. But, we still have a way to go, and for that reason I say to you that there is room for an expression for all of us—no matter what color, no matter what language we speak—to take part and be a participant. When we make decisions let us keep that in mind, but let us not penalize any area or a congregation that is not able to hold up to the standards.”

The Rev. Natanael F. Lizarazo [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke in support of the council’s recommendation. He said, “In the past six years, I have been privileged to work in

cross-cultural and cross-denominational ministries, particularly with Native Americans, but also in relation to our network in Region 3. My experience has been that the voices of Native Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and African Americans tell us that we need this principle in the life of our church. As Lutherans, we know that we are both sinners and saints, but when we look objectively to the reality of the decision-making processes in the life of this church, we realize that our sinful side tends to have more weight. So, based on my own experience, I think that this principle of representation is not an optional principle in response to whomever was asking if we are violating the integrity of the Gospel. If we do not have anything measurable to be accountable for, then we are violating the integrity of the Gospel. The integrity of the Gospel and the essence of the Gospel is to be inclusive.”

The Rev. Frank E. Lay [Rocky Mountain Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment. He said, “I rejoice with the woman who made five phone calls and found someone. But, in a former synod, after an afternoon-long search, we proposed a woman to represent us who was not yet a member of a Lutheran church, because we could not find anybody else to fit the quota of a person having a primary language other than English. There are some geographical areas where some of these quotas are virtually impossible.”

Mr. Robert Forbess [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the council’s recommendation and commented, “I am extremely impressed with the thoroughness with which the various bodies of this church have debated this issue. I call your attention to the boxed area on page 747 (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2), which alludes to the matter we are dealing with here. I believe that it is fully appropriate for this body to accept the deliberations, which were not taken lightly by the various bodies, including the Conference of Bishops. I believe that the flexibility that is built into the original resolution as it is printed is adequate to cover the needs of this church.”

The Rev. Thomas F. Sinn [Florida-Bahamas Synod] called the question on this and all other related items before the assembly.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-760; No-130
Carried: To move the previous question on all matters before the house.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-169; No-762
Defeated: To amend the Church Council’s recommendation by substituting for paragraph three, which begins, “To affirm . . .,” and paragraph four, which begins, “To recognize . . .,” the following:

To acknowledge that many in this church have serious concerns that the current representational principles may compromise the clarity with which we proclaim the Gospel;

To repent anew of our human tendencies to ward racism and sexism, and confess that the enactment and enforcement of these principles have not achieved the goal of changing hearts and minds on a large scale;

To uphold the teaching and preaching ministries of this church as more appropriate tools for changing hearts and minds than the current representational principles;

To continue to study whether the representational principles are appropriate for this church in this time, and whether and how to change this church’s governing documents in light of these

considerations.

Assembly

Action Yes-864; No-77

CA95.4.14 To adopt the following resolution regarding the principles of representation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To receive with appreciation the theological study, analyses, historical review, and descriptions of experiences provided by the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, seminary faculties, Commission for Multicultural Ministries, Commission for Women, and others in regard to the representational principles applied to councils, boards, and committees throughout the synods and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To consider the discussion and materials an appropriate response to the resolution of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly that directed the Church Council “to establish a process for reflection” on the representational principles and recommendations to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly (CA93.7.46);

To affirm the judgment that the current representational principles do not compromise the Gospel but rather reflect an appropriate pattern for good order within the practice of this church’s ecclesiology and polity;

To recognize that the current representational principles are not an end in themselves but are a means appropriate to this time in this church’s history that have been chosen to allow for more complete and more inclusive participation by members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in this church’s decision-making processes;

To acknowledge the perceived need in various synods for greater flexibility in relation to the composition of voting membership from congregations in synod assemblies, with such appropriate flexibility being anticipated through constitutional and bylaw amendments;

To urge continued attention to community outreach and ministry by all congregations of this church so that each congregation may grow in awareness of being a mission center within its community as well as increase in commitment to the wider mission of this church throughout the respective synods and the churchwide ministries; and

To express gratitude for the salutary results that have emerged thus far through the practice of this church’s representational principles.

Amendments to ELCA

Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 853-854; continued from Minutes, page 13; continued on Minutes, pages 297-321, 623-630, 637, 644-645.

Bishop Chilstrom then referred assembly members to pages 853-854 in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, regarding constitutional and bylaw amendments related to the previous action of the Church Council.

Bishop Curtis H. Miller [Western Iowa Synod] asked whether proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws would become effective immediately. Bishop Chilstrom responded affirmatively, noting that they would apply to 1996 synodical assemblies.

Ms. Dorothy Jacobs [Southwestern Texas Synod] raised a question related to the 60 percent laypersons, 40 percent clergy requirement. She said, “I wonder about the word, ‘normally,’ and about the amendment indicating that congregations with less than 175 baptized members would be allowed to send [as voting members of the synod assembly], as a minimum, one voting member. In our synod, we have frequently had to check rather closely and use the

‘escape hatch’ that says that we might have a policy to have more voting members from some congregations. At our assembly last year, at which we elected a bishop, all the clergy under call apparently were at the assembly. If we were to apply this—we have at least 58 congregations with less than 175 baptized members—if one were to expect the worst, it could very possibly affect the representation of least 60 percent lay [persons]. I wonder if any serious consideration was given to that question by the Church Council in proposing this constitutional change.”

Secretary Almen responded, “The Church Council, in considering this proposal both in committee and in the council, did pay attention to that concern and saw that concern as being addressed in the remainder of †S7.21.c. The second recommendation before you that deals with the number 175 or fewer [baptized members] is followed by the words, ‘The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation.’ So, the number 175 would be seen as the minimum. It would be the responsibility of the Synod Council, if this second proposal were to be adopted, to establish a formula in the synod to ensure that the overall representational principles are fulfilled.”

The following actions were taken without further discussion (additions underlined; deletions struck through):

Assembly

Action

Yes-854; No-69

CA95.4.15 To adopt the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

10.41.01.c. A minimum . . . related to the synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female ~~except that the odd-numbered member, if any, may be either male or female.~~

†S7.21.c. A minimum . . . related to the synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation

normally shall be equally divided between male and female except that the odd-numbered member, if any, may be either male or female.

Assembly

Action

Yes-844; No-66

CA95.4.16 To adopt the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

10.41.01.c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to the synod, . . . [with the remainder as above].

†S7.21.c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, . . . [with the remainder as above].

Elections: Second Ballot for Vice President

Reference: Continued from Minutes, page 254; continued on Minutes, pages 295-296.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, who reported that 51 nominees withdrew and two nominees were declared ineligible to serve. He then read the names of the remaining nominees and the number of votes each had received:

Mr. Hardy asked that assembly members strike the names of the Rev. Gwendolyn King and the Rev. Maxine N. Washington, who as ordained ministers were ineligible to service. He reported that the results of the second ballot would be announced at the beginning of the next plenary session, Saturday afternoon, August 19, 1995.

Bishop Chilstrom then announced that the assembly would proceed to cast the second ballot for vice president. He noted that three-fourths of the votes cast on this ballot would be needed for election. Prior to the casting of the ballot, Bishop Chilstrom led assembly members in prayer .

Greetings: Lutheran Youth Organization

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. Mark R. Moller-Gunderson, executive director of the Division for Congregational Ministries, the Rev. Walter J. (“Mark”) Knutson III, director for youth ministries, and Mr. Vance Robbins, president of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO).

Due to technical difficulties, a video of the 1994 National Youth Gathering could not be viewed. Singing “Lead Us in the Dance,” representatives from the Youth Convocation enthusiastically danced their way to the dais.

Two members of the Youth Convocation led the assembly in prayer. Ms. Karris Golden,

vice president of the churchwide board of the Lutheran Youth Organization, and Ms. Erin Johnson, secretary of the board, then addressed the assembly.

Ms. Golden said, “We bring you greetings today on behalf of the churchwide board of the Lutheran Youth Organization, the 500,000 youth of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the courageous adults who work with us.” Ms. Johnson said, “This year, we celebrate 100 years of the Luther League and the Lutheran Youth Organization. This is a significant milestone for all of us as we, the youth of today, form lifelong memories. Many of you share memories with us from your Luther League days.”

They expressed sincere thanks to the “adults standing here with us on the stage. They represent men and women across the country who are brave enough to remind us that youth ministry is not just a stop along the road to bigger and better things, but a truly great place to hang your hat. One person who has been very supportive of our ministry is Bishop Chilstrom. He has demonstrated in the past that he will answer almost any question and do just about anything the youth ask him to do. And so, Bishop Chilstrom, if you would like to leave office in style, we have found a fountain down the road—just meet us there later.” [Ms. Golden was referring to Bishop Chilstrom’s willingness to run through a water fountain during the 1993 Churchwide Assembly after an invitation from the Youth Convocation to do so on behalf of charity.]

“At our triennial convention last summer, we debated issues like multiculturalism, teenage sexuality, environmentalism, and what to do with post-high school youth. . . . We have witnessed many and wonderful changes over the years as we try to find new ways to keep the lines of communication open. . . . Though youth ministry is a valuable and popular focus of the church, we want to make it clear that it is not separate from the church’s overall ministry. We are full, active, and capable leaders of the church of today,” Ms. Johnson stated. It was acknowledged that there were more than 50 assembly voting members under age 25, but that there were only seven voting members of this age at this church’s 1987 constituting convention.

Additional convocation participants greeting the assembly were Mr. Eric Ullestad [Northeastern Iowa Synod], who spoke about involvement in protection of the environment; Ms. Rebecca Rank [Oregon Synod], who spoke about the issues of human sexuality; Mr. Elliott Cintron and Ms. Lisa Canino [Caribbean Synod], who spoke to the assembly in both Spanish and English about issues of inclusivity; and Ms. Julie Silvius [New Jersey Synod], who spoke about violence against women and gender relations.

LYO President Robbins thanked ELCA youth ministries staff, “not only those in the churchwide offices, but those who are working in each of our synods to promote and advocate for youth issues and youth to help us express our perspectives in the Church as full members of Christ. I also want to thank each of you, ‘the older youth’ of this church (including assembly voting members) for your support.” He informed Bishop-Elect Anderson that he would receive an invitation to be present at the February 1996 meeting of the Council of Synod LYO Presidents, and expressed special appreciation to Bishop Chilstrom for his advocacy of Lutheran youth ministries. The youth convocation participants departed singing enthusiastically the song, “Halle-Hallelujah.”

Recommendations from the
Lutheran Youth Organization

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 807-808; continued on Minutes, pages

465-466.

Several resolutions, adopted by the 1994 convention of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO), subsequently were reviewed by the board of the Division for Congregational Ministries. That board transmitted them to the Church Council for consideration at its April 1995 meeting

Bishop Chilstrom referred assembly members to the resolutions and the recommendations for adoption by the board of the Division for Congregational Ministries and the Church Council as printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 807-808.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Whereas, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed by Congress in 1990, laying out requirements for provision of access for persons with disabilities; and

Whereas, businesses, schools, and transportation companies are required to provide access to persons with disabilities as specified in the ADA but churches are exempt under the Act; and

Whereas, persons with disabilities are an integral part of the ministry of the Lutheran Youth Organization and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and have valuable talents to offer this church; and

Whereas, people with disabilities are often blocked from full participation in the church by lack of access; and

Whereas, provision for access for disabled people is not an act of charity, but rather an act of justice; therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Youth Organization strongly encourage all congregations and organizations in the church to make buildings and events accessible to persons with disabilities, according to the provisions indicated in the ADA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Youth Organization strongly encourage all congregations and organizations to make themselves also attitudinally accessible to persons with disabilities, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Youth Organization request the board of the Division for Congregational Ministries to transmit to the Churchwide Assembly the request that the assembly take similar action.

The following recommendation of the Church Council was adopted without discussion in response to the foregoing resolution of the Lutheran Youth Organization:

Assembly

Action Yes-854; No-6

CA95.4.17 To affirm the action taken by the Lutheran Youth Organization regarding Americans with disabilities; and

To reaffirm the commitment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to making all aspects of its life and work accessible to persons with disabilities.

Post-High School Youth

Whereas, the youth of the church are more than the future of the church and are an integral part of the full communion of Christ; and

Whereas, the church has made strides in ministering with the youth of this church through organizations such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Lutheran Youth

Organization and other ELCA youth ministry organizations, Lutheran Campus Ministries, and the Lutheran Student Movement; and

Whereas, the Church is the body of believers (Romans 12:5) and all members of the body are important for the continued mission of Christ's Church on earth; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a low proportion of membership in post-high school age groups; and

Whereas, the post-high school age youth of this church have consistently shown great drive, ideals, and energy fostered from previous involvement in the ELCA Lutheran Youth Organization on all levels; and

Whereas, these young adults have things to say, ideas to implement, and energy to change and move forward; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America does not provide any intentional ministry for those youth who have recently graduated from high school and are not pursuing a college career; and

Whereas, this age (post-high school) is the time when these people are making life decisions, becoming integral parts of society, and longing for a place not only to be accepted, but to be empowered; and

Whereas, a majority of the nominees appearing in "The Delegate Handbook" for the twelve positions on the churchwide Lutheran Youth Organization board have graduated from high school before completing the first year of their term if elected; and

Whereas, several of the members of the current churchwide Lutheran Youth Organization board are post-high school age; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Youth Organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the intention of forming programs for and ministering to youth that have recently graduated from high school, regardless of their educational or occupational plans for the future; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Youth Organization ensures that efforts be made to welcome, reach out to, and encourage post-high school age youth of the congregational, synodical, and churchwide expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Church Council recommended the following response to the foregoing resolution of the Lutheran Youth Organization:

Moved;

Seconded: To affirm the action taken by the Lutheran Youth Organizations regarding post-high school youth;

To encourage all congregations to create programs for and minister to youth who have recently graduated from high school, regardless of their educational or occupational plans for the future; and

To encourage congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to welcome, reach out to, and encourage post-high school age youth.

Ms. Helen Sanders [South Carolina Synod] offered the following amendment to the recommendation of the Church Council in order to strengthen that recommendation:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the second paragraph by substituting for the words, “encourage all,” the following: “direct the Division for Congregational Ministries to assist.”

Ms. Sanders spoke to the motion, stating, “I definitely favor what has been proposed, but I do not believe it is strong enough. I think the congregations would appreciate guidance, as well as program materials, that would assist them in ministering to post-high school youth. Some of us can remember, when the Luther League of America was disbanded and the Lutheran Youth Organization or youth ministry program was instituted and initiated, that many congregations floundered, because they did not have the personnel or the skills or the expertise or the materials to pick up and carry on a strong program. It was a while before they were given assistance. We now see the strength of the Lutheran Youth Organization in which we rejoice. I think that this recommendation could be strengthened, if, at this point, help would be offered to the congregations.”

Ms. Stacy Walker [New Jersey Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment. She stated, “I am now classified as a post-high youth. I have just finished my freshman year in college. If you speak to a lot of the youth that are here among the voting members, [you will find that] unfortunately, many of us have not found a place at our colleges and universities that allows us to continue our ministry. I feel that it is very important that . . . the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provide help for our congregations to provide more support for us, so that we can feel more welcome when we come back from school for vacations.”

The Rev. Steven K. Thorson [Saint Paul Area Synod] spoke against the amendment, and commented, “I believe that instead of directing our churchwide organization to create more programs, the direction should be to seek out resources that already may be available in our Bible camps, in organizations such as Lutheran Youth Encounter, and to apply those to the ministry of our church. In so many ways, we spread ourselves thin in the development of program resources, not only in this area, but also in others. We need to be careful about directing our church. I know that there are resources out there in para-church organizations, as well as some cooperation that can be done with other denominations.”

Ms. Mary Hodgin [Delaware-Maryland Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment. She said, “As a parent of four children, I can do the best I can at home, but, if our congregations are the bulwark of our religious life, it is, I think, part of the duty of this church to give organization and direction to our congregations in their service to our children, and a greater understanding of our children as viable and responsible members in the working of this church.”

Ms. Martha Taylor [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the amendment, stating, “I have served on the board of Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Lutheran Campus Ministry in predecessor church bodies and have a great deal of background and empathy for the youth, particularly when they have graduated from high school. I would support the stronger language of this amendment.”

Ms. Carrie Opperman [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the amendment, observing “I agree with the man who was speaking earlier about using the resources we already have. However, being from a small church, I feel that our congregations need help from the larger church to get those resources available to us.”

Ms. Katharyn L. Wilson [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment commenting, “Although there are resources available to youth once they get back from college . .

. the problem is that most of them [resources] cost money, which is something youth do not have, coming out of college. We need things in the church that are not costly.”

Ms. Kathryn F. Kees [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment observing, “I understand that the directive of this was not that the national church would add programs, but that it would assist congregations in developing programs and ministry to youth of this age, which does not necessarily mean national programs. It is crucial, because a lot of youth do not necessarily return home to their home congregations. Families move away after students graduate; students move around a lot—they have summer internships—and so, what needs to happen is that there be resources of whatever form . . . whatever the Division for Congregational Ministries determines necessary. There need to be resources available to help congregations minister to these youth who are in a lot of transition. There are a lot of congregations that surround universities and colleges but are not connected with the youth and the campus ministries on those campuses. [Such connections] could also benefit those congregations.”

The Rev. John B. Mawhirter [Northwestern Ohio Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-841; No-38
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-796; No-101
Carried: To amend the second paragraph by substituting for the words, “encourage all,” the following: “direct the Division for Congregational Ministries to assist.”

Mr. Matthew Musteric [Northwestern Ohio Synod] spoke in favor of the council’s recommendation as amended. He said, “The resolution you have before you is just that—a resolution on a piece of paper. It gives a few ideas and a few directives. What I am asking each one of you to do now and when you go back home is to give that resolution some life. I do not know whether I am a ‘youth-adult’ or an ‘adult-youth’ right now. I am not sure what to call my home. I spend eight months out of the year at school, two and a half months at a summer camp, and about a month and three-quarters where I grew up. I am just asking each one of you that when you see someone my age in your congregation, whether there for a week, or two weeks, or a year, we need to feel welcome not only for people like me, who have chosen college, but for those who have not.”

The Rev. Albert R. Ahlstrom [Metropolitan New York Synod] requested that the work of Lutheran Student Movement in the U.S.A. (LSM-USA) be recognized. He commented, “. . . the contribution we have made in supporting the Lutheran student movement and making sure that it is lively across the country [ought to be recognized]. I simply want to put on the record the fact that we already do some of this ministry, while recognizing the fact that there are many gaps and there are those persons, who are not students, who need this ministry and they have a ministry of their own to express.”

Assembly
Action Yes-903; No-15
CA95.4.18 To affirm the action taken by the Lutheran Youth Organizations regarding

post-high school youth;

To direct the Division for Congregational Ministries to assist congregations to create programs for and minister to youth who have recently graduated from high school, regardless of their educational or occupational plans for the future; and

To encourage congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to welcome, reach out to, and encourage post-high school age youth.

National Youth Gathering Video

The Rev. Peter A. Pettit (Pacifica Synod) requested that the video of the National Youth Gathering be shown when audio difficulties were resolved. The chair concurred.

Mission Prayers

Bishop Chilstrom again invited voting members from ten synods to offer words of encouragement and greetings, assisting assembly members to focus on the heart of this church's mission. Mr. Carl Harris Morgan, Alzona Lutheran Church [Grand Canyon Synod], offered the following petitions in Pidgin, a trade language spoken in parts of Cameroon and Nigeria, West Africa:

God, we ask you to make us strong and lead us for work in big, big places. We go help man and woman that no get chop for belly, no get place for sleep, no get their own way for spirit, and get other kind need. We want help, God, for no people that no be like our own self. For we want make this a church that be for all your people. We all say amen. Amen.

Mr. Ray Vallejo, St. Luke Lutheran Church, Spokane, Washington [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod], prayed:

We give you thanks and praise for the continuing growth in the North-west. We pray and ask for your guidance as we prepare to proclaim your Gospel to all of those who are thirsty and are hungry for your guidance and your nourishment. Let us be mindful that we need to minister, not only to our immediate neighbor, but to all of our brothers and sisters throughout the globe. Strengthen us in our vision for outreach and compassion for all. Be with us during this time of adjustment as we prepare to serve all who come into our midst. We would like to extend an invitation to all to Spokane next summer as we prepare for a regional festival and Global Mission Event. This promises to be a time of learning and growth for all who attend. In your Son's precious name, we pray. Amen.

Ms. Luana Langford, St. Mark Lutheran Church [Northwest Washington Synod], offered the following prayer:

Gracious heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to come into your presence to lift up your name, to magnify your name, and to praise you. Oh gracious Father, we thank you that we can praise you in this place. Oh gracious Father, we thank you that we have elected a new bishop. Oh Father, we ask that you will not give him the spirit of fear but of power and of a sound mind, so that he can go forth doing your Word and working for the good of all your people. Oh Lord, we come forth knowing that we are coming in a time where we need to be about your business. We need to know that we are truly grounded in your Word, to do your Word, to walk in your Word, to walk through your Spirit, by your Spirit. Lord, we need to know that we are anointed children, peculiar people. Help us to remember. Oh Lord, I do thank you, I

do praise you. We, as your people, your holy people, Lord, repent, give thanks, give praise, give honor to you and acknowledge you as being our Lord, our Savior, our God, our Victor. And to know, Lord, that we can walk in your victory because you have given us this victory.

Oh Lord, I pray that you will help us to make Christ truly known and these will not be just platitudes that we pleasantly say. We get pleasure in saying these things. Oh Lord, let this not be pleasure, but let this be true so that we can go forth in love and in mercy, loving all humanity and especially ourselves and one another. Let us go forth from this place. Oh, heavenly Father, determined, making up in our minds, that we will walk in the truth of the Spirit, by your Spirit. And, Lord, if there is anything that we have not done, let us repent of it right now in this place, knowing that we have to be about your business, doing your business with a truthfulness, with a faithfulness. Oh, Father, I thank you. Oh Father, I praise you and I ask that all your children will thank you and praise you and examine themselves righteously and in holiness. Thank you, Jesus, that you have heard us in your name. Amen.

Mr. Yoshio C. Haraguchi [Saint Paul Area Synod] prayed:

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers. Hear our prayers to do your will. Hear the prayers of those oppressed and discriminated against. Hear the prayers of those sick and grieving. Hear our prayers as we struggle with parliamentary confusion. And last of all, I ask you to hear the prayers of those that we have chosen. Help us to love as openly and totally as you love us. Help us to accept all people as you made them, just as you accept all of us as we are. Amen.

Ms. Judy Jernberg [Oregon Synod] offered the following petitions:

Oh Lord, hear our prayer, as we remember the 123 congregations of the Oregon Synod. We especially bring before you the eleven congregations in the Eugene-Springfield area, specifically Bethesda Lutheran Church. God of majesty and power, uphold these saints as they move forward in mission and ministry to serve the people of their communities. We bring before you ministries like early childhood, the Bethel Family Learning Center, the Bethel Clothes Closet, the Bethesda Counseling Services, and the parish nurse programs. May your good news of new life and peace enter the hearts of people of all congregations in our communities. Give our pastors a special measure of your grace. We also bring before you our specific missionaries, Al and Cheryl Jenson in Brazil, Keith and Laura Jenson in China, Dave and Katheryn Gross and their children in Mongolia, Jan Chrisgaard in Pakistan. Thank you for your faithfulness to us and give us the strength to be faithful to you. In the name of our risen Christ and Savior. Amen.

Ms. Betty Anderson, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, San Bernardino, Calif. [Pacifica Synod], prayed:

Dear Sovereign Lord, bless us as we prepare to serve you. Help us to be generous with our time, our talent, and our possessions that we can and will spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people, both local and foreign. We ask a special prayer for our local Mission Partners, Sierra Lutheran, Lord of Life Lutheran, and the Central City Lutheran Mission of San Bernardino. This we ask in your name. Amen.

Mr. Salvador Marez [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] offered the following prayer:

Our heavenly Father, we give you thanks for all the guidance and wisdom you have given this assembly. We ask you to please continue to give this guidance for the remainder of our days.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Mr. James F. Droz, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Everett, Pennsylvania [Allegheny Synod], offered the following greetings and petitions:

First I would like to offer greetings to you, Bishop Chilstrom, and also to Bishop-Elect Anderson, to all brothers and sisters in Christ's name from Zion Lutheran Church in Everett, Pennsylvania. And also from the members here present from the Allegheny Synod. My prayer is for my church, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Everett. I pray that my church may continue to be a mission and also be a church of compassion—that it be a church of vision to carry us well into the next century and beyond. We celebrated our 150th anniversary three years ago. I pray that it be a church that gives continued guidance, leadership, and direction to our bishops, pastors, lay leaders, and those who hold office or do the work of the church. I also pray for healing within my church as we are a church of transition.

My prayer is also for each person here in assembly, that as each of us returns to our home congregation that we be a vessel of this church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I pray also for the safe return of each person to their home congregation so that each of us may be a shining light and go and be good stewards of faith in their church, so that we may all spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and truly make Christ known to all. Amen.

Ms. Laura C. Bourdo [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] offered the following prayer, stating, "Greetings from the sunny, sweaty saints of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod."

Oh, God of fire and God of peace, we at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas, pray that we might be unable to resist the call of your Holy Spirit to approach every moment of every day as a mission moment. We pray that after 40 years of serving a changing urban community, we may recommit ourselves to the body of Christ, energized and empowered through ministries of renewal, focus, and development, such as Discovery Weekend, Via de Cristo, and Stephen Ministry. In these and other ways, we pray that you will make us visionaries. Help us to expect your grace to be sufficient. Affirm through us the value of diversity within unity in Christ, especially as we serve the needs of our immediate community. Bless our mission work in extensive Hispanic ministry and Spanish worship and with Lutheran Helping Hands which serves the physical needs of families burdened with cancer. And with our Mission Partner congregation, Grace Lutheran Church, a reconciled in Christ congregation serving the needs of the gay and lesbian community in downtown Houston. Affirm our mission also in your global community as we continue our support of Missionary Steenberg and his family in Japan and as we participate with our companion synod in Peru and with the growing Lutheran community in freed Russia. We pray these things in the name of your Son, Jesus, the Christ who taught us above all to love one another as we love ourselves. Amen.

Mr. Tim Larson, Fox Point Lutheran Church, Fox Point, Wisconsin [Greater Milwaukee Synod], prayed:

Lord God, bless the pastoral and lay leadership in the Greater Milwaukee Synod and the membership of the Fox Point Lutheran Church as they work in partnership in the Greater Milwaukee area and the worldwide community to promote the Gospel of peace and justice to which we are committed in Christ Jesus. As you have blessed us so graciously, Oh, Lord, allow us to be a people of blessing for others. Amen.

Bishop Chilstrom thanked the assembly members who participated in the Mission Moments.

Elections: First Ballot for

Church Council, Boards, and Committees

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 955-1025; continued on Minutes, pages 297, 622-623.

Bishop Chilstrom explained the process for voting to fill vacancies on the ELCA Church Council and on churchwide boards and committees. He drew attention to the Report of the Nominating Committee, which listed the names of the nominees on the various election tickets and provided biographical information about the nominees, as printed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 955-1025. He also noted the revised slates of nominees, which included the names of persons nominated from the floor, and the biographical information on such nominees, both of which had been distributed to voting members previously.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to provide further explanation about the election materials. Secretary Almen advised, "The complete listing of the tickets includes the names submitted by the Nominating Committee and also those persons nominated from the floor. The revised listing is contained in the supplementary pages that were distributed to you this morning" [Saturday, August 19].

An unidentified voting member stated that a number of voting members had not received the supplementary materials. Secretary Almen reported that the printer had delivered approximately two hundred fewer copies than ordered. Additional copies were to have been delivered and distributed during the course of the morning, he said.

The Rev. Paul M. Cornell [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] suggested that, given those circumstances, the deadline for balloting should be extended from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. The chair concurred. No objection was voiced by assembly members.

The Rev. Gene R. Stuckey Sr. [Lower Susquehanna Synod] drew attention to the listing of the Rev. H. George Anderson as a nominee for a position on the Church Council. Pastor Stuckey asked whether Bishop-Elect Anderson was eligible for election to that position. Secretary Almen responded, "He would be eligible for election in that position only if he resigned the office to which he has already been elected." Mr. James Latham [Northeastern Iowa Synod] commented on the bright lighting of the assembly hall. Secretary Almen continued, stating, "Now that you have received the slate contained in the supplementary pages, please turn to page 963a, under Church Council positions, the slate of nominees, category 1.A. Because of the decision of the assembly made previously this morning, you would need to remove the name of the Rev. H. George Anderson from that ticket."

Greetings from the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. Telmor G. Sartison, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Bishop Sartison said, "It is a pleasure to be here with you. . . . Bishop Chilstrom, Bishop-Elect Anderson, synod bishops and staff . . . , voting members of this assembly, guests, and friends.

"I greet you on behalf of your sisters and brothers, who belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, who are members of the body of Christ with you and share in that ministry and mission that we have in Canada." He expressed appreciation for the ecumenical

involvement, which is helping that church body to understand faith communities of different names, for the involvement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the Lutheran World Federation, and for involvement in the social and political life of the United States. Although some issues may remain divisive within our churches, we are called to be prayerful and patient as such issues are addressed, he said.

Bishop Sartison thanked Bishop Chilstrom “on behalf of all of us in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada for your support, your friendship, and your partnership.” To Bishop-Elect Anderson, he said, “On behalf of myself and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, I congratulate you. May God bless you with grace and peace as you shift into a far higher gear.”

Bishop Sartison concluded, “Our roots in the church in Canada lie, in a large part, in this church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and its predecessor bodies. We think we know you from a family perspective. We look forward to continued partnership in the Gospel on this continent and around the world, in the name of Jesus.”

Introduction of Board Chairs and Executive Directors

Before introducing the board chairs and executive directors of ELCA churchwide divisions, Bishop Chilstrom commented, “What do church leaders do when they think of the churchwide organization—those of us who are called and set apart to serve you. I like to think of it as a two-way street. We are there in Chicago and deployed across the United States first of all to serve you. That is one avenue. To help enhance your ministry in congregations, and from the churchwide organization to also enhance the ministries of our synods is another. Another avenue is to be the way by which you can reach out to people in this country and around the world. That is the partnership we have together, that is the purpose of our churchwide organization. To make this possible, God calls people, recognized by us as leaders.”

Bishop Chilstrom then named and acknowledged the board chairs and respective divisional executive directors, stating, “We want to thank today these board chairs for their very deep dedication and all the effort they put in on a volunteer basis for your sake and for the sake of the Gospel.”

Division for Congregational Ministries

Mr. Jim Myers (Kailua, Hawaii), board chair
The Rev. Mark R. Moller-Gunderson and
Ms. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive directors

Division for Ministry

Ms. Marybeth A. Peterson (Omaha, Nebr.), board chair
The Rev. Joseph M. Wagner, executive director

Division for Outreach

The Rev. John F. Nelson (Allendale, N.J.), board chair
The Rev. Malcolm L. Minnick Jr., executive director

Division for Higher Education and Schools

The Rev. Stephen P. Bouman (New York, N.Y.), board chair
The Rev. W. Robert Sorensen, executive director

Division for Church in Society

Ms. Ingrid Christiansen (Chicago, Ill.), board chair
The Rev. Charles S. Miller Jr., executive director

Division for Global Mission

The Rev. Nancy Maeker (St. Paul, Minn.), board chair

The Rev. Mark W. Thomsen, executive director

Bishop Chilstrom acknowledged two executive directors who would retire prior to the next Churchwide Assembly: the Rev. Malcolm L. Minnick Jr. (Division for Outreach) and the Rev. Mark W. Thomsen (Division for Global Mission). He then invited all persons present who serve on churchwide boards and committees, and staff serving in the churchwide office or deployed throughout this church and the world, to stand. Assembly members recognized them with applause.

Appreciation to Nominees for the Office of Bishop

Ms. Judy Gerner (Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod) moved public affirmation of and an expression of gratitude for all who had offered themselves for consideration of election to the office of bishop.

Moved;

Seconded: To express gratitude to the persons nominated to the office of bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for their willingness to serve in faithfulness to the Gospel and to the mission of this church.

Speaking to the motion, Ms. Gerner said, "As we close this plenary session, which brings great significance to our church, I move public affirmation, gratitude, and celebration for all those individuals who freed themselves to the work and call of the Holy Spirit by allowing their lives to be offered in nomination for the bishop of this church, especially for Bishop [April C. Ullring] Larson and Bishop [Richard J.] Foss, for their gifts of ministry, vulnerability, nurture, creativity, and most especially for their unwavering passion for each of us, the Church at large, and the transforming powers of the Holy Spirit."

Assembly

Action Voice Vote

CA95.4.19 To express gratitude to the persons nominated to the office of bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for their willingness to serve in faithfulness to the Gospel and to the mission of this church.

Greetings from the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone

Bishop Mark B. Herbener [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod] read greetings from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone (West Africa), also gathered in assembly at this time.

Dear Bishop Herbener,

Greetings from war-wearied Sierra Leone in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Please convey to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly meeting in Minneapolis for

and on behalf of sisters and brothers in Christ of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone, kind regards and prayerful wishes for fruitful deliberations and decisions informed and guided by the Holy Spirit.

We ask for continued prayers for peace in our country and for a church steadfast in service with the people under the Word of God.

Sincerely,

Tom J. Barnett, coordinating secretary

Rev. Dr. Jeremiah J. Sinnah-Yovonie, chair, National Church Council

Bishop Herbener explained that Sierra Leone is a poverty stricken, war-torn country, located next to Liberia.

Announcements

Secretary Lowell G. Almen announced several deadlines for submission of resolutions and amendments, and events related to this assembly. He also announced that prayers of remembrance and thanksgiving would be offered during Midday Worship for the Rev. Alfred M. Christenson and the Rev. Traci Maul of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, who had died the previous day.

Recess

The Rev. Darrel W. Saathoff [Western North Dakota Synod] led Midday Worship. Mr. Jack Johnson [Southwestern Washington Synod] read the lesson, Acts 5: 17-42. The Rev. Margarita Martinez [Caribbean Synod] presented the Bible Study.

The assembly recessed at 12:30 p.m.

Plenary Session Seven
Saturday, August 19, 1995
2:30 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called Plenary Session Seven to order at 2:31 p.m. Central Daylight Time. He welcomed visitors viewing the Churchwide Assembly via cable television.

Presentation of Servus Dei Medals

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Kathy J. Magnus, vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to make a special presentation. Ms. Magnus invited Ms. Christine H. Grumm and Mr. George E. Aker to join her on the dais.

Vice President Magnus said, “The position of vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is reserved for service by a lay member of this church. . . . Ms. Christine H. Grumm was the first person to hold the office of vice president. She . . . served until November of 1991. In recognition of her service as vice president of this church, the Church Council adopted the following citation.”

In Honor: Christine Helen Grumm

The position of vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, reserved for service by a lay member of this church, was established on April 30, 1987, when the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was officially constituted. Elected on May 3, 1987, as the first person to hold the office of vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was Christine Helen Grumm, D.Litt. She undertook her new duties with untiring energy and forthrightness of purpose.

The primary responsibility of the vice president of this church is to chair the meetings of the Church Council and the council’s Executive Committee. In fulfilling her duties, however, Dr. Grumm served ably as an outstanding and articulate representative of this church in a wide variety of ways.

In recognition of her service as vice president of this church, the Church Council adopted the following citation:

With thoughtful leading, forthright courage, diligent attention to detail, and a willingness to devote countless hours, days, and weeks to the responsibilities of office, Christine Helen Grumm demonstrated commitment to the faith of this church and competence in carrying out her duties as vice president.

She served with genuine excellence and clarity of purpose to lead in constructive and productive ways the governance and decision-making activities of the Church Council. She guided members of the council in the fulfillment of their responsibilities as the board of directors of the churchwide organization. Further, she summoned those who served on the council always to keep in clear focus the commitments of this church and their obligations to all the members of this church.

She displayed a rigorous and fully informed understanding of the issues that came before the council. She presided with fairness and effective care for each member of the council. She reflected untiring devotion to her tasks and fulfilled her responsibilities with generosity.

By remembering her work among us, we give thanks for her commitment to the faith that we believe, teach, and confess;

By expressing our gratitude for her endeavors, we affirm her diligence and courageous spirit; and

By conveying our appreciation, we underscore sincere admiration for the contributions that she made to the life of this whole church by reason of her service as its first vice president.

She stepped from her duties in our midst into the global arena to serve a term as the deputy general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation—a position of further service to the whole church for which we now convey to her our gratitude.

Upon action of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Servus Dei Medal is conferred upon Dr. Christine Helen Grumm, vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1987-1991.

In the absence of Mr. Aker, Vice President Magnus read the commendation recognizing him as the first treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She noted that George E. Aker was elected to office in June 1987.

In Honor: George Edwin Aker

The Office for Finance of the churchwide organization was established on April 30, 1987, when the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was officially constituted. Subsequently, the office was renamed the Office of the Treasurer by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly.

Elected as the first treasurer of this church in June 1987 was George Edwin Aker, who served in that capacity until completion of his term in 1991. In recognition of his service as treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Church Council adopted the following citation:

The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in order to be effective in their crucial and varied ministries, must find ways of tending to the practical matters of resource allocation and finance, bricks and mortar, fiscal planning and administration.

Individuals summoned to exercise custody of the fiscal and physical resources of this church are expected to fulfill their responsibilities with both commitment to the faith and competence in the work of this church's fiscal operations.

Throughout his service as the first treasurer of this church, George Edwin Aker carried out his duties with a willing and graceful spirit. He undertook with courage the creation of a new fiscal office, engaged in managing the merging of the finance and business operations of the three predecessor church bodies, and displayed informed witness to the faith of Christ's Church.

By remembering his work among us, we give thanks for his commitment to the faith that we believe, teach, and confess;

By expressing our gratitude for his endeavors, we affirm his diligence and spirit of good cheer; and

By conveying our appreciation, we underscore sincere admiration for the contributions that he made to the life of this whole church by reason of his service as its first treasurer.

Upon action of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Servus Dei Medal is conferred upon Mr. George Edwin Aker, treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1987-1991.

Bishop Chilstrom then commented, "I add my thanks, as an officer who worked with these persons, to the thanks from the whole church for their deep dedication and service."

Elections: Report of
Second Ballot for Vice President

Reference: Continued from Minutes, pages 254, 258-260, 279.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, to report the results of the second ballot for vice president. Because the report was distributed to the assembly in printed form and at the request of the chair with no objection from the assembly, Mr. Hardy read only the names of those persons receiving ten or more votes.

Number of ballots cast		986
Number of illegal ballots cast		3
Number of legal (valid) ballots cast	983	
Number of votes necessary for election:	738	

Assembly

Action

CA95.4.20 To elect Kathy J. Magnus (Denver, Colorado) as vice president of this church.

Bishop Chilstrom declared Ms. Kathy J. Magnus reelected vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, stating, "As you can hear there is an election and it is my great pleasure to announce formally that our vice president, reelected, is Kathy J. Magnus. . . . As one who is leaving office, obviously you know the church is going to go on, but you also long for continuity. To see that you have affirmed the marvelous leadership that Kathy has given to the Church Council and beyond it in so many places in this church, going the second, third, and tenth mile, in addition to the work she does as an assistant to the bishop in the Rocky Mountain Synod. Again, thank you so much, Kathy." He then invited Ms. Magnus to address the assembly.

Vice President Magnus responded, "Thank you for the incredible opportunity to serve a second term as your vice president. I really do look forward to walking boldly forward with you, carrying the Gospel for this world. As the changes swirl around us as the 21st century dawns, I am clear that the Gospel is for this time and for this place. I think that we must remember to honor the past as we boldly move forward with extravagant hope for the future.

"Thank you for the last four years. It has been a marvelous experience as I have traveled across the synods of this church and met so many of you. You have enriched my life enormously. Thank you especially to 'Bishop Herb' for your support and for that of his staff, which was with me every step of the journey, particularly Lita [Lita Brusick Johnson, executive assistant to the bishop] and Bob [the Rev. Robert L. Bacher, executive for administration]; to Secretary Lowell [G.] Almen and his staff, who were also with me; and to my own bishop, Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg [Rocky Mountain Synod], for giving me the space to be the person that I need and want to be in this church right now and allowing that to happen on his staff. Last,

but certainly not least, thank you to Dick [the Rev. Richard A. Magnus (spouse)] and Erica, Cory, and Eric [daughter, son, and son-in-law] who are my support and the light of my life. I love this church deeply, I hold you in my heart, and I hold you in my prayers. I ask that you pray for me during these next years.”

Elections: First Ballot for Secretary

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, page 487; Volume 2, page 588; continued on Minutes, pages 340-341.

Bishop Chilstrom described the importance of the office of secretary of this church and noted that the office is open for nomination and election to either a lay person or an ordained person. He referred voting members to 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, page 487, for a description of the office and the duties of the secretary of the church as enumerated in section 13.40. of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions. He commented, “The secretary is also a member of the Administrative Team (described in Continuing Resolution 15.11.A91.), one to whom many look for counsel and advice as the church shapes its life between assemblies. The secretary also, like the vice president, represents the bishop in various settings from ecumenical to local.”

Bishop Chilstrom noted that term of office for the secretary was at that time four years, but that “constitutional amendments before the assembly later in the agenda, if approved, [would] lengthen this term to six years . He then described the process for election of the secretary as detailed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 588. Bishop Chilstrom offered prayer prior to the casting of the ballot. Subsequently, he declared the balloting to be closed.

The Rev. Glenn M. Monson [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] reminded voting members that the deadline for submission of ballots for elections to the Church Council, and churchwide unit boards and committees (Common Ballot Number One) would be at 3:00 p.m. this day, Saturday, August 19.

Amendments to ELCA

Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 852-853; 851-872a; continued from Minutes, pages 13, 277-279; continued on Minutes, pages 623-630, 637, 644-645.

Bishop Chilstrom drew attention to proposed amendments to the ELCA Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, as recommended by the Church Council. He noted that the proposals in Part One, related to the scheduling of churchwide assemblies, would be considered on Monday morning, August 21.

Elections: First Ballot for

Church Council, Boards, and Committees

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 955-1025; continued from Minutes, page 289; continued on Minutes, pages 565-567, 622-613.

Mr. Dart Westphal [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to extend the deadline for submitting ballots for filling vacancies on the Church Council, and churchwide boards and committees to 3:15 p.m.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-511, No-361

Defeated: To extend the deadline for receiving ballots for the Church Council and other churchwide boards and committees to 3:15 p.m.

Amendments to ELCA
Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions
Part Three—Implementing Amendments from
The Study of Ministry

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 365-366, 397-398, and 399-400;
Volume 2, pages 854-863; continued from Minutes, pages 13, 277-279; continued on Minutes,
pages 623-630, 637, 644-645.

The 1993 Churchwide Assembly adopted numerous recommendations that emerged from the Study of Ministry. Some matters were referred for development of implementing amendments.

Further, the matter of entry rite for diaconal ministers was referred for additional study. At the same time, the entry rite for deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was reviewed. Differing recommendations on the entry rite emerged from the Conference of Bishops and the Division for Ministry. For detail on this, see the minutes of the Church Council in the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 365-366, 397-398, and 399-400.

Bishop Chilstrom requested Secretary Almen to introduce the recommendation of the Church Council. Secretary Almen reported that notice had been served, in keeping with the deadline, to remove the following from en bloc consideration in Part Three:

- Section 10.31.a.9) 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 859;
- Section †S6.03.a.4) 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 860; and
- Section †S8.12.d. 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 860.

Bishop Chilstrom noted that a two-thirds vote would be required on the balance of the amendments in Part Three to be voted upon en bloc. As he called for ballots to be cast, Mr. Frank Welker [Upstate New York Synod] sought to move an amendment to a portion of the amendments now before the assembly prior to voting. Bishop Chilstrom ruled the motion to be out of order, noting that items marked for en bloc disposition must be removed from en bloc consideration by the announced deadline in order to be amended. He again called for ballots to be cast.

Assembly

Action

Yes-811; No-91

CA95.4.21 To adopt the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, exclusive or specific amendments removed from *en bloc* action for later consideration:

To delete "or appoint" in churchwide constitutional provision 7.11., with the remainder of the provision remaining unchanged, because only Letters of Call are issued to those on the rosters of this church, rather than Letters of Appointment as was the case for rostered laypersons between 1989 and 1993:

7.11. . . . within this context of ministry that this church calls ~~or appoints~~ some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church.

To amend the final section of existing bylaws 7.31.16. and 7.52.22. regarding "on leave" status for study:

7.31.16. By annual ~~recommendation of the Division for Ministry and~~ action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the Division for Ministry, a pastor as an ordained minister engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the ordained ministry, may be retained on the roster [with the remainder of the bylaw unchanged].

7.52.22. By annual ~~recommendation of the Division for Ministry and~~ action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the Division for Ministry, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister engaged in graduate study appropriate for service in this church may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers [with the remainder of the bylaw unchanged].

To delete from churchwide bylaw 7.51.02., in accord with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, the reference to deaconesses of the Lutheran Church in America, because such deaconesses were "grandparented" into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America under bylaw 7.51.04. adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly:

7.51.02. Under constitutional provision 7.51., those persons previously rostered as . . . ~~deaconesses (the Lutheran Church in America)~~, . . . [with the remainder of the bylaw unchanged].

To correct references in churchwide bylaw 7.51.03. to conform with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly regarding associates in ministry:

7.51.03. Associates in Ministry. The lay roster of associates in ministry, in addition to those listed in bylaw 7.51.02., shall be composed of:

- a. [Unchanged]; and
- b. those who are ~~certified~~ approved, subsequent to September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry in this church according to the standards, criteria, and requirements of this church, as defined herein and in policies and procedures developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, a newly ~~certified~~ approved candidate shall be commissioned, according to the proper service orders of this church. . . [with the remainder of the bylaw remaining unchanged].

To clarify in churchwide bylaw 7.51.04. references to deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accord with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly:

- 7.51.04.** Deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This church shall maintain a lay roster of the ~~members of the Deaconess Community~~ deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of those [set apart] [~~consecrated~~]--according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church) for such service within the life of this church.
- a. A newly approved candidate for this roster shall be [set apart] [~~consecrated~~], according to the proper service orders of this church, as a ~~member of the Deaconess Community~~ deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - b. As used herein, references to deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America mean members on the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America listed on this church's official rosters of laypersons as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c.

 Unless otherwise specified, all AH constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, except for the service order of [setting apart] [~~consecration~~] for the Deaconess Community as a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall apply to those on the lay roster of this church as ~~members of the Deaconess Community~~ deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

To delete from churchwide bylaw 7.51.05. reference to "certification" because such a word no longer applies to the candidacy process:

- 7.51.05.** Diaconal Ministers. This church shall establish . . .
- a. Upon ~~certification~~ and approval as a candidate. . . [*with the remainder of the bylaw remaining unchanged*].

To add in the following churchwide constitutional provision and bylaws specific references to deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and diaconal ministers in appropriate places and to correct references to the candidacy and entry-rite processes:

- 7.52.** The standards of acceptance and continuance as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall be included in the bylaws.
- 7.52.10.** Standards for ~~Associates in Ministry~~ the Official Rosters of Laypersons.
- 7.52.11.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers shall be governed by the following:
- a. Basic Standards. Persons ~~certified~~ approved and continued as associates in

ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following:

- 1) commitment to Christ;
- 2) acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;
- 3) willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- 4) academic and practical qualifications for the position;
- 5) life consistent with the Gospel and personal qualifications including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- 6) receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- 7) membership in a congregation of this church.

b. Preparation and Approval of an Associate in Ministry. ~~Except as provided below, a A candidate for certification approval and commissioning as an associate in ministry of this church shall have:~~

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) ~~been endorsed by and~~ under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the committee ~~for certification;~~
- 3) completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which ~~certified~~ approved according to criteria and procedures established by the Division for Ministry; ~~and~~
- 4) been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to procedures established by the Division for Ministry after consultation with the seminaries and colleges of this church which offer programs designed to prepare persons for ~~certification~~ rostered service as associates in ministry; ~~and~~
- 5) been commissioned, according to the rite of this church, as an associate in ministry.

c. Preparation and Approval of a Deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A candidate for approval and [setting apart] [consecration] as a deaconess of this church shall have:

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for call and [setting apart] [consecration];
- 3) completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which approved according to criteria and procedures established by

the Division for Ministry;

- 4) been examined and approved by the synodical candidacy committee according to procedures established by the Division for Ministry after consultation with the Deaconess Community of the ELCA and the seminaries and colleges of this church that offer programs designed to prepare persons for rostered service as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- 5) completed the required formation component, as defined by the Division for Ministry, in the preparation program for service as a deaconess of this church;
- 6) been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures recommended by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
- 7) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call; and
- 8) been [set apart] [consecrated], according to the rite of this church, as a deaconess.

d. Preparation and Approval of a Diaconal Minister. A candidate for approval and [commissioning] [consecration] as a diaconal minister of this church shall have:

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for [commissioning] [consecration];
- 3) demonstrated competence in at least one area of specialization or expertise according to guidelines established by the Division for Ministry;
- 4) completed a first theological degree from an accredited theological school in North America;
- 5) completed approved work in Lutheran studies as defined by the Division for Ministry;
- 6) completed the required formation component in the preparation program for Lutheran diaconal ministry as defined by the Division for Ministry;
- 7) completed an approved internship or practical preparation as defined by the Division for Ministry;
- 8) been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures established by the Division for Ministry for such candidacy;
- 9) been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures

recommended by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;

10) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call; and

11) been [commissioned] [consecrated], according to the rite of this church, as a diaconal minister.

- 7.52.12.** Certification Approval under Other Circumstances. A candidate may, for reasons of age or prior experience, be granted certification approval under criteria and procedures which permit certain equivalencies as defined by the Division for Ministry.
- 7.52.13.** Reinstatement. Persons seeking reinstatement as associates in ministry, whether having previously served in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be endorsed
- a. Any person removed . . . must apply for acceptance to a roster of this church under the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures that apply to the official rosters of associates in ministry laypersons, as identified in 7.51.03.b. This same requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church. . . [*with the remainder of the bylaw unchanged*].
- 7.52.14.** Maintenance of Lay Rosters. Each synod shall maintain a lay roster or rosters containing the names of those related to the synod as members of its congregations who have been approved as associates in ministry, ~~members of the Deaconess Community~~ deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers—according to the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church—for inclusion on such a roster or rosters.
- 7.52.15.** The secretary of this church shall maintain a lay roster or rosters of associates in ministry, ~~members of the Deaconess Community~~ deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers on which shall be listed the names of those who qualify according to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.
- 7.52.20.** Service as ~~Associates in Ministry~~ Rostered Laypersons
- 7.52.21.** Service under Call. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, synod, or the churchwide organization.
- a. Calls may be extended either for indefinite or stated periods of time by the appropriate calling body for service in a congregation, synod or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another

setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.52.A95.

b. Regular, valid calls in this church shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

c. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.

To add to churchwide bylaws 7.52.22., 7.52.23., 7.52.24., and 7.52.25. in all references to "associates in ministry" the words, "deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church." or their appropriate equivalent.

To adopt a new bylaw regarding non-stipendiary service for lay rostered ministries:

7.52.26. Non-Stipendiary Service under Call. When necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

To amend churchwide continuing resolution 7.52.A93. as 7.52.A95. to include intended application to deaconesses and diaconal ministers:

7.52.A935. Sources of Calls for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers
a. The principles governing sources of calls for ordained ministers shall, as appropriate, also govern sources of letters of call for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

b. Table of Sources of Call for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers

12.0	Other	
12.1	Non-stipendiary	Synod Council upon ap-
	service under call	approval by the Conference
		of Bishops (<u>as in conjunction with occupations and</u>
		<u>in approved situations not otherwise specified)</u>

To adopt a new bylaw concerning various synodically authorized deacon programs:

7.61.02. When needed to provide for diaconal ministry as part of a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible for such ministry to be provided by appropriately rostered lay ministry, the synodical bishop acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council may authorize a non-rostered person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer such non-sacramental ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by an ordained minister appointed by the synodical bishop and shall be trained and authorized to fulfill a particular ministry for a specific period of time in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be renewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

To provide in churchwide constitutional provision 10.21. and 10.31. for the approval process and entry rite for those categories of officially rostered lay ministries approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly:

- 10.21.** Each synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in its territory. In fulfillment of this role, the synod shall:
- a. Provide for the pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, ~~and~~ associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in the synod, including:
 - ...
 - 3) ~~certifying~~ approving associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;
 - 4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the [setting apart] [consecration] of deaconess, and the [commissioning] [consecration] of diaconal ministers of this church;
 - 5) consulting in the calling process for ordained ministers, and in the selection of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

[with the remainder of the provision remaining unchanged].

10.31. The officers of each synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

a. As the synod's pastor, the bishop shall:

...

- 3) Provide pastoral care and leadership for the synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, ~~and~~ its associates in ministry, its deaconesses, and its diaconal ministers.

To amend †S6.03.a. in the Constitution for Synods in accord with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly regarding the Study of Ministry:

†S6.03. a. Provide for the pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, ~~and~~ associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church in this synod, including:

- 1) approving candidates for the ordained ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;
- 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining on behalf of this church;
- 3) ~~certifying~~ approving associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;

...

and

- 5) consulting in the calling process for ordained ministers, ~~and in the selection of~~ associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

To adopt amendments to +S8.12. in the Constitution for Synods that were received for first reading by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly as a result of action on the Study of Ministry; to add provision for the entry rites for those on the official lay rosters; and to revise the proposed change in +S8.12h.1) to make that item more specific and consistent with +S8.12.a.:

+S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall be an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who shall:

~~a. Oversee and administer the work of this synod.~~

b a. Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the ~~faith~~ Confession of Faith of this church.

c b. Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing ~~Provide~~ pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, and its ~~associates in~~ ministry other rostered leaders.

i c. Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested

d. ~~letter of call for the office of ordained ministry; and shall~~
Commission (or provide for the commissioning of)
approved candidates who have received and accepted a
properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as
associates in ministry; [set apart (or provide for the setting
apart of)] [consecrate (or provide for the consecration of)]
approved candidates who have received and accepted a
properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as
deaconesses of the ELCA; and [commission (or provide
for the commissioning of)] [consecrate (or provide for the
consecration of)] approved candidates who have received
and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call
for service as diaconal ministers of this church.

j e. Attest letters of call for persons called to serve
congregations in the synod, and letters of call for persons
called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons
called by the Church Council on the roster of this synod.

i f. Install (or provide for the installation of):
1) the pastors of all congregations of this synod;
2) ordained ministers called to extraparish service
within this church; and
3) associates in ministry persons serving in the other
rostered ministries within this synod.

g. Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so
doing:

m. 1) Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of
the whole church; .

2) Lead in fostering support for and commitment to
the mission of this church within this synod;

h. 3) Coordinate the use of the resources available to this
synod as it seeks to promote the health of this
church's life and witness in the areas served by this
synod; .

t. 4) Submit a report to each regular meeting of the
Synod Assembly concerning the synod's life and
work; and .

ct. 5) Advise and counsel its this synod's related
institutions and organizations.

h. Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the
Church and in so doing:

1) Exercise oversight of the biblical fidelity and
confessional orthodoxy of the preaching, teaching,
and administration of the sacraments within this
synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this
church:

-
- 2) Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of controversies and for the discipline of ordained ministers, other rostered leaders, and congregations of this synod;
 - e. 3) Be its the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;-
 - 4) Consult regularly with other synodical bishops and the Conference of Bishops;

 - 5) Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;

 - 6) Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning within the territory of this synod; and
 - k. 7) Be ex officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly,
 - a i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod . and in so doing:

S8.13.

- 1) ~~The bishop shall be~~ Serve as the president of the synod corporation, be the chief executive and administrative officer of this synod, and be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other instruments and to affix the seal of this synod; .
- g. 2) Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and ~~be the chief executive officer of the synod;~~ provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the council's Executive Committee;
- g. 3) ~~Ensure see to it that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are~~ duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;
- f. 4) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers; .
- g. 5) Coordinate the work of all synod staff members; and
- g. 6) Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made; provided for.
- k. 7) Be and a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution.
- n. † 8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synodical rosters containing:

- a) the names and addresses of all ordained ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which they become retired or disabled; and
 - b) the names and addresses of all ~~associates in ministry~~ other rostered persons of this synod and a record of the positions to which they have been ~~appointed~~ called or the date on which they become retired or disabled;
 - c) ~~the names and addresses of all commissioned teachers and consecrated deacons and deaconesses of this synod and a record of the positions to which they have been called or the date on which they become retired or disabled; and~~
 - d) ~~the names and addresses of all certified and commissioned lay professionals of this synod and a record of the positions to which they have been appointed.~~
- 2 9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all ~~ordained ministers~~ rostered persons on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study ~~and the names of all associates in ministry, commissioned teachers, and consecrated deacons and deaconesses on leave from appointment or engaged in approved graduate study~~ in conformity with the constitution and bylaws of this church ~~as stated in ELCA 7.31.16. and ELCA 7.52.16.~~ and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council:-
- σ: 10) Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church:
- † a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of ~~ordained ministers, associates in ministry, commissioned teachers, consecrated deacons and deaconesses, certified and commissioned lay professionals,~~ this synod and the register of congregations;
 - 2 b) issuance of certificates of transfer, ~~upon their written request,~~ for ordained ministers for rostered persons in good standing who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under ~~are~~ moving into the jurisdiction of another

- synods;
- 3 c) entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been received; ~~on the roster of ordained ministers and the rosters of associates in ministry, commissioned teachers, consecrated deacons and deaconesses, and certified and commissioned lay professionals of this synod.~~
- 311) Provide for preparation and maintenance of a register of the congregations of this synod and the names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and
- p. 12) Appoint a statistician of the synod, secure the parochial reports of the congregations, ~~collate the same for annual report to the synod,~~ and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.

Part Four—Other Amendments

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 863-872a.

Bishop Chilstrom requested Secretary Almen to introduce the action before the assembly. Secretary Almen reported that notice had been served, in keeping with the deadline, to remove the following from en bloc consideration in Part Four: Provision C13.04. [Model Constitution for Congregations] on page 872 for separate consideration at a later time.

Bishop Curtis H. Miller [Western Iowa Synod] inquired, “We received a page 872a; is that included in the en bloc resolution?” Secretary Almen responded affirmatively.

Assembly

Action

Yes-832; No 55

CA95.4.22 To adopt the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, exclusive of a specific amendment removed from *en bloc* action for later consideration:

To amend, in response to a 1993 Churchwide Assembly referral, churchwide bylaw 7.41.11. to provide greater consistency in application of policy regarding calls to interim pastoral ministry:

7.41.11. Service under Call. A pastor as an ordained minister of this church shall serve under letter of call properly extended by a

congregation, a synodical council or assembly, the Church Council, or the Churchwide Assembly.

- a. Calls may be extended for stated periods of time and for shared-time ministry by the appropriate calling body under criteria recommended by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. Ordained ministers serving as interim pastors appointed by the synodical bishop may serve under a letter of call, according to policies developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. A call to interim ministry shall be a term call extended by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.

To add a churchwide bylaw, numbered 7.42.02., as requested by the Conference of Bishops, to provide for transfer if one spouse of a clergy couple accepts a Letter of Call to another synod while the other spouse is on leave from call:

- 7.42.02. In unusual circumstances, the transfer of an ordained minister who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

To adopt a new churchwide bylaw 7.42.03. to enhance the practice of interdependence between synodical and churchwide work for the ministry and mission needs of this church:

- 7.42.03. In certain circumstances for the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, the transfer of an ordained minister serving under call in the churchwide organization may be authorized, at the initiative of the bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved in such a transfer after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

To amend churchwide bylaw 8.32.06. to define more specifically the minimum representation on certain college boards of members of congregations of this church:

- 8.32.06. Subject to approval by the appropriate synods, a college or university may be owned by a not-for-profit corporation that has voting members at least 90 percent of whom shall consist of members of the biennial Churchwide Assembly. Meetings of such corporations shall be held in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly for the purpose of electing or ratifying members of the governing board and approving amendments in the governing documents. At least ~~75~~ 60 percent of the members of the governing

boards of such corporations shall be ~~Lutheran and at least a majority shall be~~ members of this church.

To amend churchwide bylaw 8.51.01. to reflect more accurately the actual pattern for handling such matters:

8.51.01 This church, through its ~~Department for Ecumenical Affairs and by the secretary of this church and~~ action of the ~~Churchwide Assembly~~ Church Council, shall establish the general policies to govern official relationships with independent Lutheran organizations that seek to relate with this church while maintaining their independence and autonomy.

To add a new churchwide bylaw 8.71.01. to define the required margin of vote for establishment of official church-to-church relationships (Note: This bylaw would apply to possible decisions of the 1997 Churchwide Assembly on Lutheran-Episcopal, Lutheran-Reformed, and Lutheran-Roman Catholic ecumenical proposals.):

8.70. Official Church-to-Church Relationships

8.71.01. This church may establish official church-to-church relationships and agreements. Establishment of such official relationships and agreements shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly.

To add a new constitutional provision, numbered 9.23. regarding congregations that fail to acknowledge and practice in regard to pastoral leadership this church's criteria for recognition and to renumber existing constitutional provision 9.23. as 9.24.:

9.23. In accord with constitutional provision 9.21.d. and bylaw 9.21.01. and without invoking the provisions of Chapter 20, a congregation that maintains as its pastor an ordained minister who has been removed from this church's roster of ordained ministers by disciplinary action or that calls as its pastor one who has not been approved for the roster of ordained ministers may be removed from the roster of congregations of this church by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.

To amend the last part of churchwide bylaw 9.53.03. to conform to action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly regarding amendment of constitutions:

9.53.03. *[First part of bylaw remains unchanged.] . . .* The synod shall recognize that congregations may organize themselves in a manner which they deem most appropriate ~~and that there are a variety of ways in which the required elements may be stated.~~

To add a sentence to constitutional provision 10.13. for clarification regarding the process for amendment of the synodical constitution:

10.13. *[Existing language remains unchanged until the end.] . . .of this church. Non-mandatory provisions shall not be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.*

- 9) . . .
Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry; to commission approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as an associate in ministry; to [set apart] [consecrate] approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a deaconess; and to [commission] [consecrate] approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a diaconal minister; and shall install (or provide for the installation of):

- . . .
c) associates in ministry rostered in the synod;
d) deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America rostered in the synod; and
e) diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America rostered in the synod.

To move the final sentence of churchwide bylaw 10.31.01. to churchwide constitutional provision 10.63.--and amend +S8.11. and +S11.01. accordingly--as the appropriate location for that stipulations:

10.31.01. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister of this church. The bishop may have as many assistants as the synod shall authorize. ~~Each synod shall establish a mutual ministry committee to provide support and counsel to the bishop.~~

10.63. Each synod shall have an executive committee, a consultation committee, and a committee on discipline. Each synod also shall establish a mutual ministry committee to provide support and counsel to the bishop.

+S8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. ~~This synod shall establish a Mutual Ministry Committee to provide support and counsel to the bishop.~~

+S11.01. There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, and such other committees . . . [*with the remainder of the provision unchanged*].

To renumber existing S11.04. as S11.11., with a heading under S11.10., "General Provisions," and to add a new +S11.04. regarding the Mutual Ministry Committee:

+S11.04. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.

To correct the terminology of churchwide bylaw 10.41.01. to conform to action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly and to amend +7.21.b. in the Constitution for Synods consistent with the decision of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly:

10.41.01. Membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a. [*Unchanged*] . . .
- b. All ~~active~~ associates in ministry, ~~members of the Deaconess Community deaconesses~~ of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, under call, on the lay roster or rosters of the synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item 10.41.01.c.

+S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a. [*Unchanged*] . . .
- b. ~~Other persons on the rosters of this synod as defined by ELCA bylaw 10.41.01.b. shall be voting members~~ All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, under call, on the lay roster or rosters of the synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item +S7.21.c.
- c. [*Unchanged*] . . .

To amend churchwide bylaw 10.31.05. (second sentence) and +S8.51.b. in the Constitution for Synods, in response to a referral by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, to read:

10.31.05. [*First sentence remains unchanged.*] . . . ~~Each~~ The other officer shall be elected to a term ~~of four years~~ as defined by each synod, but not to exceed six years, and may be reelected.

+S8.51. The vice president, secretary, and treasurer of this synod shall be elected to a term

of ~~four~~ ____ years and may be reelected.

To amend churchwide constitutional provisions 13.32., 13.42., and 13.52. to make the terms of the vice president, secretary, and treasurer consistent with that of the bishop of this church:

13.32., 13.42., 13.52. . . .to a ~~four~~ six-year term. . . .

To add a new bylaw, 14.21.09., to reflect the requirements of other constitutional provisions and bylaws in the governing documents:

14.21.09. The Church Council may adopt policies in accord with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

To amend churchwide bylaw 19.51.02. to provide for the beginning of the terms on steering committees consistent with that which is stated for division boards:

19.51.02. The members of the steering committees for each commission shall be elected by the Church Council and shall have particular experience and expertise that will assist the committee in its work. The terms of office of persons elected by the Church Council to regular terms on a steering committee shall begin at the conclusion of ~~the first regular meeting of the Church Council~~ after each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly.

To amend churchwide bylaw 19.51.03. to make the nomination process for the advisory committee for The Lutheran consistent with the pattern followed for similar committees of the churchwide organization; and

To amend churchwide bylaw 19.51.03.b. to designate the beginning of the terms on the advisory committee of the church periodical following each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly:

19.51.03. The advisory committee of the church periodical shall be composed of ~~ten~~ eleven members elected by the Church Council.

a. ~~Five~~ The members of the advisory committee of the church periodical shall be nominated by the Church Council's nomination process. ~~and the remaining five members shall be nominated by the board of the Publishing House of the ELCA.~~ Not more than one person shall be a member of the Church Council and not more than one person shall be a member of the board of the publishing house. The members of the advisory committee shall include persons chosen for their understanding of periodical publishing.

b. 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 ~~the first regular meeting of the Church Council~~ after each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly.
c., d., and e. [Unchanged]

To amend churchwide bylaw 19.61.05. to clarify intended meaning:

19.61.05. No voting member of a board, ~~or persons employed by an entity, agency, or institution supervised by that board,~~ shall be simultaneously an officer of this church, a voting member of the Church Council, or a voting member of another board, steering committee, or advisory committee of this church, except the advisory committee of the church periodical that has representation from the Church Council and the board of the Publishing House of the ELCA. Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the board, steering committee, or advisory committee, a member's position shall be declared vacant by the secretary of this church who shall arrange for election by the Church Council to fill the unexpired term. Further, no person employed by an entity, agency, or institution supervised by that board shall be a member of that supervising board.

To amend churchwide constitutional provision 20.11. to provide for a process for handling disciplinary matters that do not require a full hearing:

20.11. *[Apart from inserted phrase, the remainder of the provision remains unchanged.]* . . .of congregations. Except as provided in 20.18. or 20.19., such ~~Such~~ process shall. . . .

To amend churchwide constitutional provision 20.13.:

20.13. *[Apart from insertion, the remainder of the provision remains unchanged.]* . . .in the bylaws. ~~The~~ If the accused is a congregation, the hearing shall be open to the public unless both the accuser and the accused agree to a hearing not open to the public. If the accused is an individual, the hearing. . . .

To add new constitutional provisions 20.18. and 20.19. to establish a formal process for handling matters that do not require a full disciplinary hearing:

20.18. The authority to administer private censure and admonition upon an individual or public censure and admonition upon a congregation is inherent in the office of bishop. Proceedings under this chapter or any other provision of the constitutions and bylaws of this church or of its synods is not required for the exercise of such authority.

20.19. Where the written notice of charges specifically requests that the discipline to be imposed shall consist of suspension for not more than three months (during which time requirements for evaluation, therapy, continuing education, sensitivity training, or similar experience may be imposed), the due process and due protection provisions of this constitution shall apply only as specified in the bylaws.

To amend the following bylaws for greater clarity and refinements in the process related to consultation and discipline:

- 20.13.01. In a hearing not open to the public,
- a. the accuser and the accused may each be represented by not more than two representatives who may present or assist in the presentation of the evidence, and
 - b. the discipline hearing committee may permit attendance by a limited number of persons ~~chosen by the accused~~, with the consent of both the accused and the accuser.

20.21.01. Ordained ministers shall be subject to discipline for:

[Text of sections a. through d., unchanged.]

d. . . . ; or

e. willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.

20.21.03. Charges against an ordained minister which could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:

[Text of sections a. through d., unchanged.]

e. the synodical bishop. ; or

f. the bishop of this church, but only with respect to an accused who is a synodical bishop (or who was a synodical bishop at any time during the 12 months preceding the filing of written charges), submitted to the secretary of this church.

20.21.06. When charges are brought other than by the synodical bishop or the bishop of this church, the synodical bishop may refer such charges to a consultation panel as

provided in 20.21.04.a.

- a. If as a result of meeting with a consultation panel the charges are withdrawn by the accuser(s), no further proceedings shall be required.
- b. Upon recommendation of the consultation panel that the charges be dismissed, the synodical bishop may dismiss the charges, in which case no further proceedings shall be required.
- c. Upon recommendation of the consultation panel that some of the allegations supporting the charges be stricken, the synodical bishop may strike some or all of such allegations, and further proceedings shall be required on the remaining allegations.
- d. In the case of charges that do not anticipate disciplinary action, the consultation panel shall submit a report in writing to the synodical bishop that sets forth the action or actions recommended by the consultation panel, and the synodical bishop shall convey the recommendations to the parties. If either party does not accept the recommendations, that party may appeal to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.
- e. In the case of charges that anticipate disciplinary action that have not been withdrawn or dismissed as a result of 20.21.06.a. or b. above, the charges shall be referred to a discipline hearing committee for a hearing.
- f. The work of a consultation panel under this section shall be completed within 30 days from the time the panel was constituted.

20.21.07. When charges are brought by a synodical bishop or the bishop of this church, or when charges are brought other than by a synodical bishop and have not been withdrawn or dismissed or otherwise disposed of as provided in 20.21.06., the synodical bishop shall deliver a copy of the charges to the accused and the secretary of this church.

20.21.11. The churchwide Committee on Discipline shall consist of ~~28~~ 36 persons, ~~15~~ 19 of whom shall be laypersons and ~~13~~ 17 of whom shall be ordained ministers, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, each without consecutive reelection, to serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods in this church.

20.21.13. The churchwide Committee of Hearing Officers shall consist of ~~six~~ nine persons elected by the Church Council for a term of six years, each without consecutive reelection, to serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods of this church.

20.21.17. In each specific case for which a discipline hearing committee has been constituted, the committee shall, within 60 days after the secretary of this church has given notice of the selection by the Executive Committee of the Church Council of the members of the churchwide Committee on Discipline to serve on a discipline hearing committee, meet with the accused and the accuser(s) to hold a hearing. ~~and~~ The committee shall render its written decision within 15 days after the committee concludes the hearing. The 60-day period may be extended one or more times to a specified date by a written stipulation signed by the accuser(s), the accused, and the hearing officer prior to the expiration of the original 60-day period or prior to the extended specified date.

20.21.22. The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be made by a majority vote of its members who were present at the hearing. The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be final on the date it is issued by the committee. ~~unless;~~ ~~w~~ Within 30 days, one of the parties may appeals to the Committee on Appeals and may request the Committee on Appeals to stay the effective date of the decision. A stay may be granted in whole or in part and subject to such conditions, if any, as the Committee on Appeals may require. The decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be final.

20.22.01. Lay persons on official rosters shall be subject to discipline for:

[Text of sections a. through d., unchanged.]

d. . . . ~~;~~ or

e. willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.

20.23.01. Where the written charges specify that the accuser will not seek, in the case of an ordained minister, removal from the ordained ministry of this church or suspension from the office and functions of the ordained ministry in this church for a period exceeding three months, or, in the case of a layperson on one of the rosters of this church, removal from such roster or suspension from the role and functions of a person on such roster for a period not exceeding three months, 20.23.01. through 20.23.09. shall apply to the exclusion of 20.21.08. through 20.21.24. and 20.22.05. through 20.22.07.

20.23.02. The voting members of a discipline hearing committee convened to conduct a hearing on charges described in 20.23.01. shall be six members of the synod's Committee on Consultation selected by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. A hearing officer selected from the churchwide Committee of Hearing Officers by the secretary of this church shall preside as the nonvoting chair of the discipline hearing committee described in this 20.23.02.

20.23.03. The secretary of this church may appoint one or more persons as facilitators to make arrangements for, and to provide technical assistance to, a discipline hearing committee considering charges described in 20.23.01.

20.23.04. Three members of the Committee on Appeals, appointed by the Church Council, shall develop rules of procedure for the performance of the duties of hearing officers and discipline hearing committees considering charges described in 20.23.01. The rules become effective when adopted by the Church Council.

20.23.05. In each case for which a discipline hearing committee has been constituted, the committee shall, within 60 days after the secretary of this church has given notice of the selection of the hearing officer to serve on a discipline hearing committee, commence a meeting or series of meetings with the accused and the accuser(s) to receive testimony or other evidence offered by the accused or the accuser(s). The 60-day period may be extended one or more times to a specified date by a written stipulation signed by the accuser(s), the accused, and the hearing officer prior to the expiration of the original 60-day period or prior to the extended specified date.

20.23.06. Written notice of the date, time, and place of the first meeting of the discipline hearing committee at which testimony will be received, and a copy of the charges shall be delivered to the accused and to the accuser(s) at least 20 days prior to the date of the meeting.

20.23.07. The discipline hearing committee shall decide, consistent with rules adopted under 20.23.04., to what extent the accused shall be able to confront or cross-examine witnesses testifying on behalf of the accuser(s) and to what extent the accuser(s) shall be able to confront or cross-examine witnesses testifying on behalf of the accused. A verbatim record shall be made by tape recording of all meetings of the committee at which testimony is presented. The accused and the accuser(s) may be accompanied at the meeting(s) by a friend or advisor. Such friend or advisor shall not participate in the proceedings before the committee.

20.23.08. The discipline hearing committee shall conclude its meeting(s) and render its decision in writing within 45 days of the commencement of the meeting for which written notice was given under 20.23.06. The written decision shall be in two parts:

a. Findings of Fact. In this part, the committee shall set forth what it has found to be the relevant facts, that is, what it believes to be the truth of the matter.

b. Determination. In this part, the committee shall state whether, based upon the facts that it has found, it believes discipline should be imposed and if so, which one or more of the following should be imposed:

-
- 1) private censure and admonition by the synodical bishop.

 - 2) suspension for a period not exceeding three months from the office and functions of the ordained ministry in the case of an ordained minister or from the role and functions of a rostered layperson in the case of a layperson on a roster of this church.

 - 3) participation in such programs of evaluation, therapy, continuing education, or similar experience as the committee may direct.

 - 4) referral of written charges (amended to reflect additional evidence presented to the committee) to a discipline hearing committee convened under 20.21.08. through 20.21.24. or 20.22.05. through 20.22.07.

20.23.09. The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be made by a majority vote of its members who were present at the hearing. The decision of the discipline hearing committee shall be final on the date it is issued by the committee. Within 30 days of that date, one of the parties may appeal to the Committee on Appeals and may request the Committee on Appeals to stay the effective date of the decision. A stay may be granted in whole or in part and subject to such conditions, if any, as the Committee on Appeals may require. The decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be final.

20.31.04. When there are indications that a cause for discipline exists, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation in the same manner as set forth above for ordained ministers in 20.21.04. ~~through 20.21.06. and 20.21.05.~~

To add to churchwide constitutional provision 20.82. to provide a process for adjudication between or among synods:

20.82. When there is disagreement on a substantive issue among churchwide units or between or among synods of this church that ~~which~~ cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council for consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Church Council requesting it to mediate the matter.

To add a new churchwide constitutional provision, numbered 20.84., to provide a process for adjudication between a synod or synods and the churchwide organization and to renumber existing constitutional provision 20.84. as 20.85.:

20.84. When there is disagreement on a substantive issue between a synod or synods and the churchwide organization that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the Committee on Appeals for

consultation and adjudication. If this appeal fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Churchwide Assembly, whose decision shall be final.

To amend 22.11.b. to clarify the process for constitutional amendments by the Churchwide Assembly:

22.11.b. An amendment may be proposed by 25 or more members of the Churchwide Assembly. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation, following which it shall come before the assembly. ~~Adoption of such~~ If an amendment is approved by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting, such an amendment shall become effective only if adopted ~~require passage at two successive regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at the next regular Churchwide Assembly.~~

To add a new provision as +S2.02. in the Constitution for Synods, consistent with the requirement of the churchwide constitution:

+S2.02. No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.

To number separately the second part of existing provision as +S3.01. in the Constitution for Synods as +S3.02. for clarity and order:

+S3.02. "Determined by the Churchwide Assembly," as stipulated by +S3.01., is understood to include the reported changes in synod relationship made by any congregation in a border area agreed under ELCA bylaws 10.01.11. and 10.02.02.

To add to +S7.01 in the Constitution for Synods a comparable sentence of that of churchwide constitutional provision 12.11.:

+S7.01. This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly's own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of this church.

To add to S7.23. and S7.24. in the Constitution for Synods additional references in accord with the 1993 Churchwide Assembly's action on the Study of Ministry:

S7.23. All retired ordained ministers, all ordained ministers on leave from call, ~~and~~ all associates in ministry on leave from call or retired, all deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on leave from call or retired, and all diaconal ministers of this church on leave from call or retired, all of whose names appear on the rosters of this synod, shall have the privilege of voice

but not vote at all meetings of the Synod Assembly. . . [*with the remainder of the provision unchanged*].

S7.24. [*First sentence remains unchanged.*] . . . Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers of this church serving under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call. . . [*with the remainder of the provision unchanged*].

To amend S7.32. in the Constitution for Synods to clarify its intent and to make the provision consistent with churchwide bylaw 12.31.09.:

S7.32. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedures of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.

To add to +S8.51. in the Constitution for Synods an introductory statement:

+S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be: [*with the remainder unchanged*].

To amend S10.03.e. in the Constitution for Synods in accord with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly regarding the Study of Ministry:

S10.03.e. Issue letters of call to ordained ministers and letters of call to associates in ministry, ~~members of the Deaconess Community~~ deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.

To amend S13.11. and S13.12. in the Constitution for Synods in accord with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly regarding the Study of Ministry:

S13.11. When a pastor or when an associate in ministry, deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or diaconal minister of this church resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive. . . [*with the remainder of the provision unchanged*].

S13.12. A congregation under financial obligation to its former pastor or associate in ministry, deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or diaconal minister of this church shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.

To designate S13.31. in the Constitution for Synods as a required provision, consistent with the requirements of the churchwide constitution and bylaws:

+S13.31. Congregations and members of congregations are subject to discipline in

accordance with the provisions of Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.

To renumber S14.22. as +S14.31., marking it as a required provision in the Constitution for Synods and to amend it, consistent with the 1993 Churchwide Assembly action on the Study of Ministry:

S14.30. Official Rosters of Laypersons

- ~~+S14.22.~~**31.** The provisions in the churchwide documents and such provisions as may be developed by the Division for Ministry governing associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall apply in this synod.
- a. When a congregation of this synod desires to call an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister or a candidate for these official rosters of laypersons of this church:
- 1) Such a congregation of this synod shall consult the synodical bishop before taking any steps leading to extending such a call.
- 2) Issuance of such a letter of call shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 3) When the congregation has voted to issue a call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.
- b. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall confer with the bishop of this synod before accepting a call within this synod.
- c. The call of a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the individual, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with policy developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod who are serving under call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly.

To amend +S16.01. in the Constitution for Synods for clarification of the intent and to add a new provision, +S16.05., regarding circumstances of indemnification:

- +S16.01.** *[First part remains unchanged.]* . . . Except as otherwise required by law, (a) the term, "proceeding," does not include (a) a proceeding by this synod and (b) indemnification for expenses incurred in a disciplinary hearing described in Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be permitted only as provided in

+S16.05. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "indemnification," includes advances of expenses.

+S16.05. When in proceedings under Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America written charges against an ordained minister or a layperson on an official roster of this church are made by the synodical bishop or written charges against a congregation are made by the Synod Council or the synodical bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, and such determination is not reversed or set aside if an appeal is taken, then indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney's fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be decided by the Synod Council.

*To amend *C5.03.c. in the Model Constitution for Congregations in accord with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly on the Study of Ministry:*

***C5.03.c.** call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; *[with the remainder of provision *C5.03. unchanged].*

*To amend *C5.03.h. in the Model Constitution for Congregations to make the options consistent with those provided in Chapters 11 and 12:*

***C5.03.h.** elect its [officers,] Congregation Council, [boards, and committees,], and require them [the members of the council] to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution[,], [and] bylaws[,], [and continuing resolutions]; *[with the remainder of the provision unchanged].*

*To amend *C5.04 in the Model Constitution for Congregations to provide for either annual or biennial synodical assemblies, depending on the practice of the respective synod:*

***C5.04.** This congregation ~~annually~~ shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.

*To amend *C6.03.d. in the Model Constitution for Congregations in accord with action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly on the Study of Ministry:*

***C6.03.d.** This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions. . .

Report on the Study of Ministry

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 854-863.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Joseph M. Wagner, executive director of the Division for Ministry, to report on developments related to the Study of Ministry and associated recommendations adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly.

Pastor Wagner said, “What really happens when this church studies a major issue and develops a posture and a report after more than five years of study and has it approved by the Churchwide Assembly? Does the report sit and molder on a thousand bookshelves across this church, to be remembered fondly by some of us and forgotten by almost all? I was asked by a pastor earlier this year, ‘When is the ELCA ever going to decide what it believes about ministry?’ He was surprised to learn that a major study on ministry was authorized by this church as one of its first acts; that the study itself was adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly; and that a number of new and exciting forms of ministry have emerged in the meantime because of that very study and action. We probably all suspect that studies—costly, thorough studies—may when all is said and done, have results that are very small if they are anything at all.”

He continued, “Whatever did happen to the Study of Ministry? I wonder where your copies are. We are here to give you a follow-up report on some of the new opportunities for expanded ministry and mission that have developed in this church because of the action the Churchwide Assembly took two years ago, and, also, because of the work of thousands of members of this church who, in one way or another, contributed to the Study of Ministry and to its outcomes.

“The study began with the mandate contained in a constitutional continuing resolution, ‘To engage in intensive study on the nature of ministry leading to decisions regarding forms of ministry that will enable this church to fulfill its mission.’ Ministry for the sake of mission. Because the world is changing around us, this church is bold to expand its forms of ministry. Extensive studies of God’s Word, and especially forms of ministry in the New Testament, and meticulous attention to the history of how ministry has been understood in the church since the first century, informed that study. The Lutheran Confessions and more recent experience in the Lutheran church in broader ecumenical circles, heavily informed the recommendations brought to the assembly two years ago. Affirmative votes by that assembly put in place the new possibilities for ministry on which we now report to you. Alongside the foundational ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament, which is and will remain the solid backbone of ministerial practice in this church, are new expansions of ministry. They present this church with new possibilities for more flexible deployment of ministry and the leadership of this church to meet the changing challenges of life in the 21st century.

“What new ministries are available?,” Pastor Wagner asked. “The Study of Ministry calls for diaconal ministers and synodically authorized ministries. You will hear reports on these two new forms of ministry in the next few minutes. Non-stipendiary ministries and new opportunity for ministry while on leave from call were also established by the Study of Ministry. These four new forms of ministry are now in place. They join the pastors and bishops and associates in ministry and deaconesses who continue as the solid base of ministry in this church. Let us give you first a look at the ‘first fruits’ of our work two years ago. The Study of Ministry is not moldering on a bookshelf. The conclusions of that study are ministering now in Christ’s name in this new world.”

Ms. Madelyn H. Busse, director for rostered lay ministries in the Division for Ministry, began her presentation on emerging diaconal ministries by praying a prayer for such ministries, which appears in Lutheran Book of Worship, “O God, through the ages you have called women and men to the diaconate in your church. Let your blessing rest now on all who answer that call. Grant them understanding of the Gospel, sincerity of purpose, diligence in ministry, and the beauty of life in Christ so that many may be served and your name glorified.” She said, “This prayer reminds us that diaconal ministry has actually been around for a long time. In 1993, the Churchwide Assembly determined that diaconal ministry should be renewed and that diaconal ministers would be called to positions of leadership that exemplify the servant life and that seek to equip and motivate others. Diaconal ministers are called to provide leadership—leadership that will enable us to strengthen our vision and mandate, to witness and to serve in response to God’s love, to meet human needs both in the world and in the church. Diaconal ministers are called to serve at that intersection where the needs of the world and the mission of the church call for service in the name of Jesus Christ.

“As directed by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, the Division for Ministry consulted with persons who have been involved in training candidates for diaconal service in this and in other church bodies. Out of that consultation we developed six identifying marks that will characterize diaconal ministry and inform the education and formational processes of preparation. Diaconal ministers shall be rooted in the Word of God, be trained to carry out a particular service, be committed and prepared to assist the baptized for ministry in the world and in the church, give particular attention to ministries at the boundaries between church and world, exemplify the life of Christ-like service addressing all forms of human need, and finally, be grounded in community. Educational requirements, standards, procedures, guidelines have all been written and approved. Now the exciting, life-giving part of our work together begins.

“Over 50 individuals have responded to this call and applied for candidacy to serve as diaconal ministers. This summer, 30 of the first candidates came together for two weeks on the campus of Gettysburg Seminary for a pilot formation event. They came from 23 synods in seven regions. They are graduates or current students at seven of our ELCA seminaries. They are men and women with a strong desire to serve in fresh new ways, committed to the church, passionate about the Gospel, committed and seriously engaged in the world. They are courageous and hopeful about the contribution that diaconal service might make in the life of this church. They are eager to be partners in ministry, partners working closely with pastors and bishops, with associates in ministry and deaconesses. Most particularly, to work in partnership with laity, to work creatively with congregations, synods, and agencies of this church, seeking to live out the Gospel in a world in need of redemption. They bring a wide range of interests and expertise to this new ground-breaking form of ministry. They bring experience in our congregations and

agencies and community action organizations, in health care settings, hospitals, AIDS clinics, and homeless shelters. They come with previous training and skills in education, in music and the arts, counseling, social work, and social ethics. They are an exciting group of people. President Darold H. Beekmann of Gettysburg Seminary was with us at the formation event to share in the energy and the vision and the excitement of this new group.”

The Rev. Darold H. Beekmann, president of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., spoke of his experience at the summer gathering and said, “‘Inspiring’ and ‘challenging’ describe for me our experience with this first group of diaconal ministry candidates. One could not help but be inspired by the level of competence, commitment, and the strong sense of call that these people brought to this particular ministry. At the same time, the strong emphasis on ministry at that juncture where church and world intersect provided us yet another opportunity and challenge to think anew about how we prepare people as mission leaders in a way that is both biblically and theologically faithful, and at the same time takes seriously the context and the real life experience of the persons being served.

“Although the ELCA Center for Diaconal Ministry is located on the Gettysburg Seminary campus, it is a program of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries and serves on behalf of the entire church. This means that the design for the program is being developed collaboratively, involving representatives of Philadelphia and Southern seminaries, the Division for Ministry staff, and diaconal ministry candidates. Faculty for this first event included Philadelphia (Theological Seminary) and (Lutheran Theological) Southern (Seminary) faculties, Division for Ministry staff, and others. Although certain components of the program will be offered from the center at the Gettysburg Seminary campus, all eight ELCA seminaries will be providing diaconal ministry preparation and therefore have been invited to have input in the design. The design is based on existing academic resources and existing faculty at our seminaries. However, an effort is being made, not simply to channel these candidates through existing degree programs, but to develop the program in such a way that it takes seriously the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities of diaconal ministry.

“Finally, I think a very helpful side-effect of this new effort is represented by the new partnerships that are emerging with a whole spectrum of ministries and programs both of the church and of the broader community. Programs of social service, ecumenical programs, policy related programs, and others that will be serving as settings for the contextual part of the educational program. On behalf of our seminary, let me say what a distinct privilege it is to participate in the birthing of this new form of ministry for our church.”

Ms. Busse continued, “Diaconal ministry must be as flexible and diverse as the many hurts and needs in the world that cry out for the redeeming, healing Word of God. This is not a ‘one-size-fits-all’ ministry. As we came together for this first formation event, we studied, we worshiped, we prayed together seeking to be grounded in Word and Sacrament for a ministry that proceeds from Word and Sacrament.” The assembly then viewed a videotaped presentation that introduced some of the candidates.

Ms. Busse concluded, “Let the servant church arise. We are called to be a diaconal church. Our congregations and social ministry organizations have a long history of working together to serve the neighbor. This new form of rostered ministry offers an additional cadre of well-prepared and equipped leaders ready to risk and to break new ground, responding to the call to serve where the needs of the world call for service and witness in the name of Jesus Christ. As the rich imagery of the cross designed for diaconal ministers portrays, diaconal ministry is

grounded in a theology of the cross and the saving message of the Gospel. It is living and moving across the boundary between church and world, speaking and interpreting the needs of God's world to the church and sending God's people out into the world for lives of witness and service.

“On the final day of our two weeks [at Gettysburg seminary], the group that was gathered made common commitments that would sustain us as we went out to the places that we would be called to serve. We promised to share common devotional disciplines and a life of prayer. We affirmed together a letter to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America written by Mr. Terry Moore of St. Louis. A few sentences from that letter, I believe, will show you the commitment of these people to full partnership in this new pioneer form of ministry. ‘Just as the church has been faithful in its call to renew diaconal ministry, we have been faithful to our call to serve in this ministry in our baptism, through Scripture, Word, and Sacrament, grounded in prayer and community. Because we are the first cadre of those called by the Holy Spirit to this new ministry, we acknowledge our responsibility to help clarify and interpret it for the whole church, as well as to encourage sisters and brothers to pursue their important ministries. We are committed to identifying potential diaconal ministers from all ethnic communities. As we strive to meet our calls, we will work to be full partners with all the church as we make the journey together with Christ, the servant, who is our light and our hope.’”

The Rev. A. Craig Settlage, director for candidacy in the Division for Ministry, spoke to the assembly and said, “One of the ongoing responsibilities of the Division for Ministry is that of candidacy. It is a churchwide process of discernment and the evaluation that is carried out by the synod candidacy committees. It may lead to service either in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament or in one of the three rostered lay ministries of this church. But what of the needs of ministry and mission that are unable to be met by the rostered leaders of this church? Yesterday in the questions asked of the candidates for bishop [bishop of this church] we were reminded of the struggles of many of our urban and rural congregations in today's world. Is there a way to utilize the gift of the laity in ministries of service and witness that will better respond to these needs?

“The 1993 Churchwide Assembly took action in response to the Study of Ministry on the need to broaden this church's ministry resources. It determined that where there is a specific need for ministry within a synod, that the synod be able to authorize lay persons, properly trained and prepared, to provide this ministry. The Division for Ministry was directed to develop standards for the preparation and accountability of this new category of ministry. Early this year, 11 synods were invited by the Division for Ministry to share their experiences. These synods had identified mission and ministry needs on their territory and had developed programs of preparation for lay persons that would equip them to address these ministry needs. It was the insight and the vision for mission of these 11 synods that led to the development of the strategy and criteria adopted by the Church Council for this newest category of ministry.

“Synodically authorized ministry is intended to meet those mission and ministry needs within a synod that are unable to be met by the synod's rostered leaders, or are more effectively carried out by lay persons equipped in a synod program of preparation. It is a strategy for mission that provides synods with flexibility in determining how to meet particular ministry needs in specific settings. It is a churchwide strategy with churchwide criteria but one that will be implemented differently within each synod. It focuses on equipping lay persons to provide ministry within a specific place and time on behalf of the synod. One of the earliest programs of

preparation was that in Western North Dakota.”

The Rev. Nola Eisenbrand, co-director of the “Growing in Faith to Serve” [GIFTS] program, commented that Western North Dakota has a tradition of numerous pastoral vacancies. There is another tradition that goes with that which is local lay leaders helping with these vacancies by filling pulpits on Sunday, teaching confirmation classes, doing visitation, and in general, providing the leadership necessary for a congregation until an ordained pastor is available. In the past, lay people provided this assistance without any support or training from the synod. The GIFTS program of the Western North Dakota Synod is the synod’s response to the need for training, guidance, and support for those who fill this important ministry.

In consultation with the synod’s board for ministry and Luther Seminary, the GIFTS program was specifically designed to meet three needs: support for rural congregations during times of transition and pastoral vacancy; providing training in preaching for those who were filling pulpits on a regular basis; and, providing academic study in Bible, history, and theology for those seeking to serve their congregation more fully. The goal of this third track is primarily to equip lay people to be a strong witness to the Gospel in the workplace, she said.

Pastor Settlage continued, “In other synods the need for mission outreach to the unchurched has led to similar programs of preparation. The North/West Lower Michigan Synod has developed such a lay leadership program. In the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, 20 people have completed a two-year training program to be equipped for witness, outreach, and service. In other synods, the focus is on providing ministry to those in particular needs. The Metropolitan New York Synod has pioneered in developing the Diaconia Program, which trains persons for a synodical diaconate.”

The Rev. Stephen P. Bouman [Metropolitan New York Synod] said, “Jesus came among us not to be served but to give his life as a ransom for many. The primary reason for a synodically authorized diaconate is to remind, inspire, organize, and lead the church in a renewal of its commitment to the servant ministry of the dying and rising Christ. Although the primary setting of ministry is the congregation, the synodical diaconate is also a cadre of servants, under the oversight of the bishop, who may be deployed from time to time to strategic or urgent service throughout the synod. Two examples may give us a hint of the potential of such a cadre of deacons among us.

“When the chaplain who is in synodical ministry at the Franklin Avenue Men’s Shelter in the South Bronx was called to another ministry, Glenn Stevenson, a deacon from Long Island, stepped in to continue the ministry. He organized congregations, and even the bishop’s office, to provide Word and Sacrament ministry. He began Bible classes, held retreats, and regularly visited the residents. He organized a team of deacons who provided a ministry of education, music, social service referral, and individual spiritual counsel. Attendance at the liturgy has tripled. Bible studies are following the men out of the shelter and into the network of single occupancy transitional housing in the neighborhood.

“When the pastor of St. John’s (Lutheran Church) in the Bronx was called to another ministry, our bishop, James Sudbrock, appointed Lori Viera, a Spanish-speaking deacon from Queens, to interim ministry with the new and fragile mission to Spanish-speaking people in that congregation. Through her ministry of visitation, Bible study, catechesis, and worship, this mission is showing remarkable growth and stability, as well as equipping congregational leaders to claim and test their own diaconal skills and calling.

“Deacons Stevenson and Viera are graduates of ‘Diaconia,’ a two-year program that

combines theological, biblical, historical, and practical studies offered at several neighborhood sites with a rhythm of mentoring, prayer, and worship. An internship prepares people to accept calls from congregations for specific ministries. In the words of our synod guidelines, ‘works of mercy, witness, and worship in solidarity with the poor.’ More than 400 have graduated from the program, some of them with us today in the Metropolitan New York Synod delegation. This year a track of the program was added in the Spanish language with 12 lay people in the first class. The synod hopes to use them and others to establish communities of support, Bible study, and worship in various Spanish-speaking neighborhoods.

“In summary, why a synodically authorized diaconate in the Metropolitan New York Synod? Primarily, to develop indigenous leadership, to give standards and support to the many parish-based diaconal programs already in existence. To make a cadre of deacons available to the bishop and the synod as strategic mission unfolds in the synod. To inspire and help organize ministry in daily life. The ultimate purpose for such a ministry is mission and outreach—to and with the poor, the suffering, those without the Gospel—in memory of servant Jesus who gave his life not to be served, but to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Pastor Settlege continued, “Hispanic ministry development is also a prime concern to those synods who are along the border with Mexico. In the Southwestern Texas Synod a strategy is being developed in cooperation with the Division for Outreach and the Division for Ministry to minister in the Mexican-American community.”

The Rev. David L. Carrillo [Southwestern Texas Synod] said, “I would invite you to travel with me. Travel back in time some twenty-five years to the time when I became a Lutheran. Let us go to a Lutheran worship service. There are three elements that are very distinctive. One is the pastor, well trained at a seminary, his skills honed by internship and by practice. Then there is the congregation. They have been trained at confirmation classes and with years of Lutheran worship. The third element is the church building. There are many styles of church buildings, but every one reminds you that you are in church. So worship takes place, the Gospel is preached, and the Sacraments are duly administered.

“Now let us travel forward in time to the present time. Many things have happened. One of the wonderful things that has happened is that our Lutheran church has reached out—reached out to those persons who may be of a different color, speak a different language, whose culture may be different, but still we worship. Do we have the pastors? Maybe they are short in number. Do we have the congregations? Yes, they are there but they have not been trained to make the right responses at the proper time. Do we have the buildings? Well, there are some buildings, but they do not look like church buildings. Still we have not lowered our standards, we are still preaching the Gospel, we are still administering the Sacraments duly. How do we do this? Each synod takes upon itself to figure out its own way. In the Southwestern Texas Synod, in the lower Rio Grande valley, we are working with people who are inspired and anointed yet have not been to a seminary. They work under the ‘corridor concept.’ A corridor is a geographic area and each corridor is supervised by an ordained pastor. These people who are helping us out are under the mentorship of one or more ordained pastors. They have it in themselves to proclaim the Gospel and to do whatever it is that they can to spread the Good News. It is up to us to help them do it, so we have the corridor concept and we have the lay leader concept.

“There is also the ‘Worship in Community,’ a group who gathers perhaps in a house or wherever a place is available. It may not look like a church, but a church is not a building. A church is the called out people of God and if you have been baptized, you have been called out.

So we carry on with the ministry, we do not lower the standards, we carry out a ministry to a people who may be different from the average Lutheran, whose language may be different, whose culture tells them that somehow it is not safe to go inside these stately church buildings. But, they love to go to someone's home or some place where they can hear the Good News and so there they are. Is this unbiblical? Read the Book of Acts. There were 12 apostles, the rest of the people were lay people. They went out and they spread the Gospel and the church grew and grew. Is this working? I would advise you to take one more trip, especially if you live up north where you get the snow blowing horizontally and the temperature stays below zero degrees. Come down to the lower Rio Grande valley, I invite you, come worship with us and see our worshipping communities and see if you will not praise God for what he has done."

Pastor Setlage concluded, "From Western North Dakota to Metropolitan New York to Southwestern Texas, you have heard from only a few of the synods who have developed programs to prepare lay persons for needed ministry. These synodically authorized ministries are one of the tangible results of the Study of Ministry. It offers synods a new resource for ministry with pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers. It offers this church a strategy for the flexible deployment of ministry leadership to respond to the mission challenges that lie ahead."

Pastor Wagner, in completing the report, said, "There you have some concrete examples of new ministries beginning in new ways. When the church has been at its best in the past, it has used its ingenuity and its vision to extend the faith of Jesus Christ in fresh ways to the changing circumstances of ministry in each new time and new place. That is a mark of a healthy, venturing church. Thanks to your [the Churchwide Assembly's] work on the Study of Ministry two years ago, we now have those new mission ministry forms that are accountable to this church and are ready for use. Now we need the nerve and the suppleness to let them find their places among us. New names—they seem awkward because our mouths have not yet mastered the sound of them. Nor has this church yet felt the full power of them, but we will. Diaconal ministers and synodically authorized ministries: the newest vessels of the Gospel of Jesus Christ's love, at the disposal of this church. As you have seen, their enthusiasm and their fresh faithfulness are already bringing new ministries to life."

Bishop Chilstrom thanked the presenters for the report. He said, "We do studies of ministry and we think deeply about these matters because we are concerned about the future of this church."

Recognition of Former Bishops
James R. Crumley Jr.

Bishop Chilstrom welcomed to the dais the Rev. James R. Crumley Jr., former bishop of the Lutheran Church in America, and Mrs. Annette Crumley. Pastor Crumley greeted the assembly, saying, "There is a way in which I see this assembly as, not completely closing, but finishing in a way a first chapter in the history of this church. Because that is true, there are a couple of things that I do want to say and I think I can do it simply because I know something about the positions I am going to refer to. You see, there is a way in which you cannot really understand what some people do unless you have been there. You can read the descriptions of the office of the secretary of the church or the bishop of the church and that is impressive. But you really can't know unless you have been there. [Pastor Crumley served as secretary of the Lutheran Church in America before being elected its bishop.] I want to single out two areas of deep appreciation that I have.

“The first I am going to mention is the secretary of the church, simply because I was secretary of a former church, and while his responsibilities have expanded considerably over those that I carried, I have been terrifically impressed by the way in which Lowell Almen has mastered that office. A church is in a difficult position unless that church has accuracy in its records and comprehensiveness in what is being undertaken. We have had to build certain systems in these years since 1988. I think Lowell’s work has gone a great way toward building the systems so that now we have ways of operating that are serving us well.

“Certainly, I want to say something to Bishop Chilstrom. About six months from now, you are perhaps going to find that some of that grinding weariness in your bones is about to go. No one can know just how heavy the responsibilities are and certainly I want to say, with all of the appreciation that I have to Herb, that I appreciate so much what he has done. Annette and I would both say to you and to Corinne, we hope that the future means for you what it means for us—that we are together more than we have ever been. You see, Herb, while life in the episcopal office is good and exciting, life after the episcopal office is even better and you have a great deal to look forward to.

“Then, I want to say to the members of the assembly also that you must feel very good or you would not have performed as you did in the election of H. George Anderson as the new bishop. That is never to say that only one person can do a job. We recognize that there were several who had that ability. But I know that in George Anderson there is a particular combination of qualities that make up his person, with the talents and experience that make possible his being effective in so many ways, and I am sure that we are going to find in this term of office the type of leadership that also will be very good for this church. I invited George to preach the sermon at my installation as president of the Lutheran Church in America. I was just reflecting a bit this week on that sermon. You might have expected that George, with all his background, would have lifted up in a dramatic way the theology of the church and the confessional position—he can do that very well—but he centered on what it means to be pastor because I had had a great deal to say about the office of the bishop that I saw as a pastoral office. Not that I saw the church just as a large congregation, but that that office had to be a pastoral office. I have oftentimes thought of what George said to me at that time. I am quite sure that he will be thinking a great deal of what he said then even as those words now apply to himself.

“It is a great privilege to be here. Thank you so much for the opportunity to see so many friends who have been friends for years and to meet and get to know so many new ones.”

Introductions: Churchwide Units

Commissions and Departments; and

Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Bishop Chilstrom invited to the dais the chairs of the steering committees of churchwide commissions and the executive directors of those commissions, together with the directors of churchwide departments. He said, “The [commissions] represent this church’s commitment to the full participation of women, persons of color, and persons whose primary language is other than English, in the life of this church. . . . The departments serve all of our churchwide units and indeed this whole church, giving us deep and basic expertise and assistance in such areas as communication, human resources, research and evaluation, synodical relations, and, very importantly, in ecumenical affairs—vital tasks for this church’s ministry.” Bishop Chilstrom then presented a gift to each in appreciation of their faithful work. Persons receiving recognition were:

Commission for Multicultural Ministries

The Rev. Edmond Yee, chair of the steering committee

The Rev. Frederick E. N. Rajan, executive director

Commission for Women

Ms. Audrey R. Mortensen, chair of the steering committee

Ms. Joanne Chadwick, executive director

Department for Communication

The Rev. Eric C. Shafer, director

Department for Human Resources

The Rev. A. C. ("Chris") Stein, director

Department for Research and Evaluation

Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, director

Department for Synodical Relations

The Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, director

Department for Ecumenical Affairs

The Rev. William G. Rusch, director

Bishop Chilstrom also recognized the acting president of the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Rev. Marvin L. Roloff, and that unit's board chair, Mr. Alan T. Seagren.

Bishop Chilstrom invited the assembly to stand and to sing the hymn, "How Firm a Foundation."

Study of Theological Education

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 32-66; Volume 2, page 788-788c; continued on Minutes, pages 570-574.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Joseph M. Wagner, executive director of the Division for Ministry, to introduce the report on the Study of Theological Education. Pastor Wagner said, "This presentation of the Study of Theological Education concludes the Division for Ministry's reports to this assembly. More importantly, it marks a significant moment in the history of this church. This task force, appointed by the Church Council, has worked for more than six years to envision and to begin a new approach to theological education for the sake of more adaptable and vibrant mission outreach for the future. This report is a promise kept, for it represents the successful efforts of many in our seminaries, synods, churchwide offices, and congregations to bind the eight separate seminaries of this church into a cohesive system of complimentary institutions with common intentions. It has not been easy, nor is it yet finished. But, on this day in August 1995, we can say that it has begun in strength a promise kept."

Pastor Wagner then introduced the members of the task force who were present: Ms. Dorothy J. Marple (Philadelphia, Pa.), chair of the task force; the Rev. Phyllis B. Anderson, director for theological education in the Division for Ministry, who served as staff director for the study; the Rev. Beverly Burkum Allert (Tigard, Oreg.); Mr. Charles P. Lutz (Minneapolis, Minn.); the Rev. Charles W. Mays (Port Angeles, Wash.); the Rev. Paul E. Rorem (Princeton, N.J.); Bishop Harold C. Skillrud (Atlanta, Ga.); Ms. Martha Stortz (Berkeley, Calif.); and Ms. Marybeth Peterson (Omaha, Nebr.), Division for Ministry board liaison. Pastor Wagner also acknowledged Ms. Mary Chrichlow (Elmont, N.Y.), a member of the task force who was unable to be present.

Pastor Wagner continued, "The formal written report of the Study of Theological Education

begins on page 32 in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1. It is titled, 'Faithful Leaders for a Changing World: Theological Education for Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.' Our oral and visual report is based upon the written report and serves to prepare the assembly for action on the recommendations of the Task Force for the Study of Theological Education printed on page 48 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, which also are included in the recommendation of the Church Council that appears on page 788 in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2.

"As the report begins, I am pleased to introduce the Rev. Martin E. Marty, Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service professor of the history of American Christianity at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and associate editor of *The Christian Century*. Pastor Marty is a preeminent scholar and writer concerning the church and modern culture. An expert in these times and in the directions of the church in this day, he is internationally known, but more important to us today, he comes to us as a pastor of this church—one of us."

Pastor Marty addressed the assembly, stating, "Someone asked jazz pianist, a blind man, George Shearing, 'Have you been blind all your life?' and he said, 'Not yet.' Have I been in theological education all my life?—not yet. It started with catechism. I have been an educatee and an educator, trained to observe. As a fervent supporter of ELCA education, I am delighted to talk about what the task force talked about and saw as they looked at church and world in our times. [There are] five main areas.

"First, demographics—people, who they are and where they are: The population growth is slowing, but there are a lot of us. We are getting older and we need different kinds of ministry to go with it. Half of our ELCA congregations are in rural areas and we have heard much of the change in the need there, even though a smaller percentage of the American people are living in rural areas all the time. The population in our denomination, I always like to say, is on the map in the shape of a bow tie. The east wing in the Rust Belt and the midwest wing in the Farm Belt and most of the nation's growth is elsewhere. We want to keep up with that and anticipate some of that growth and we need new kinds of leadership for such places.

"Next, get out your hyphens, because America is newly hyphenated. African-American, Native-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American, and all the other hyphens. We all know the drastic need for cultural change in forms of ministry for that. The workforce is changing; we know that. Ever more women in the workforce changes family styles to which we minister. We list pluralism. Look at the encyclopedias or the yearbooks and see how many kinds of religions and individualisms are shaping around us. Our seminaries have to be very busy to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ in such a world and to learn from it.

"Second, the globe: I like to think of those old paint ads that showed the globe; you remember how the paint was dripping down to the southern hemisphere. That is Christianity in the world today, too. The northern hemisphere loses 2,000 Christians per day; the southern world gains that. There is a great power shift in Christianity. Korea; the sub-continent of Asia; Latin America, where two-thirds of the world's [Roman] Catholics are; sub-Saharan Africa—great growth, great change. You and people around you know more about Rwanda, Burundi, the former Yugoslavia, and so on than what is going on in the state next to you. The economists listen to how the dollar does against the yen. We are in a very tiny world and we are all affected by it. We need ministry that understands it.

"Third, a secular culture. It does not always mean anti-God, but it means distracted from the things of God as we have known them along the way. Great changes in family life—whatever

happened to the weekend and the religious education that went with it? Where do people get the story? Church colleges and religious periodicals are doing what they can to keep it going, but statistically they are small forces in the larger world around us. A lot of people cannot read at all; illiteracy is a great problem. A lot of people do not read our languages and the styles that we have known. So, we who are dependent on a book culture have to learn a lot about other forms of communication. Are we ready to minister to all these changes in the culture around us?

“Fourth, implied by this hall: I can remember when church conventions were in a church basement and you shouted. Now, they put you on a silly stool and give you a hand microphone. We are in a communication world of great interactivity. You are much closer to the people on the stage than people were back in those old church basements. You are closer to people in South Africa and almost anywhere in the world by e-mail and Internet, or whatever, than you might be walking next door. Are we able to listen, to read—do we have something to say, do we have a ministry of lay and clergy who are taking advantages of all these means? Yes, the book will live, printing will live, but we also can connect in fresh new ways with people. Will we care? Will they care?

“Fifth, economic stress: drastic and radical shifts in our own economy and the world economies. The task force had to be mindful of how these impinge upon theological education and seminaries—sending people forth from them with great debts, having to find new ways to finance them along the way—are only little symbols of economic changes in the larger church in the world. The task force recommendations coming to you today are very much more mindful of the environment than they might once have been. Are we ready for all of this? I invite you now to hear from some of the people who are engaged in the re-formation of reformation Lutheran theological education,” Pastor Marty concluded.

Ms. Joanne Negstad [Minneapolis Area Synod] reflected, “It was a warm and sunny day in the western plains of North Dakota many years ago. We were honored to know that the Rev. Gerhard E. Frost was coming to visit in our home. I remember well how he, with his grandfatherly arms, sat on our couch with one of our pre-school children on each side. The purpose of Pastor Frost’s visit was to, in his kindly and gentle way, ask for support for the seminary [Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.]. It seemed to make some sense to us—my husband was a recent alumnus. So, though very meager in dollars, our journey for theological education began.

“In those 25 plus years since, things have changed a lot in support for the seminary, we have learned. Just last year, our intern in our parish in suburban Minneapolis was telling of the struggle she has for the mounting debts because now we expect students to take responsibility for their own education to a much greater extent. Financial support from the larger church has diminished. During those years, I was privileged to be a part of a board of directors of one of our ELCA seminaries. As I saw that responsibility, I took seriously the desire to continue that journey with increased giving to the seminary, so the journey deepened and continued. Last year, in 1994, the financial resources of the Negstad household changed. We faced the challenging task of reevaluating our charitable giving. Our priority of supporting seminary education remained. Though the amount of dollars we give is less than we wish, our regular giving symbolizes our partnership with theological education. Why, you may ask, why is that so important? Well, not only has my own personal life been enriched with the diverse gifts of so many pastors whose paths have crossed mine, they have nurtured my faith by their preaching, they have nourished my journey as they have walked with me through transitions in my life.

“I am convinced that what we need in the church are strong leaders, leaders who have a deeply rooted Scripture-based faith integrated in their own spiritual journey. Leaders who have a heart for mission—I like to say, a contagious heart, a heart that so triggers a spark in our hearts to reach out to others—leaders who have good skills, who preach well, who teach well, who teach us and help us to make Jesus known, who administer well, who know how to raise money and spend it and save it wisely. I believe we, as a church, need leaders who are adaptable, adaptable to the changes that Pastor Marty has just been referring to. My journey continues as a baptized person of God because I believe that partnership is one way in which I help Jesus be known.”

The Rev. Kim L. Beckmann [Northern Great Lakes Synod] commented, “What shall I say? What shall I say about my own call to ministry and about seeking answers that lead to becoming a rostered minister in this church? In the early days of my journey toward ordination, that kind of discernment took place after I had already packed up my Volkswagen bus and headed across the country to seminary. So, while struggling to find a rhythm for studies, I was also joining a congregation and just discovering that I had a candidacy committee. Mid-terms came and so did my first visit from the committee contact person. I did psychological and career counseling right in the middle of Greek intensives—not a good mix. Today, candidates experiencing the ecclesial readiness process participate in this time of discernment before entering seminary. Now, as a member of a candidacy committee myself, I welcome the movement we have experienced toward placing these opportunities for asking the first, ‘What shall I say?’ questions before study and acclimation to seminary life, so that we can be good stewards of our students’ time, freeing them to do their best work and study. Asking, ‘What shall I say?’, before seminary training begins also makes for better stewardship of our synod candidacy committees. Now, candidates can take full advantage of working with these people who are caring companions and skilled mentors during this intense and life-changing experience of questioning and finding their vocation.

“In our multi-synodical candidacy committee in upper Michigan and eastern Wisconsin, the early entrance decision already has helped candidates to set up systems of support and encouragement before entering seminary this fall. We also are supporting those engaged in the additional preparatory work needed before entering seminary and are encouraging those who are wondering, if, despite all of those positive outward signs, they are really ready to answer, ‘Yes!’, to this question and all that it will entail. The question, ‘What shall I say?’, frames all of our lives as disciples of Jesus. We who serve on candidacy committees have a special responsibility to help candidates for rostered ministry ask and answer this question at the right times in their preparation for service. We continue to give thanks that God calls out people of all talents, experiences, and backgrounds for these ministries of Christ’s church.”

The Rev. William L. Hurst Jr. [Metropolitan New York Synod] observed, “When, upon graduation from the Philadelphia Seminary in 1992, I first learned of Region 7’s mandatory three-year program of continuing education for new pastors, I remember my reaction being, ‘Oh, no. After all these years of seminary and internship, more school?’ Now, as a member of the first group that has completed this program of the ELCA’s northeastern synods, I am glad to report that the experience was a tremendous help to me in these first years in pastoral ministry. The Institute for Congregational Ministry program, organized around three retreat-style seminars per year, each lasting two and one-half days, has provided several dozen first-call pastors with additional study opportunities in the areas of evangelism, personal and ministerial growth, worship, catechesis, and parish management. These times of retreat and study have provided opportunities to maintain relationships with colleagues from all over the region, to share

challenges, griefs, and joys, to test ideas and experiences in a safe and supportive collegial environment, and to begin to take personal responsibility of seeking out on-going continuing education for ministry.

“The mandatory nature of this program has had two additional and unexpected benefits for me at the congregational level. First, it has forced me to address the issue of life-long learning at the very beginning of my pastoral ministry—at a time when I could easily have shelved such an issue ‘for a later date,’ such as when my parish was running like a top and the neighborhood had all been saved—in other words, never. In addition, the fact that the institute bore the seal of the larger church meant that it was not I asking my congregation and its leadership for additional time—vacation in disguise, some might have claimed—but rather, responding to and participating in this church’s commitment to continuing formation of its professional leaders. I thank the leadership of Region 7, the institute staff, and my colleagues for allowing the program to develop a strong participatory element in terms of planning, staffing, and review. I commend to the entire church this approach to continuing ministerial formation as we together face the challenge of confessing the evangelical faith honestly, contextually, and publicly in the years ahead.”

Mr. Larry Graham [Alaska Synod] reflected, “As a lay person in Anchorage, Alaska, I read the study and recommendations on theological education with growing excitement, especially that portion dealing with distance delivery. My mind raced as I thought about the possibility of taking classes from top scholars in our seminaries and colleges, maybe without even leaving home. Our people in Alaska are too far from any Lutheran seminary to make taking classes very practical. Besides, to many of us lay persons, whether in Alaska or elsewhere, taking a class in theological education from a seminary professor has never been considered a possibility, except perhaps on a weekend. But now, that is even being encouraged by our church.

“Early this month, I sat in a classroom in an elementary school in Fairbanks. The classroom was filled with computers all tied into Internet. No children were present, but we saw examples of what students had done last year. Via computer, a third-grade girl had learned, from an astronomer in Wisconsin and from NASA in Florida, how we know what minerals can be found in a planet we have never even touched. A fifth-grade girl had debated the role of women in society with a 12-year old boy in Japan. Another school district in northern Alaska has interactive television in all its schools and satellite time of its own. A teacher in one school can see and be seen by students in another school hundreds of miles away. This is not ‘Star Trek’ stuff. This technology is here now. Yes, it is expensive and all communities don’t have the necessary facilities, but that is coming quickly. If a third-grader in Fairbanks can learn instantly from NASA or a student in Ketchikan can take an art class from a teacher in Point Hope, 600 miles away, we can use technology to learn from the top theologians in our seminaries. That idea boggles my mind. For many of us, distance delivery may be the answer to expanding our theological education and I urge our church to move forward at all possible speed.”

Ms. Dorothy J. Marple [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] said, “I want to turn your attention now to the first three recommendations (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 788). The first recommendation directs the Division for Ministry ‘to report to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly [the] continuing progress of the ELCA seminaries toward fulfilling the 11 imperatives.’ These 11 imperatives were approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly as the planning and guiding focus for the preparation of leaders for this century. The first four imperatives raise up the need of pastors and rostered leaders with well-rounded faith, a heart for

mission, practical skills for parish ministry, and adaptability to the context of their ministry. Imperative five identifies the need for preparation of more leaders from the African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American communities. The next four expand the scope of theological education to include laity, continuing education, and the ministries of theological teaching and research. The last two imperatives call for more flexibility and interdependence in the way in which we do theological education. The seminaries have already incorporated these imperatives in their long-range plans. As you can see in the assembly report beginning on page 788-A (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2), great strides have already been made and we want to hear more in 1997.

“The purpose of first-call theological education is to enhance the transition from seminary to parish ministry. It is an opportunity to explore alone and with others what it means to be a called pastor or lay leader of this church now that you are one, the nature of this congregation and its particular regional and cultural setting, who the people are who have called you, and skills you need for ministry in this place beyond those that you learned in seminary. Since the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, when synods were encouraged to establish programs, 59 [synods] have already begun to make plans and 54 have actually held events for first call pastors. On the basis of this early experience, we are recommending that all pastors, associates in ministry, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses in all synods participate.

“The third recommendation encourages the Division for Ministry, together with others, to develop an ELCA telecommunications consulting service. Faithful leaders in a changing world need to be equipped for ministry in a variety of flexible formats. Many will pursue at least part of their studies close to where they live and work and do their ministry. That is distance learning. New developments in interactive telecommunications provide practical methods for making theological education more accessible. A common telecommunications consulting service is essential as the network is established. Why?—to ensure common technology standards, to save costs and maximize efficiencies, to coordinate offerings, and to provide support for faculties and learning new methods of teaching.”

Pastor Marty resumed, “Have I been in theological education all my life? Not yet, but I have been here long enough to see a great deal of enterprise and innovation in the individual seminaries of this church and I respect most of that very much. But we have not seen as much innovation in thinking about them all working together. I am thankful to the task force for letting me eavesdrop and kibitz in these last years and to see the development of one concept above others—clustering. A simple enough word, but it gets very vivid when we hear from the people here, like the voice all the way from Anchorage about what clustering means. It makes no sense just to turn out 2,000—however well equipped—seminary graduates for a church of 5.2 million members and a society of over 250 million people and a world of 6.7 billion, when there is so much other talent waiting for these kinds of developments—new forms of ministry and theological schools taking their part in it. You have heard a lot already about diaconal, non-stipendiary, synodical authorized ministries, and you have seen samples of what some of the clusters have begun to do. We have sample pictures of what the Eastern Cluster is doing for diaconal [ministers], the Covenant Cluster is doing in the first distance learning network, and the Western Cluster and its work with affiliated learning centers, and how they are tying into other institutions, such as the church-related colleges, continuing education centers, and other potential providers. So, while clustering is not the be-all and end-all invention, it is a great enabler that ought to excite us very much. I invite you now to hear from the leaders of the church about

clustering so far, about its possibilities and challenges, and about funding our new system of theological education.”

The Rev. Robert G. Hughes [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod], president of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, reflected, “You have heard a lot so far about strengthening traditional programs, clustering, a lot of other new things, while also containing costs. We are going to do this, but it is going to require some serious planning. For that I have two texts that I think will help us. The first is certainly not canonical, but from the year 1872, written by Lewis Carroll in *Through the Looking Glass*. Alice asked the question, ‘Which way will I go?’ The cat replied, ‘That depends on where you are going.’ Alice: ‘But I don’t know where I am going.’ The cat: ‘Then it doesn’t matter which way you go.’

“Planning is a process by which we determine where indeed we are going and how we are going to get there. Not only does it make good common sense; frankly, it is very sound stewardship. Which brings us to text number two, the saying of Jesus found in Luke 14, ‘If you intend to build a tower, first sit down and estimate the cost to see whether you have enough to complete it. Otherwise, when you have laid a foundation and are not able to complete it, all those who see it incomplete will ridicule you.’

“For the past nine months the seminaries of this church, together with the Division for Ministry, have been working around the clock to produce a business plan for this churchwide system of theological education. What in the world is a business plan? Some of you here know a lot about it, some of you perhaps do not. Let us use Bishop Crumley’s image of a moment ago: playing with a grandchild, building a tower of blocks. You build the base—broad and firm and secure—and then on top of that you add a second layer, which makes the tower rise even higher, and finally on top of that cutting-edge, bold, creative things. On the program side in this venture together, we have been talking about foundational things first of all—how to make the preaching of pastors more effective and the outreach of congregations stronger. You have heard a lot about second level things now—diaconal ministry; we are getting into that and we know a lot about how to do it, and some are doing it on behalf of others. This is eliminating costly and competitive duplication. Finally, up there on the top of the tower [is] distance learning—words that I do not understand and, as Pastor Wagner said, the tongue does not wrap around them effectively: compressed, digital, uplink, downlink, and all the rest. But, what it means is programs in Alaska and California and Texas, and sometimes in places very, very far from where there are seminaries.

“Finally, containing costs, the bottom line in a certain sense: Back to Luke 14: ‘If you intend to build a tower, first sit down and count the cost to see if you have enough to complete it.’ Financial models are being designed to assist seminaries to budget and to plan their financing years into the future; to identify revenues and costs and where gaps may, in fact, appear; creative ways to work together not only to save money but for efficiencies; a single internship program for a cluster (We are working on that in the Eastern Cluster.); a single funding strategy for a cluster in consultation with bishops and synodical leaders; a single business office for a cluster or maybe indeed for the whole system—working together, saving precious dollars. How will your next pastor get through seminary, bearing staggering costs (\$10,000 or more of debt for the average graduate), often supporting a spouse and children, often working all of the free hours that pastors in my age group spent in libraries and reading? . . . I believe God expects of this church in this day that we not only plan the tower and count the cost, but that we finish the job. With God’s help and yours, we intend to do that.”

The Rev. Susan L. Gamelin [Florida-Bahamas Synod] continued the presentation. “Well, it was Erma who said it first at the committee meeting last fall. She said, ‘Why do we not increase the support line for seminaries in the 1995 budget proposal? Seminaries are really important for our congregation and for the whole mission of the church, and we know that now they need our support more than they ever have before.’ As the pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Clearwater, Florida, I shared with the folks in my congregation the urgent need for seminary funding. The committee nodded its approval of Erma’s proposal and so did the congregation at our congregational meeting in January. There we approved a list of ways in which we would express ourselves benevolently in 1995. One of the items on the list is our mission share for the Florida-Bahamas Synod and the ELCA churchwide expression. Another item is strong support for an ecumenical social service agency in our community, which we helped to found. A third is our offering for an ELCA missionary family in the Cameroon; and then \$5,500 for the seminaries.

“St. Paul’s Lutheran Church also has recognized that several of our members have said, ‘Yes,’ when the seminaries have asked them for leadership roles and special giving projects, and some of our folks have come to me to talk about their careful plans for benefitting the seminaries with deferred giving. St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Clearwater has treasured its pastoral and lay professional leadership over its 40-year history. We are grateful to the seminaries for preparing these people and we are just beginning to learn about the new tasks for the seminaries, new tasks in providing theological education so that all of us, lay and clergy, can grow in our service to the Gospel. St. Paul’s Lutheran Church at Clearwater, Florida, knows that the seminaries are vital to the whole mission of the church.”

Bishop Richard P. Jessen [Nebraska Synod] observed, “Partnerships between synods and seminaries is a key component of clustering. Learning from the Western North Dakota Synod, the Central States and Nebraska synods have developed a program of lay ministry called, Parish Ministry Associates.” . . . However, “we have not been able to afford to fly seminary profs out to the Great Plains to teach the courses our people need, in order to complete their three years of preparation prior to becoming synodically authorized ministers in the Parish Ministry Associates program. But now, with the development of distance learning, which has been described by several who have gone before me, we are talking with our cluster [seminaries]—Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and Wartburg Theological Seminary—about being involved in interactive television, so that this can be a part of the program of preparation for our Parish Ministry Associates. Partnership is a two-way street, though. It is not simply a matter of receiving services from the seminaries. It is also an opportunity for the synods to increase their financial support. Many of us are convinced that it need not be that the support of theological education in this church would drop below 25 percent from synodical and churchwide sources. A number of synods are moving aggressively to increase their financial support and we encourage all of us to be involved in this partnership in this positive way.”

The Rev. Phyllis B. Anderson, director for theological education in the Division for Ministry, said, “Recommendation four, which we bring before you today, directs the Division for Ministry to report to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly on the progress of clustering. Our seminaries have indeed done what they were asked to do in 1993—they have formed three clusters. The Western Mission Cluster, including Luther Seminary at St. Paul, Minn., and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary at Berkeley, Calif.; the Covenant Cluster, including Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Columbus, Ohio, Wartburg Theological Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa, and

the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago Ill.; the Eastern Cluster includes The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Pa., the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary at Columbia, S.C. The time line for developing and implementing the seminary clusters was approved at our last assembly. The printed report, which I truly hope you have read with care, tells you how the clusters have met the goals for 1995. The supplementary report, to which Ms. Dorothy Marple referred, distributed here on Thursday, August 17, highlights steps taken by the clusters since the publication of the pre-assembly report. Things are happening that quickly. Cooperative efforts are developing and coalescing. This recommendation continues to hold all the partners accountable for moving ahead on schedule with the assignments that were given in 1993, particularly the assigning of specializations among the clusters, the forming of cooperative partnerships beyond the seminaries with other institutions, and the developing of common governance structures for each cluster.

“Recommendation five asks this assembly to affirm the work of the Division for Ministry and the seminary clusters in developing a comprehensive business plan. This plan will show programmatic and financial projections for the future of this emerging theological education system, for the clusters, and for individual seminaries. This recommendation also anticipates that the Division for Ministry will bring a case statement to the 1997 assembly, which will provide rationale with specific strategies for stabilizing financial support for leadership education in this church, lay and ordained. The remaining three recommendations further specify initiatives that will strengthen financial support for this interdependent theological education system. Number six urges all ELCA leaders to commend the cause of theological education to potential donors. Number seven encourages clusters to develop deferred giving programs and to build endowments for the future. Recommendation eight encourages clusters to hold regular consultations and to build the partnership with supporting synods.”

Pastor Marty concluded the presentation: “I hope you all leave the 1995 assembly aware of the creativity that the task force has brought us to and what we have seen in theological education. The word, ‘more,’ kept appearing—more opportunity, more people, more need, more mission, more challenge. We also know we are going to need more resources even with cost containment, so we want to hear ‘more’ in two years at the 1997 Churchwide Assembly as here described, to find creative ways beyond the patterns we have now known for the support of seminaries.

“Now, I charge you all to remember the ‘why’—why we are about theological education in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: First, because the theological emphasis of the Lutheran tradition makes its own distinctive contributions to the ecumenical church and should be fostered among us. Second, the purpose of ministry and the ultimate end of theological education is the faith of the whole people of God, active and alive in their daily lives of service and witness to the world. Third, a primary focus of the church’s mission in an increasingly secular context is to make Christ known among unbelievers and to enlarge the circle of faith among our own people. Fourth, our ministries must be both faithful to the Gospel and flexible, appropriately, to serve a variety of cultures and contexts. Fifth, current mission challenges demand committed and competent leaders. Sixth, leadership permission will come from people serving in many different forms of ministry. Seventh, those who serve and are prepared to serve in all kinds of ministries including the every-day callings of the baptized need access to appropriate theological education. Eighth, seminaries and other providers of theological

education will have to rely on each other in an interdependent network to accomplish their large and complex task within some financial constraints. Finally, our financial resources must be cultivated and used wisely in the preparation of leaders for mission.”

Bishop Chilstrom thanked the presenters, stating, “What we have heard is a very major proposal and plan for our future.”

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] moved to amend the orders of the day to extend the session to 5:30 p.m.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-563; No-303

Defeated: To amend the orders of the day to extend the session to 5:30 p.m.

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the failure of this motion meant that the recommendation related to the Study of Theological Education could not be considered during this plenary session, in order that time be available for a report on the first ballot for secretary and for the meetings of four college corporations.

Bishop Robert L. Isaksen [New England Synod] moved to amend the orders of the day to extend the session to 5:20 p.m.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-583; No-282

Carried: To amend the orders of the day to extend the session to 5:20 p.m.

Elections:

Report of First Ballot for Secretary

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, page 487; Volume 2, page 588; continued from Minutes, page 296-297.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, to report the results of the first ballot for secretary. Mr. Hardy said that a printed report would be available to voting members on Sunday, August 20. He requested permission to read only the names of those nominees receiving ten or more votes. Assembly members voiced no objection.

Number of ballots cast	940
Number of illegal ballots	2
Number of legal (valid) ballots cast	938
Number of votes necessary for election	704

Assembly

Action

CA95.4.23 To elect the Rev. Lowell G. Almen (Chicago, Illinois) to a six-year term as secretary of this church.

Bishop Chilstrom declared the Rev. Lowell G. Almen reelected secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Secretary Almen welcomed his wife, Sally, and daughter, Cassandra, to the dais. He indicated that their son, Paul, was not present at the assembly. Bishop

Chilstrom commented on Secretary Almen's reelection on the first ballot, which also had occurred four years previously during the 1991 Churchwide Assembly. Bishop Chilstrom said, "It is affirmation of the fine work going on in the very complex office of the secretary of this church."

Pastor Almen's question to the assembly, "How are you going to explain this when you get home?," was greeted with good humor by the voting members. He continued, "I hope you explain it in this way: I hope you go home and say, 'We gathered in assembly and it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to summon certain persons to service within our church as officers, members of the Church Council, and boards. We made some decisions about the directions of our church, about our church's commitments, particularly the commitment to making Christ known.' But, then I hope you add, 'With every vote we cast, with every decision we made, we promised to pray for those people and to pray for the work that we do together.'

"One of the most deeply moving cards that I have received in the past two years came one morning in the mail from a congregation, Gethsemane Lutheran Church, at Wyoming, Michigan. I opened the card and it said in there, 'The prayer group of Gethsemane church is praying for you.' I confess I had to go to the map to see where Wyoming, Michigan, is located, but I think I shall forever remember that gesture.

"Bishop Chilstrom, there are a number of things that I would like to say in gratitude to you and to others, but in the interest of time, I request that privilege be granted in tomorrow's session." He quipped, "If I were not here, I would be running a Swiss railroad."

Presentation of Servus Dei Medal (continued)

Reference: Continued from Minutes, pages 293-295.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Mr. George E. Aker, former treasurer of this church. Vice President Magnus presented to Mr. Aker the Servus Dei Medal and a citation, the text of which appears on pages 294-295 in these minutes.

Recognition of Upsala College

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. W. Robert Sorensen, executive director of the Division for Higher Education and Schools, to make several comments prior to the afternoon recess and the scheduled college corporation meetings. Pastor Sorensen said, "I want to begin by saying that the 1990s may prove to be the most difficult decade for higher education in this century. The colleges and universities of this church, therefore, face some great difficulties. This afternoon, . . . we remember one of those overcome in this struggle, Upsala College of East Orange, N.J. The New Jersey and New England Synods have had special occasion to commemorate Upsala [College], but it is appropriate for this assembly to remember the college as well. For the closing of a college is not simply a loss to one part of the church, it is indeed a loss to this whole church. We lose some of our collective ability to develop leadership and just as importantly, we lose some of our ability to serve God's world, to serve society, by bringing the gift of education to others not our own. Our multicultural efforts are diminished and our efforts to bring students together globally in a common place where they study and learn from one another are diminished, too.

"Upsala College was brought to life in 1893 by the Augustana Lutheran Church as it sought to establish an institution in the East for the preparation of pastors and teachers. Over time, this fine expression of our church in higher education came to serve a broad constituency that went far beyond the Swedish and Lutheran roots of that school. By 1990, a majority of the students

were African American, Hispanic, and Asian. As this college reached out to this diverse community, it was at the same time engaged in a severe struggle for survival. Despite the efforts of this church and an unprecedented effort by some of its sister colleges to help financially, in the end it was not enough. And so on June 30, 1995, the 102-year-old story of Upsala College came to a close and it filed for bankruptcy. We have lost an important expression of this church in higher education. We pray that God is with those who have benefited from the education of this school and especially with those faculty and staff who now must seek other opportunities. They have lost an important touchstone in their lives and they have given a sobering reminder to all of us that in this difficult decade, our colleges and universities require from this church our understanding, our strong commitment, our continued support, and our prayers.”

Recess

Bishop Chilstrom declared the assembly to be in recess at 4:55 p.m. for the purpose of convening college corporation meetings, for which the Churchwide Assembly serves as sole voting member.

Plenary Session Eight
Sunday, August 20, 1995
2:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called to order the eighth plenary session of the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at 2:01 p.m., Sunday, August 20, 1995. He greeted assembly members and welcomed the cable television audience.

Bishop Chilstrom expressed appreciation to those who had planned and led the Service of Holy Communion held prior to this plenary session. The service was held at 10:00 a.m. in Exhibit Hall Three of the Minneapolis Convention Center in conjunction with the Festival of Word and Deed, which took place concurrently with this Churchwide Assembly.

Members of the Worship Committee were:

Leadership for the Service of Holy Communion was provided by:

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom, presiding minister

Rev. Karen G. Bockelman [Calmar, Iowa], preacher

Ms. Cheryl Chatman [St. Paul Area Synod], assisting minister

Ms. Salud G. Nieting [Lower Susquehanna Synod], lector

Mr. Pedro Bata [Southeastern Iowa Synod], lector

Rev. Mons A. Teig [St. Paul, Minn.], director of liturgy

Rev. Mark J. Hendrickson and Ms. Susan Masters [Minneapolis, Minn.],
sign-language interpreters

Ms. Liza M. Canino [Bayamón, P.R.], crucifer

Ms. Karris Golden [Waterloo, Iowa] and Ms. Erin Johnson [Charlotte, N.C.],
torchbearers

Ms. Norma Aamodt Nelson [Minneapolis, Minn.], organist

Ms. Dori Erwin Collins [Batavia, Ill.], choir director

Mr. Miles Johnson [Northfield, Minn.], brass choir director

Members of the Churchwide Assembly served as communion assistants.

Presentation of Stained Glass Window

Bishop Chilstrom directed the attention of assembly members to a Dalle de Verre medallion window, which had been placed front of the dais. He said, "As many of you came in this afternoon, your eye immediately caught the stained glass window. This is the second time we have done something like this—to build a window at our Churchwide Assembly for one of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This one was created by artist Dennis Roberts and the staff from IHS Studios, Inc., Fredericksburg, Texas. I am guessing that most of you who are voting members in this assembly went to the display area and chose one of the pieces, as my wife and I did, which now are part of this wonderful creation symbolizing that each of us, though small, is part of a large and significant church in mission. This window will now be moved to Feast of Victory Lutheran Church at Acme, Michigan."

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Donald D. Johnson, director for Mission Education and Mission Partners in the ELCA Division for Outreach, for comment. Pastor Johnson thanked the assembly members for their participation in the construction of the window. He then introduced the designer of the window, Mr. Dennis Roberts, who stated, "I would like to thank you and the members here for the opportunity of serving you and our Lord in this manner." Mr. Roberts called upon the Rev. William J. Hanson, of the Division for Outreach, and Mr. Bill Harris, who introduced the Rev. James W. Helman, pastor of Feast of Victory Lutheran Church, which was to receive the window, Pastor Helman said, "There are four or more reasons that

Feast of Victory Lutheran Church in beautiful downtown Acme, Michigan, is alive today. First of all, the grace of God: Miracles galore have taken place in that congregation and God has continued to pump life into us over and over and over again. Jesus came to us through people like Mac Minnick [the Rev. Malcolm L. Minnick Jr., executive director] and Susan Thompson [Ms. Susan A. Thompson] and Dick Linde [Mr. Richard P. Linde] and Don Johnson [the Rev. Donald D. Johnson] and Bill Hanson [the Rev. William J. Hanson] of the Division for Outreach. And Jesus came to us through people like our bishop, Reg Holle [Bishop Reginald H. Holle] and Pastor Jim Kocher [the Rev. James C. Kocher], our Mission Director.

“Second, one of the reasons we are alive is Mission Partners. Jesus came to us through the awesome congregations of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, where over half of those congregations gifted us in some way through our program ministry or helping us to build our first church facility.

“Third, Jesus came to us through Mission Builders. Jesus came to us through eleven wonderful, dedicated people who came to Acme and set up trailers on our church site and helped us to build that facility. We are overjoyed that Bill and Betty Harris, and Harry and Irene Christianson, our construction managers, are here today to share in the joy of this event.

“Fourth, Jesus came to us through the committed people of Feast of Victory Lutheran Church who donated over 10,000 volunteer hours to help build our first facility. So many opportunities to serve, so many connections, so many partnerships, and again today God has graced us with this beautiful gift of the window—the gifts of Dennis Roberts, the artist, the gifts of each one of you who helped assemble it, again showing us over and over and over again that the church is the church, one in Jesus Christ, we work together.”

Pastor Helman introduced his daughter, Jennifer, a college student who had returned home for the summer. She reflected on how the building of this church helped her on her faith journey. She said that as she saw obstacle after obstacle overcome, she became convinced that “God is with us no matter what. He showed time and time again that when a door is closed he will at least open a window, if not a bigger door for us.” Ms. Sherri Helman, Pastor Helman’s spouse, told the assembly, “You may be wondering what happens at Feast of Victory at this point. We have rested a bit after over 10,000 hours of volunteer labor, but we are not stopping. In December 1994, we went off mission status and as of January we became Mission Partners with Bread of Life Lutheran Chapel in Jennison, Mich. You see, you have been Jesus to us and now it is our turn to be Jesus to other people. The Helman family and the family of Feast of Victory Lutheran Church encourage you, we commission you, we challenge you, we beg you to become involved as Mission Partners, if you have not already made the commitment. As Mission Partners, you can give life to another congregation.”

Bishop Chilstrom expressed appreciation to the presenters and said, “Please bring our greetings back to all the members of Feast of Victory Lutheran congregation.”

Greetings:

The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod

Bishop Chilstrom announced that the Rev. Alvin L. Barry, president of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, was unable to be present due to illness. He mentioned that President Barry’s spouse also was seriously ill and invited assembly members to remember the Barrys in their prayers.

Bishop Chilstrom welcomed the Rev. August Mennicke, first vice president of The Lutheran

Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), to the assembly and spoke of his past connections with Pastor Mennicke who had served as the president of the LCMS Northern Minnesota District when Bishop Chilstrom was bishop of the Minnesota Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. Bishop Chilstrom said that the bishops and presidents of Lutheran synods and districts in Minnesota were known by some as the “Minnesota Eight.”

Pastor Mennicke responded that, if more time were available, he too could tell about the old days when he and Bishop Chilstrom were members of the “Minnesota Eight,” which he said, “was known among the more irreverent ones even as the ‘Minnesota Mafia’ at times.”

Pastor Mennicke greeted assembly members, stating, “It is good to be here with you [Bishop Chilstrom], and it is good to be here with all of you about the Lord’s business as delegates, representatives of your church body, in this assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I can think of no better way to address you than to use those familiar words—and they come from my heart—‘Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.’”

“It is truly my great privilege to be able to bring you greetings from the 6,200 congregations and the 2.6 million members of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. I do bring greetings, also, specifically on behalf of President Barry. . . . I bring you greetings also on behalf of so many in our church body who have forged deep friendships and continue to work closely with so many of you in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

“I want to share a very personal word of commendation, and support, and thank you to my good friend, Bishop Chilstrom. Herb, for your leadership, your friendship, for your vision, for the pastoral heart, which characterized not only your ministry, your servant ministry, in the Lutheran Church in America and in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, but particularly for that pastoral heart that characterized the way you dealt with so many of us in the Church as we meet together to share, to pray, to thank God. God bless you.”

Pastor Mennicke also extended sincere greetings and best wishes to Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson. He added, “Dr. Anderson, on behalf of our church body, I offer this special word of commendation and congratulations, and also the assurance of our prayers for God’s best gifts for the ministry to which he has called you as bishop-elect of this church body—to be sure, an awesome task, a task that carries with it both challenge and promise. We pray that the God who has given you this ministry by his mercy would give you also the gifts of joy and good health, the wisdom that comes from above, the mind and the heart of Christ Jesus, and the spirit of the Living God as you perform it.

“We pray for you as you struggle with difficult issues,” Pastor Mennicke continued, as he asked for the prayers of the members of this church on behalf of “those of us in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as we continue to struggle and seek the clear direction of God’s Holy Word and gracious will. I do sincerely pray that as we have opportunity to continue discussing those issues, which give evidence of differences between us, that the rough places in the relationships between our church bodies may become smoother.”

Pastor Mennicke drew attention to the various arenas of ministry in which the two church bodies cooperate, e.g., Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. He reiterated, “Where there are stumbling blocks, let us speak to each other gently and with the mind that was in Christ Jesus.”

Concluding his remarks, Pastor Mennicke noted that The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod would soon begin to celebrate its 150th anniversary, culminating in 1997, under the theme, “Sent

Forth by God's Blessing." "That is the prayer for our own church body and our prayer for you, as well," he said, "that we might be the sent people of God, bearing fruit for all the world in Jesus."

In response, Bishop Chilstrom asked that Pastor Mennicke bring to the Barrys "good words" from this church and the assurance of its prayers.

Election Response by Secretary Lowell G. Almen

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen, who had requested an opportunity to address the assembly following his reelection as secretary of this church.

Secretary Almen expressed appreciation for his reelection on the first ballot, stating, "I am very grateful to you. In fact, you caught me by surprise. And so, I was almost grateful that the schedule was so tight, for it gave me some time to reflect on what I would want to say in expressing my gratitude to you. To give you some understanding of how deep and moving that moment was for me, I should recall that I grew up in an area of the country where the most optimistic, positive, affirming, forward-looking statement was this, 'Well, it could have been worse.'"

"All of us in some respects can see John the Baptizer as our model. Pastors, and those who serve in congregations in other ways, are summoned to the task of preaching and teaching, pointing to Christ, 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.' All of us are invited to extend God's gracious invitation to others, the invitation to repent and believe that God loves you. But, those of us who serve terms in office and are subject to election also—perhaps, deep down inside, facing that prospect—wonder at times whether we will be like John the Baptizer, in leaving an assembly hall, with our head on a platter. I accept your call with profoundly felt gratitude and I look forward with joy to serving with Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson, Vice President Kathy J. Magnus, and Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe, as the officers of this church.

"Even as I look forward, I look back with gratitude, gratitude for the leadership that Bishop [Herbert W.] Chilstrom has provided to this church in its initial years. I suspect I have some idea of some of the struggles and challenges that went with that office in these initial years, and yet, he led with grace and dignity through some troubled waters, as well as some joyful times. So, I am grateful for the honor and privilege of having been able to serve with him during these past eight years.

"I am mindful also of the work of the first vice president for us, Ms. Christine H. Grumm, and the privilege of serving with her and with Treasurer George E. Aker. The staff of the Office of the Secretary has been, of course, strategic in these years and it has also been my pleasure to work with the members of the staff of the Office of the Bishop. At times, I have thought that, when we talked about combining the church bodies and some of the efficiencies that would create, one of the places where we found a way of creating efficiencies was to double the size of the church, but to leave the staffs of the Office of the Bishop and the Office of the Secretary about the same size as in one of our large predecessor churches. So, it has been a challenge at times, but in many respects a joyous one.

"I have been grateful for the support of members of the Church Council over these years. They are a conscientious, hard-working group. I think that the minutes of the council sessions, in some respects, can give you an insight into the way in which members of the council have so thoroughly looked at their responsibilities and sought to carry them out with care on behalf of this church. I have discovered that they are also a forward-looking group, because a number of the name plates in front of them [here at this assembly] suddenly after yesterday morning [with

the election of H. George Anderson as bishop-elect] had an ‘H’ added before their names.

“I am grateful to the members of the Conference of Bishops and their spouses. They have become very good, supportive friends along these years, and it has been truly a deep and moving privilege to serve with them. Some of you may know that one of the—perhaps, from your perspective—odds of this church is that the members of the Conference of Bishops are defined as the 65 synodical bishops, the bishop of this church, and the secretary [of this church]. You can always tell where the secretary is in the meetings. The secretary is the one without a pectoral cross—and the one paying attention! (Now, I suspect I will pay several times over for that one.) But, quite seriously, it has been a marvelous privilege.

“One further word of thanks beyond that to you as voting members of this assembly goes to the members of the Youth Convocation who developed what perhaps some might see as an unauthorized campaign—but, delightful fun nonetheless.” [Several members of the Youth Convocation had designed homemade t-shirts bearing the words, “I’m a Lowell G. Almen freak.”]

Secretary Almen concluded, “You, and I, and the other 5.2 million members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, are richly blessed. We stand as a united church on the threshold of a new century. This is a moment for humility, this is a moment for hope, this is a moment for courage, as we look to the future. For the sake of the mission that God gives this church, for the sake of our witness in the world—perhaps as we gradually mature as a church body—the time is coming when it would be healthy for us if some of the poison pens were put away; that some of the raging anger subside that one sees here or there in some pockets. What I hope we begin to realize is that the era in which we live, and the unity that we now have in this church, and the opportunities for mission and ministry that are before us throughout the world—all of those—are things for which our forebears prayed and worked for decades and years and years and years. And now, some days I fear that we take all of those things for granted, that we may not measure up to the opportunities and challenges that are before us. We can, we can together walk with confidence into a new century, because Jesus is the one who is walking before us and showing us the way.”

The assembly responded to the secretary’s comments with a standing ovation. Bishop Chilstrom then recognized the Rev. Karl M. Richard [Upstate New York Synod] and the Rev. Daniel E. Hoffman [Upstate New York Synod]. Pastor Richard read the following statement, “Dr. Almen, with thanksgiving to God for the way you keep this assembly moving like a Swiss railroad; and recognizing that bishops have miters, rabbis have yarmulkes, but secretaries have no symbol under which to rest their head; we, the voting members from the Upstate New York Synod, and sundry hangers-on, present you with this sign of your office.” They then presented to Secretary Almen a railroad cap.

Greetings:

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Commenting on the needful ministry of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Bishop Chilstrom said, “I know that many of us in this room have, at one point or another, helped someone find a home here in this country. We are living in an era now when the spirit we knew some years ago has changed, and in some cases rather dramatically. [There is] rising anger against new immigrants and refugees of our world. Through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, you and I have an opportunity to make a powerful witness.”

Bishop Chilstrom then called upon the Rev. Charles S. Miller Jr., executive director of the ELCA Division for Church and Society, which relates to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service on behalf of this church. Pastor Miller stated, “We are very fortunate to have with us at this assembly, both as a voting member, and now as a special guest, Mr. Ralston H. Deffenbaugh Jr., executive director of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. He brings strong, decisive, and courageous executive leadership to this agency.”

Mr. Deffenbaugh greeted assembly members, stating, “I know that it is difficult in a hall this vast, but imagine for a moment that you are in a room that is rapidly shrinking in size. Soon you will not be able to breathe and you muster all of your resources to try to find some avenue of escape from that room. Suddenly, you see a door open and you run through it. Behind that door are many people, but they are speaking a strange language and they are very different from you. You do not know what they are saying, you do not know what is going on, and you are exhausted. You know that your ordeal is not over, because now you are in a strange land. You try to read the people’s expressions to see if they will welcome you, or not. What kind of people are they, you wonder. Will they be kindhearted and friendly, or not?”

“Twenty years ago there was a little girl who was thrown into the midst of just such an upheaval in her life. She and her widowed mother and six brothers and sisters had lived peacefully in the mountains of northern Laos until the Vietnam war broke out, creating a world of chaos. They could no longer sustain their lives. They became refugees. But, they were among the lucky ones 20 years ago. This girl and her family found an open door because of Lutheran people. The open door was in Eau Claire, Wis., and they found friendly faces there from Trinity Lutheran Church. This 10-year-old girl, named Bea, grew up and went to St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., and then graduated from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., with a Master of Divinity degree. She became the first Hmong, Lutheran, woman pastor in the world, and she is also the newest member of the board of directors of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.”

Mr. Deffenbaugh then introduced to assembly members the Rev. Bea Vue Bensen. Pastor Bensen greeted the assembly in the Hmong language. She then said, “I am honored to be here. I would like to share a little of my experience as a refugee and how I became an ordained minister. In 1978, through the resettlement work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, my family and I came to Eau Claire, Wis. We did not speak a single word of English and knew no one. Yet, our church openly received us and nurtured us through the years. Members of that community assisted my family in every aspect of their lives. More importantly, they developed personal relationships with each one of us in our family and showed that they cared. I grew up being surrounded by two very compassionate pastors and a whole community of supportive Christians. My faith story grows out of this experience and is grounded in this love-filled experience.

“However, I know that being loved and received by a Christian community does not always lead one to become a Christian and then to become an ordained minister later. Many of our Lutheran churches sponsor refugee families and we know that these families do not always stay and become Christians. We also know that no human culture, no matter how uncivilized it may appear to be, is deprived of a capacity to love and offer hospitality to strangers. My indigenous Hmong culture, in fact, is considered deeply grounded in these practices and yet our roots are not necessarily Christian. What led me to pursue ordained ministry was the call to share the Good News of God’s unconditional love, of God’s unconditional forgiveness for all people who

confess their sins and believe in the power of God's grace. So then, it is not the love and hospitality I practice that makes me a Christian, but the trust and hope I place in Jesus Christ as my Savior, as the one who delivers me out of my sinfulness and forgives me absolutely when I have failed to love others.

“The Biblical imagery that stands out for me and calls me to ordained ministry is that of the disciples being forgiven and empowered by the Holy Spirit, even as they had abandoned Jesus and were deeply frightened. This Easter story holds up the power and freedom of Christ's forgiveness. It is this imagery that guides my ministry to newly arrived families that live in fear and isolation as newcomers in this country. I do feel called to call them out of fear, to lead them from behind locked doors, to experience new life after that, for I, too, have been led out to the land of freedom and new life from the land of oppression and death. It is out of this call and this experience that I am an ordained minister. I invite all of you individually and in your congregations to join in this ministry for newcomers. Thank you for this opportunity to share my faith story.”

Mr. Deffenbaugh concluded, “Pastor Bea's story is heartwarming and we are grateful to have a chance to share it with you. But, friends, I have to say that this is not an easy time in America for refugees and immigrants, or for those who would work with refugees and immigrants. We, at Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, are blessed to have the firm foundation that we do have for our work—the foundation of hospitality in the Bible and in our Lutheran theology and heritage, as well as in the strong support of our three member churches. We are in a deep crisis now in our country in respect to the hospitality that we show to strangers. Our church has long been committed to opening hearts and opening doors. Yet, the mood of our country is becoming more and more inward-looking. We do have many serious problems in our country, but it is not fair to blame immigrants and refugees as the cause of those problems. More often, we find that they are judged unfairly and easily become scapegoats. Yet, even if resettling refugees is a burden, it would still be the right thing to do—to show that hospitality, because they are people in need.

“But actually, and this is the miracle part, in many cases, we find that the refugees themselves end up giving us more than we ever gave them. There are now powerful voices in the Congress of the United States that want to cut back refugee admissions to 50,000 a year. This may sound like a large number, but it is not. The current number is more than 100,000 a year and it is a terrible fact in our world today that one out of every 120 people in the world is an uprooted person who no longer has a place to call home. We in Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service would like to be able to close the doors and to say that our work is done. But, as we look out into the world toward Bosnia, toward Rwanda, toward Liberia, we do not think this is the time for our country to be closing its doors. I am glad to be part of a church that has been heroic in maintaining support for this life-saving ministry with refugees. I thank you for that and I ask that we continue to stand together.

“We can also be proud that this work is being done well. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service now for five years in a row has been rated number one by the U.S. Department of State for the quality of our refugee resettlement work.

“In the fall of last year, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service published a statement of concern and commitment called, ‘Who is my neighbor?’ It makes theological affirmations and addresses the four questions most commonly asked about our work at this time in our country. I hope that you find it thought-provoking. Help us to advocate. Be a friend to refugees. For what

you have already done so much to help, thank you very much.”

Greetings: Lutheran World Federation

Bishop Chilstrom spoke fondly of his years of involvement with the Lutheran World Federation, stating, “Whenever I am asked to name three or four things I have enjoyed most about my tasks in the last eight years, I always without fail mention my involvement with the Lutheran World Federation. To be in partnership with more than 120 Lutheran churches around the world—Lutheran churches that are bound together in communion—is a great privilege. To represent you [the members of this church] in those circles and to sense from those other churches how important we are in that circle, that family, is certainly one of the great privileges of my life.”

Bishop Chilstrom then introduced Ms. Christine H. Grumm, who was the first person to hold the office of vice president of this church. During the past four years, Ms. Grumm served as deputy general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation.

Ms. Grumm brought greetings from the Rev. Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, on behalf of the 56 million Lutherans worldwide and the 121 member churches that constitute the federation’s global community. She said, “[The Lutheran World Federation is] a communion of churches that expresses itself in the daily life and activity of hundreds of thousands of parishes throughout the world. When we think about the vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as we have been doing over these past few days, I would hope that we dream dreams that go far beyond our national borders and have visions that actually reflect the first day of Pentecost. For it was at that international gathering of God’s people that the church of Jesus Christ was born. And, it is toward that understanding of the church universal that we must now, as we move into a new century, turn our direction.

“As a communion of churches, for instance, we can no longer develop our visions of the church without including the vision of those 121 other Lutheran churches, as well as the visions of our sisters and brothers in the whole Christian community. For that is what communion is all about. We are one body in Christ. In other words, we live and breathe as if we are doing it for each other. We are not just givers or receivers, but together we share in our pains and struggles, as well as in our hopes and dreams, for what we know is that we are not alone in the task of sharing the Gospel to all the corners of the world. We are bound together, a called people of God, sharing the Good News.

“Times have changed and it is no longer acceptable for us to think in terms of the churches from the North doing mission and ministry to the churches of the South. Rather, we engage as 121 member churches in what I call ‘the great exchange.’ When we are discouraged and feeling as if we are making no movement in our life as a faith community, we can through the faith of our brothers and sisters around the world once again put that Easter story in front of us.

“This has been proven to me time and time again when I, as the deputy general secretary of Lutheran World Federation, have traveled throughout the world and visited many places. No experience reflects that more for me than the day I visited St. Peter’s church in Monrovia, Liberia. There is a well-known story; it was in The Lutheran and it has been covered in many places. Five years ago, 600 women, men, and children took refuge in St. Peter’s church and compound, refuge from the violence that had erupted at the beginning of the Liberian civil war. Tragically, not even the sanctity of the sanctuary was respected by the soldiers of dictator Samuel Doe. Before the night was over 600 women, men, and children were slaughtered with repeated

rounds of bullets fired into the crowded masses. I knew the story well before I ever went to that church in Monrovia, but I always missed the message.

“When I took my first steps into that compound at St. Peter’s, the first thing that my eyes saw was the markers of the graves where hundreds of those victims had been buried. The congregation had just completed a three-year restoration of the sanctuary, yet as I walked into the sanctuary, I was met with an incredible emptiness. For there were only about two dozen chairs in a sanctuary that when full held about two thousand. Most of the wooden chairs, along with the organ and the piano and anything that was made out of wood, had long since been broken apart and used for fuel to keep people warm and to cook food and drink during the still-raging civil war. As I looked around the room, I wondered privately, ‘What has kept the people of this parish going? What has kept them from sinking into the depths of despair?’

“And then I was told the story of the cross. On the front wall of the sanctuary hangs a cross larger than life. It is not a particularly artistic cross, just big and obvious. It is not a cross that one would choose if they were doing the most creative worship space. It was just a cross, big and obvious. It is not a cross that one would keep, if they had any opportunity to get rid of it. It was just a cross, big and obvious. But, it was that cross that during the firing of thousands and thousands of rounds of bullets into the sanctuary from every conceivable angle, it was the cross that was never touched. Not one bullet hole was found on that cross, even though bullet holes were found surrounding it, inches from its frame. Yet, it was this big and obvious cross, unmarked by the violence of hatred and terror, that became the symbol of the resurrection story for the parish in St. Peter’s in their quest for life in the midst of death, for hope in the midst of despair.

“I do not know about you, but I am not sure that one unmarked cross would give me enough hope to move forward in the midst of an ongoing civil war, but it is enough for the people at St. Peter’s in Monrovia, Liberia. It is their gift to the worldwide community of Lutheran churches. For it is their understanding that even in the bloody waters of human violence and revenge, Jesus stands right by us wading in those waters, getting us to the other side.

“I offer today this gift to you from one of the members of the Lutheran World Federation. From your sisters and brothers in Monrovia, I ask that you share this gift in the congregations that you go home to when you leave this assembly. We are indeed tied together through the gift of God’s communion. We are tied not always because we choose, but because through baptism, we become members of the family of God—a family that is often divided, but a family that is also healed by the touch of God’s grace. As a result of that healing, we can begin anew.

“So, we begin anew when our hopes and dreams are tied to the churches in Namibia and South Africa as they find new ways to be church in the midst of their new found independence. We begin anew when we are intimately connected with the Christian community in Hong Kong, which in less than two years will face the challenge of an unknown future when the rule of their colony moves from the British to the Chinese. We can begin anew when we are tied together with the churches in Eastern Europe that are beginning a new journey after being years in the wilderness. In particular, as we celebrate the gifts of 25 years of women’s ordination, we can begin anew when we stand in solidarity with the women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Latvia who though called by God to be ordained and serve in that ministry, have been barred from that service.

“We in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have many gifts to give to worldwide Lutheranism, but we also have many gifts to accept. Through our membership in the Lutheran

World Federation, we have the opportunity to be a part of that great exchange. It is my prayer and my hope that as we continue to develop the visions of this church, we include that big and obvious cross.”

Ms. Grumm acknowledged Bishop Chilstrom’s service as a vice president of Lutheran World Federation. She expressed appreciation for his leadership and support, and the theological understanding he contributed. She commented, “Bishop Chilstrom has also developed an interesting reputation. He has provided on numerous occasions the comic relief during those times of saying ‘goodbye and thank you’ to staff—comic relief that is often very important as we listen to the tedious litany of many speeches. An example of that particular talent of his is that when I left [office in] the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, he awarded me the ‘Swedish switchblade.’ This was presented to me, because I was moving from a Swedish boss [Bishop Chilstrom] to a Norwegian boss [the Rev. Gunnar Staalsett, former LWF general secretary]. Bishop Chilstrom thought it was very important that I have something to carry at my side to continuously protect me—and I want you to know that this [the ‘Swedish switchblade’] has been in my desk drawer for four years.

“With that particular talent in mind, we went in search of the perfect thank you gift for Bishop Chilstrom for his commitment to the work and life of the Lutheran World Federation—we knew that you would receive many beautiful and profound gifts and it was difficult to think about matching those. We thought a more practical gift would be important. Some of you may remember that when Bishop Chilstrom was first elected, he received from the King of Sweden, the Royal Order of the North Star. Some might call that Swedish knighthood. So, with that in mind, the decision was made to confer on you, Bishop Chilstrom, the Swiss symbol of royalty in the form of a Swiss Army Knife with the engraving, ‘Herb I’ [‘Herb the First’]. We hope that this knife will accompany you as you stomp through the Minnesota woods with 31 different tools folded into this miracle of Swiss efficiency, we present it to you with our gratitude for all the miles flown, for the work done on behalf of the Lutheran World Federation, the Order of the Swiss Army Knife.” In response, Bishop Chilstrom quipped, “Quite a weapon, isn’t it? I could have used this eight years ago.”

Recognition of Former Bishops

Rev. Robert J. Marshall

Bishop Chilstrom recognized the Rev. Robert J. Marshall, former president of the Lutheran Church in America, stating, “We want to recognize some of those who have been so important to the root system of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—folks who have given themselves so unselfishly to making sure that the base of this church, those deep roots of faith and commitment, were in place when we came together eight years ago and as we continue to grow.” He then introduced Pastor Marshall and his spouse, Mrs. Alice J. Marshall.

Pastor Marshall responded, “I admire the risk you are taking inviting me to speak to this delegation. When one gets older, one gets wordier. I shall try to be disciplined, however. I am tempted to come before you with some feeling at being an expert in assemblies. I attended my first churchwide convention in 1946. It was the first convention over which Dr. Franklin Clark Fry presided. There was one action taken by that convention that was of particular interest to me as a young, 28-year-old pastor. It was the ULCA’s [United Lutheran Church in America] adoption of a contributory pension plan. I learned something about church leadership at that

convention, and about conventions, because a recommendation was brought in, which was not adopted. A substitute was adopted. The following day, however, the whole matter was reconsidered. The substitute was then rejected and the original proposal that had been prepared by the experts was finally adopted.

“Right then I learned something about the nature of a church that is a church of the people—a church that has a representative convention periodically, whose authority is second only to Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions—a church of the people where delegates with less experience than the leadership must think through clearly what the final decision must be.

“But, I also learned the importance of leadership—leadership that could explain the issues adequately to the people, so that they would understand them, and, while they might be a little ‘slow,’ they would eventually come out with the wisest possible human decision. So, I stand here as one greatly appreciative of a representative convention and an assembly of this sort. In the last forty years, I have attended every churchwide convention or assembly except one. I continue to have the experience of coming in from the outside feeling somewhat like Job, argumentative about everything—sometimes complaining, sometimes critical, sometimes wondering what God can be up to. But, at each assembly, I am reassured again. I see the variety of viewpoints. I see how they can be respected and yet some unity of forward movement can be adopted. I have seen it here again.

“I want to congratulate Bishop Chilstrom on an almost perfect job of presiding over an assembly of this size. I have seen him trying to be fair to every single delegate. I have seen him patiently explaining the rules by which we order our business and to which we must adhere, if we will have fair decision-making. I would say, sir, that you measure up to the standard of Ivory Soap—99.44 percent pure. By making that parallel, I by no means want to suggest that you are all washed up. I admired your preaching at the opening worship. You are a great preacher and I hope that the church will continue to benefit from your preaching. You were thought-provoking; you were scriptural. And, I could only admire your report as a bishop to this assembly. You were challenging; you were courageous; you brought attention to the very focal point of our existence—the need to understand the proper use of Scripture, the way the Reformer taught us. May we constantly carry that treasure of your reminder in our hearts and minds. God bless you in the future and the work that you will do for the church in the future.

“I must say a word of appreciation to Vice President Kathy Magnus and to the Secretary, Lowell Almen. I have had the privilege of benefiting from working together with them and learning to appreciate their mastery of their responsibilities. God has blessed this church with their leadership and I congratulate you delegates for reelecting them. Blessings to both of you in your work.

“I have said twice already that I admire you delegates. It was a privilege to sit here and see you sorting out the decision of who should be the next bishop of the church. You weighed carefully the variety of qualifications, you weighed carefully the variety of styles of leadership. I think you made a wise decision. I have reason to be grateful for my past associations with your future bishop, Dr. H. George Anderson. I shall mention only one of them. It was 25 years ago. It was a convention of the Lutheran Church in America, the first convention of that church over which I presided. One of the first items of business, the first major item of business, was the recommendation from the Commission on the Theology of the Ordained Ministry. Dr. Anderson had written a large part of that report and he had to pinch hit in the presentation of the report, because another person had become ill. So, he was there, that first night of the convention, at

one podium and I at the other. We came to the recommendation on the ordination of women. There had been thorough preparation, for, at the same time that the Lutheran Church in America was conducting its study, there was a study of the specific topic of ordaining women by the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. When the report of that study was presented, the three church bodies decided to have a popular study book on the subject, so there had been thorough discussion in the congregations in advance of the convention, so that when the delegates came to the convention it took only a brief, a very brief, discussion with no animosity whatever. Then came an enthusiastic voice vote, affirmatively, with only a very small minority still in opposition. I think the leadership of your bishop-to-be, Dr. Anderson, showed in that particular instance. I pray that in the future, his leadership will meet with equal consensus and response, and that the church will have the same benefit from decisions in the future that it had from that decision 25 years ago. God bless all of you always.”

Bishop Chilstrom noted that Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson had been confirmed by Pastor Marshall at Grace Lutheran Church at Alhambra, Calif. He thanked Pastor Marshall for his partnership and counsel throughout the years.

Rev. Will L. Herzfeld

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. Will L. Herzfeld, former bishop of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and his spouse, the Rev. Michele L. Robinson, and invited Pastor Herzfeld to address the assembly. He noted that Pastor Herzfeld now serves as a staff member of the ELCA Division for Global Mission.

Pastor Herzfeld stated, “I am told that I have two minutes. For an African American clergy that is tantamount to a sentence of death, but we will try to observe [the time limitation]. First of all, it is a pleasure to be able to attend this particular assembly, mostly because of events preceding the assembly where we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women. Rarely have I been so inspired and so moved to endure the early ravages of a Churchwide Assembly. We are especially grateful that we can be present to share and to express our solidarity with the women of our church. I did, however, remind the women of the church that, while we speak a lot of Abraham and Sarah and of the Hebraic line in the church, there was a woman and her child who were thrown out of Abraham’s camp, but who did receive a promise. Until she is welcomed back fully into the camp with her family, there will be some of us who will trouble you. The woman’s name, of course, was Hagar.

“The other reason that I am especially happy to be here is to say publically, as I have said privately to our bishop [Chilstrom], thank you. It is not an easy chore to get a ship turned into the wind so that the wind pulls it into the unknown in a way in which the vessel at least feels some sense of safety. I think that with our bishop we have all experienced that and the church can never be too grateful to Herb and Corinne Chilstrom for their leadership, for their dedication, and for some pain, sometimes caused by us, which they endured and for which, I am sure, they may be grateful for at some point at Pelican Rapids, [Minnesota]. Grateful for the pain? Yeah!

“Third, I would like to also congratulate and express my support for the decision of this assembly in its election of Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson. It looks like those who served as a part of the original 70 [members of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church] are still doing quite well for themselves. George, you may be the last one of those and for that we expect great things from you, not so that this church will continue to be a great church, but so that this church will continue to be a servant church, captured totally by the mind of Christ and by the spirit of Christ for mission. Welcome to Chicago, George, and God bless your ministry among us. And,

God's blessings to you, Bishop Chilstrom, as you begin another phase of your ministry."

Mrs. Fredrik A. (Dagny) Schiotz

Bishop Chilstrom expressed gratitude for the presence of Mrs. Dagny Schiotz, the widow of the late Rev. Fredrik A. Schiotz, who had served as general president of The American Lutheran Church. Mrs. Schiotz was accompanied by her daughter, Ms. Lois Eid. He recalled, "I saw Dagny last winter when I was here in Minneapolis in the middle of a snow storm. It was at Central Lutheran Church and, of course, she always gives you that wonderful warm greeting. Her first words were, 'Won't you come over to my house this noon for lunch?' That is indicative of the kind of person she has been in partnership with her husband. She continues her witness now among us." Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to welcome Mrs. Schiotz.

Acknowledgment of Retiring Synodical Bishops

Bishop Chilstrom invited the synodical bishops who, having served since 1993, had completed, or would complete by the end of the current month, their terms of office. He introduced those who were present and expressed gratitude to them:

Rev. Charles J. Anderson [Southwestern Minnesota Synod]
Rev. Gerald E. Miller [Allegheny Synod]
Rev. Gerhard I. Knutson [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin]
Rev. L. Paul Bartling [Interim Bishop, Northwest Washington Synod]
Rev. Norman D. Eitheim [South Dakota Synod]
Rev. Arthur V. Rimmereid [Northwestern Minnesota Synod]
Rev. Lowell O. Erdahl [Saint Paul Area Synod]
Rev. Reginald H. Holle [North/West Lower Michigan Synod]
Rev. Robert W. Kelley [Northeastern Ohio Synod]
Rev. Harold C. Skillrud [Southeastern Synod]

Bishop Chilstrom acknowledged also those not present:

Rev. J. Roger Anderson [Southern California (West) Synod]
Rev. Robert H. Herder [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin]
Rev. Lowell E. Knutson [Northwest Washington Synod]
Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla [Caribbean Synod]
Rev. Michael G. Merkel [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod]
Rev. Lyle G. Miller [Sierra Pacific Synod]
Rev. Henry Schulte Jr. [Southwestern Texas Synod]
Rev. Robert H. Studtmann [Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod]
Rev. Wayne E. Weissenbuehler [Rocky Mountain Synod]
Rev. Sherman G. Hicks [Metropolitan Chicago Synod]
Rev. E. Harold Jansen [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod]
Rev. Lavern G. Fransen [Florida-Bahamas Synod]

Bishop Chilstrom recognized the ministry of the late Rev. John P. Kaitschuk, who had died in 1994, while serving as bishop of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod. Bishop Chilstrom then said, "On behalf of this church, certificates of appreciation already have been presented to almost all these bishops in another setting. We have one, however, Bishop Robert W. Kelley, who will

receive one today. Bishop Kelley is being given a framed copy of the mosaic that hangs at the entrance of our Lutheran Center in Chicago.” The Lutheran Center houses the corporate offices of the ELCA churchwide organization.

Social Statement on Peace (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 792-802; continued from Minutes, pages 13, 113-137, 260-265.

Discussion of the proposed Social Statement on Peace resumed. Bishop Chilstrom drew attention to the relevant pages in the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2. He said, “You may recall that when we discontinued our discussion and debate on this item we were looking at the recommendation of the Church Council. We also had agreed to treat this en bloc rather than item-by-item. At that time, Ms. Adrienne Lumpkin [Virginia Synod] had presented an amendment, which is number one on the “Amendments and Substitutions to the Social Statement on Peace” supplement, to insert a new paragraph 4.:

Moved;

Seconded: To add the following implementing resolution as a new resolved paragraph 4, and to renumber existing resolutions 4-10 appropriately:

4. To urge those who have responsibility for the Lutheran Calendar for North America to amend it so that the pacifist Dietrich Bonhoeffer is listed as a teacher and martyr;
and

If feasible, to change future printings of Lutheran Book of Worship so that they reflect this new listing.

The Rev. George W. Forell [Southeastern Iowa Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer the amendment before the assembly to the Church Council for study and action.

Pastor Forell spoke to the motion, stating, “I am in agreement with the concern about Bonhoeffer, but I think it is not the proper place to put it into this particular statement and I hope that it will be taken up and put into the various documents where we celebrate and honor the people who have been martyrs for the church.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-744; No-73

Carried: To refer the following amendment to the Church Council for study and possible action:

To urge those who have responsibility for the Lutheran Calendar for North America to amend it so that the pacifist, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, is listed as a teacher and martyr; and, if feasible, to change future printings of the Lutheran Book of Worship so that they reflect this new listing.

Bishop Chilstrom recalled that the recommendation of the Church Council on the proposed social statement on peace was before the assembly for consideration en bloc. He indicated that a two-thirds vote was required for approval.

Assembly 2/3 Vote Required

Action Yes-803; No-30

CA95.5.24 1. To adopt, as amended, "For Peace in God's World" as a social statement of this church to be used in accordance with the understanding outlined in "Social Statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Principles and Procedures," which was adopted at the 1989 Churchwide Assembly (CA89.3.14).

2. To call on members of this church to renew our prayer for peace, our identity as a community for peace, and our study of the scriptural witness to the God of Peace, using this statement to help them form their judgments and carry out their commitment to live a faith active for peace.

3. To call on our congregations and professional leaders to give renewed attention to how our liturgy, preaching, hymnody, and prayers embody God's will for peace and our calling for peace.

4. To commend the education, service, and advocacy ministries of this church in their work for peace on our behalf; to direct churchwide units to review their programs and major program directions in light of this social statement with the intention of strengthening this church's witness to global peace; and to call upon members to support these ministries.

5. To direct the Division for Church in Society, in cooperation with other units, particularly the Division for Congregational Ministries, to provide leadership, consultation, and educational and worship resources for congregations on the basis of this statement.

6. To call upon members to give generously to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its World Hunger Appeal, so that the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, and our partner ecumenical agencies might do more in helping to alleviate the causes and consequences of war, to resolve conflicts, and to build peace; and to call upon members to participate actively in these ministries.

7. To call upon the educational institutions of this church—day schools, colleges, seminaries, centers of continuing education, and camps—to review their programs in light of this statement, so as to further the study of peace and global affairs.

8. To call upon the members and leaders of this church to support our youth in their struggle to define their identity and vocation as present and future peacemakers, and to call upon pastors and educators to encourage our youth to consider various forms of volunteer service that contribute to peace.

9. To share this social statement with other churches of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, and our other ecumenical partners as a sign of our commitment to work together for peace with justice.

10. To send this social statement to the President of the United States, to our elected representatives in the United States Senate and House of Representatives, to the United States Secretary of State, and to the Secretary General of the United Nations as a sign of our commitment to work with them for a more peaceful world.

For Peace in God's World

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America share with the Church of Jesus Christ in all times and places the calling to be peacemakers. In the liturgy of Holy Communion we pray "for the peace of the whole world," asking, "Lord, have mercy." Our petition unites faith in the Triune God with our world's sufferings and hopes.

At the end of a tumultuous and violent century, we share with people everywhere hope for a more peaceful and just world. With this statement on international peace, we strive to strengthen our global perspective as individual Christians and as a church body, in spite of strong currents that push us to turn in on ourselves. As our world discards the mind-set of the Cold War and faces the new threats and opportunities of a changing time, we join with others in searching for what makes for peace.

Most importantly, this statement recalls that the basis of the Church's peace-calling is in God's final peace, the peace of God's eternal reign. That calling is to proclaim the Gospel of God's final peace and to work for earthly peace. This statement understands earthly peace to mean relationships among and within nations that are just, harmonious, and free from war. It offers direction as we act to keep and to build earthly peace on the eve of a new millennium.

We are grateful for the legacy of peacemaking given to our church by its predecessor communities.¹ We confess that too often we have fallen short in our responsibility for peace. We pray for forgiveness, and for the faith that in love acts for earthly peace. We dedicate ourselves anew to pray and to work for peace in God's world.

1. The God of Peace

The biblical narrative reveals God's resolve for peace.

God created all things and gives unity, order, and purpose to a world of different creatures. All humans are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), made for life in community—with God, with others, and with the rest of creation.

All humans also are bound together in sin. Sin, the rupture in our relation with God, profoundly disrupts creation. Centeredness in self, rather than in God, destroys the bonds of human community. In bondage to sin, we fall captive to fear. Sin entangles our social structures. The Bible describes the power of sin: ingratitude, deceit, distrust, hatred, greed, envy, arrogance, sloth, corruption, debauchery, aggression, cruelty, oppression, and injustice. These violate community and generate killing and war.

God nonetheless preserves the world, limiting the effects of sin, bringing good even out of evil and making earthly peace possible. Through the Law, the sovereign God of the nations holds all responsible for their neighbor, protects community, and blesses creation ever anew. God works often in hidden and inscrutable ways. God's judgment comes upon a sinful humanity for failure to live together justly and peacefully, and calls all to repentance and faith in God. God's just wrath against all that causes chaos and destruction is in the service of the divine resolve for peace.

God's resolve for peace was manifested in a new way through one people, chosen to be a blessing to all. Through the people of Israel, God acted so as to reconcile creation, promising a reign in which peace and justice will kiss each other (Psalm 85).

God's promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Rejected by humans, Jesus was confirmed by God who raised him from the dead in the power of the Holy Spirit, so that "on earth" there might be "peace" (Luke 2:14). In bringing this peace,

- Jesus taught love for one's enemies;
- he reached out to the oppressed, downtrodden, and rejected of the earth;
- he prayed for his enemies while himself being rejected on the cross;
- above all, through Jesus' violent death, God redeemed the world, "for . . . while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (Romans 5:10).

This reconciling love of enemy discloses how deeply peace is rooted in who God is. The cross of Christ enacts God's resolve for peace once-for-all. "The God of peace"² suffers with and for a suffering and sinful world so that all of creation will enjoy the loving community of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"The Gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15) heals our broken relationship with God, removing the ultimate root of violence and injustice. The Gospel breaks down the dividing walls of hostility among people, creates a new humanity—making Christ Jesus "our peace" (Ephesians 2:13-22)—and promises the reconciliation of all things in Christ.³ The peace of the Gospel is the final peace God intends for all. The baptized community already takes part in this peace through the Word and faith as it hopes for creation's fulfillment in "a new heaven and a new earth" where death and pain "will be no more" (Revelation 21:1, 4).

God's steadfast resolve for peace encompasses our time as it does all times. In creation and redemption, through Law and Gospel, God's faithful love acts for peace.

2. The Church, a Community for Peace

A. Divine Calling

Through the Gospel, the Holy Spirit calls and gathers a people from all nations to worship and witness to the God of peace. The called and gathered are sinners, forgiven and righteous on account of Jesus Christ.

In publicly gathering to proclaim and celebrate God's Gospel of peace, the Church uniquely contributes to earthly peace. Its most valuable mission for peace is to keep alive news of God's resolve for peace, declaring that all are responsible to God for earthly peace and announcing forgiveness, healing, and hope in the name of Jesus Christ. In praying for peace in the world, in interceding for all who suffer from war and injustice and for those in authority, the Church acts for peace.

The vastly different Christian communities of faith that gather in all parts of the globe are one in the Gospel, called "to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-6). The Church, with a diversity of gifts, contributes to earthly peace in living the oneness we have received—in our congregations, in our church body, and in the Church universal. Nonetheless, divisions among competing groups (1 Corinthians 1:10-17) and human differences frequently outweigh our oneness in Christ (Galatians 3:28) and abuse our divine calling.

Where the Church does live in unity, overcoming such divisions and welcoming the stranger and outcast, the Church contributes to earthly peace. Where the followers of Jesus refuse to repay evil with evil but turn the other cheek and go the extra mile (Matthew 5:38-42), where in their life together Christians' creative, nonviolent responses to hostile acts open up possibilities for reconciliation, the Church contributes to earthly peace. Where churches in different countries work in solidarity for human dignity, the Church contributes to earthly peace. Peace in the community of faith serves by example the ministry and message of reconciliation entrusted to the Church for the world (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

By equipping the faithful to act for peace in all their communities, the Church contributes to earthly peace. In recalling our identity in baptism, in gathering in peace around the Lord's Table, in telling the biblical narrative, in teaching faith, hope, and love, the Church provides the basics of peacemaking for all of life. The Church is the school of the Holy Spirit, who molds and equips us to be peacemakers. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,

generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22). With its ministry of Word and Sacrament, the Church sustains believers in their conscientious decisions, including people who serve in the military and defense industries, and people who refuse to participate in all wars or in a particular war.

B. Faithful Presence

When the Church fulfills the mandates of its divine calling, it helps in word and deed to create an environment conducive to peace. When the Church forsakes these mandates, it also fails to serve earthly peace. Through faithfulness in its life and activities as a community for peace, the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit becomes a presence for peace that disturbs, reconciles, serves, and deliberates.

The Church is a disturbing presence when it refuses to be silent and instead speaks the truth in times when people shout out, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14). The Church is this presence when it names and resists idols that lead to false security, injustice, and war, and calls for repentance. We, therefore, denounce beliefs and actions that:

- elevate our nation or any nation or people to the role of God;
- find ultimate security in weapons and warfare;
- ordain the inherent right of one people, race, or civilization to rule over others;
- promise a perfect, peaceful society through the efforts of a self-sufficient humanity; and
- despair of any possibility for peace.

As a reconciling presence, the Church creates bonds among different peoples, whether local or distant. It has special opportunities to bring conflicting parties together and to keep tenuous lines of communication open during times of crisis and war. The Church serves reconciliation by countering religious movements—including ones claiming to be Christian—that preach and practice hate and violence, by challenging stereotypes of "the enemy," and by encouraging imaginative solutions to conflicts.

The Church is called to be a serving presence in society. The Church serves when it holds power accountable, advocates justice, stands with those who are poor and vulnerable, provides sanctuary, and meets human need. The Church serves when it supports efforts by governments and others to secure a just peace and when it encourages public debate about what is right and good in international and domestic affairs. It serves by calling for compassion in meeting human needs.

The Church as a community for peace is also to be a deliberating presence in society. As a community of moral deliberation,⁴ the Church is a setting of freedom and respect where believers with different perspectives may learn from one another in the unity of faith. Issues that shape our world—including dilemmas of military service and confronting human evil through nonviolence—are proper themes for discussion in the Church.

The Holy Spirit calls the Church to be a community for peace, yet, as that community, we fall short and contradict our calling. God's disturbing Word comes especially to us, judging us and calling us to confession and repentance. At the cross of Christ, the Church stands with the whole world under God's judgment and mercy. Daily we must return to our baptism, die again with Christ to sin's power, and be raised anew to live by the Spirit.

3. In God's World, a Faith . . .

A. Active for Peace

Trust in God's promise of final peace freely given in Jesus Christ alone drives us to engage fully in the quest to build earthly peace. Yet we know this quest is complex and our accomplishments provisional. Faith in the crucified and risen Lord strengthens us to persist even when God seems absent in a violent and unjust world, and when weariness and hopelessness threaten to overwhelm us.

Through the cross of Christ, God calls us to serve the needs of our neighbor, especially of those groups and individuals who suffer and are vulnerable. The cross assures us that even in our vulnerability, suffering, and death, God's power is active through us. In the cross we recognize that forgiveness, reconciliation, and love of enemy are essential to our efforts to build earthly peace.

Our everyday communities form the arena where faith acts in love for peace. God calls us to be peacemakers in and through the many overlapping circles of communities through which God gives us life: our homes and friendships, neighborhoods and work places, congregations and volunteer associations, towns and cities, nations and international communities. As citizens we are to seek to influence our nation's actions for peace among the nations. Sharing a common humanity with all people, we are called to work for peace throughout the globe.

Our many communities mutually influence one another. Attitudes, loyalties, and commitments learned in families help shape our views of other peoples and nations. War may disrupt and even devastate family life. Efforts to create just and secure communities within our nation go hand-in-hand with the pursuit of peace among nations.⁵

Because Christians act for peace in varied settings, our responsibilities, experiences, interests, and perspectives differ. We often disagree on how to build earthly peace, but biblical insight provides a common context for discerning direction.

B. Guided by Biblical Insight

In faith we receive our world as God's creation. We affirm therefore that earthly peace is built on the recognition of the unity and goodness of created existence, the oneness of humanity, and the dignity of every person. Peace is difference in unity. It requires both respect for the uniqueness of others—finite persons in particular communities—and acknowledgement of a common humanity. We advocate an earthly peace that builds on freedom and responsibility, encourages compassion, and embraces justice and care of the earth.

Because all are sinners before God, efforts to build earthly peace must recognize sin's persistent, pervasive, and subtle power. We easily deceive ourselves about our own righteousness. Even our best intentions can produce harmful results. Our efforts must take account of the human tendency to dominate and destroy, and must recognize those "principalities" and "powers" (Ephesians 6:12, RSV) that cause strife in our world. We also advocate an earthly peace that provides security from violence and aggression, seeks just order in place of tyranny or anarchy, checks unrestrained power, and defends and enhances the life of people who are poor and powerless.

In spite of human enmity—toward God, among humans, and with the rest of creation—God continues to work through people, their communities and structures, to make earthly peace possible. We, therefore, cooperate with and learn from others, and we value the God-given knowledge, wisdom, virtue, imagination, and creativity found among all peoples. We support structures and processes for ordering relationships that are sufficiently just, open, and dynamic for people to confront injustice and conflict nonviolently.

Because we are created as whole persons, building earthly peace encompasses all the dimensions of human society. These dimensions include the patterns of beliefs and values that give meaning to life (culture, including religion), the structures and practices that sustain life (economics), as well as the structures and processes that allow communities to make and enforce decisions (politics). We believe that God works through human culture, economics, and politics, and intends them to restrain evil and promote the common good.

Earthly peace is not the same as the promised peace of God's present and future eternal reign. As a human achievement built in the middle of strife, earthly peace is often fleeting and always partial. It is difficult to build and maintain. It is easily and frequently disrupted by violence and war. All the more, then, is earthly peace a most precious gift. It embodies God's intention for creation, serves human and planetary good, and gives space to proclaim the Gospel, keeping hope in God alive.

C. Lived in Our Time

In hope we live out our faith in community with others and together strive for earthly peace. As we do so, we experience a world that is increasingly interconnected. People work, buy, and sell in a global market. The media make us present at happenings around the world, and new communication technologies increase available information. Economic and technological developments make increased integration both possible and necessary. The global dangers of nuclear weapons, environmental degradation, and population pressure also create greater interdependence. International trafficking in illegal drugs contributes to violence in all parts of the world.

All people experience these global changes from within particular and limited communities. The movement toward greater integration affects the world's diverse communities differently—from threatening their identity and existence to enhancing their life. Different communities respond differently to the changes. Integration often accentuates the attention people give to their particular communities. Familial, religious, cultural, ethnic, and national communities continue to be decisive sources for peoples' sense of belonging, outlook, and perception of their interests.

The tension-filled interplay of these two dynamics—here called integration and particularity—shape today's quest for peace. Integration promises broader global community; particularity promises deeper personal community. Integration threatens to bring inequality and domination by unaccountable power; particularity threatens to bring fragmentation and violent conflict by groups that deny the humanity of those who differ from them. Recognizing both promise and threat, we seek an earthly peace that affirms unity in our diversity.

Good and evil are intricately interwoven in the interplay of these two dynamics. The benefits of unparalleled economic development in some parts of the world contrast with unrelenting poverty in others. The impact of a global economy on local communities varies. Basic cultural questions become even more important as the encounter of cultures intensifies. In and among religions there exist increased dialogue and mutual understanding. But there also are splintering, intense hostility toward other groups, and support for violent crusades against the enemy.

States, vastly unequal in their power, exercise their sovereignty in a thickening web of international organizations and agreements, regionally and globally. Economic integration diminishes governments' ability to determine their own economic policies. National borders are

ever more permeable by outside influences. The movement of people across borders due to war or poverty is massive and controversial. Moreover, numerous states face disintegration from within when minority groups, usually ethnic communities, seek their own state or autonomy. In vicious civil wars civilians often are targeted by armed groups. Such wars raise new questions about what, if anything, the international community can and should do in the face of internal conflicts.

4. Political Responsibility

A. Acting As Citizens

We recognize the awesome responsibility political leaders, policy makers, and diplomats have for peace in our unsettled time. In a democracy all citizens share in this responsibility. We encourage participation by Christians in the affairs of government.

Our faith as Christians gives a distinctive quality to our life as citizens. Love born of faith calls us not to harm others and to help them in every need. The Scriptures provide us direction. Yet we do not possess uniquely Christian international policies or a divine or biblical politics for our nation. For political guidance we also must rely upon reason and compassion, and examine and draw upon common human experience through which, we believe, God is at work creating and preserving the world.

For the welfare of our neighbors, we in company with others must press for what is right and good within the limits and possibilities of the actual situation. Leaders and citizens make decisions among many competing goods and interests when not all can be realized. In the uncertain task of calculating the probable outcomes of these decisions and choosing the best alternative, we must view the desired ends of action in light of the means and resources available.

Political authority relies on both the consent of the people and the threat and use of coercion. In accordance with the Lutheran tradition,⁶ we affirm that governments may legitimately employ such measures as law and its enforcement, police protection, provisions for the common defense, and resistance to aggression. We also affirm that governments should vigorously pursue less coercive measures over more coercive ones: consent over compulsion, nonviolence over violence, diplomacy over military engagement, and deterrence over war.

With its significant economic, political, cultural, and military power, the United States plays a vital leadership role in world affairs. It cannot and should not withdraw or isolate itself from the rest of the world. Neither should it seek to control or police the world. Global challenges cannot be addressed by the United States alone; yet few can be met without the United States' participation.

In pursuing their interests, all nations, including the United States, have an obligation to respect the interests of other states and international actors and to comply with international law. Nations should seek their own common good in the context of the global common good. International bodies should work for the welfare of all nations.

Citizens need to give careful attention to how we in the United States perceive our national interest and interpret our national identity, since what states do depends in large measure on their views of their own interests and identity. Sin's power often makes itself felt in arrogant and self-righteous views of national identity, and in narrow, short-term, and absolute views of national interest.

We call for an imaginative attention to the interests and welfare of other nations, especially of those that are viewed as "enemies" or that are considered unimportant for our nation's

interests. We expect expressions of our nation's identity to build on the best of our traditions, to respect others' identity, and to open up paths for mutual understanding. For the sake of a greater good or for reasons of conscience, citizens may need to oppose a prevailing understanding or practice of national identity and interest. Citizens may even need to resist oppressive government.

B. Deciding about Wars

Wars, both between and within states, represent a horrendous failure of politics. The evil of war is especially evident in the number of children and other noncombatants who suffer and die. We lament that the Church has blessed crusades and wars in the name of Jesus Christ. We recognize with sorrow that too often people formed in the Lutheran tradition have passively accepted their government's call-to-arms or have too readily endorsed war to resolve conflicts.

First and foremost, love of neighbor obligates us to act to prevent wars and to seek alternatives to them, especially in view of modern weapons and their proliferation. For this reason, this statement focuses on building a just peace and identifies tasks that create conditions for peace. Yet wars and their threat still thrust themselves upon us, and we cannot avoid making decisions about them.

In doing so, we face conflicting moral claims and agonizing dilemmas. Helping the neighbor in need may require protecting innocent people from injustice and aggression. While we support the use of nonviolent measures, there may be no other way to offer protection in some circumstances than by restraining forcibly those harming the innocent. We do not, then—for the sake of the neighbor—rule out possible support for the use of military force. We must determine in particular circumstances whether or not military action is the lesser evil.

We seek guidance from the principles of the "just/unjust war" tradition. While permitting recourse to war in exceptional circumstances, these principles intend to limit such occasions by setting forth conditions that must be met to render military action justifiable. We begin with a strong presumption against all war; support for and participation in a war to restore peace is a tragic concession to a sinful world. Any decision for war must be a mournful one.

The principles for deciding about wars include right intention, justifiable cause, legitimate authority, last resort, declaration of war aims, proportionality, and reasonable chance of success. The principles for conducting war include noncombatant immunity and proportionality.⁷ The principles for post-war conduct include showing mercy to the defeated and assisting them to rebuild. Justifiable national and international commitment of forces to armed conflicts depend on adherence to these principles.

This approach incorporates the hope that even war may be subject to political ends (peace) and moral considerations. At their best, these principles provide a moral framework, ambiguous and imprecise though it be, for public deliberation about war, and guidance for persons deciding what to do when faced with the dilemmas of war. In using them, Christians need to be prepared to say "no" to wars in which their nation participates.

These principles are important in international law and in military codes of conduct. They are the basis for our church's unequivocal rejection of nuclear war⁸ and for its support for "selective conscientious objection."⁹ In taking this approach to war, this church supports the vocation of men and women in the military who in conscience directly face the ambiguities of relative evils, and who may suffer and die to defend their neighbor.

From the posture of the just/unjust war tradition, the aim of all politics is peace. Any

political activity that involves coercion should be held accountable to just/unjust war principles. They are important for evaluating movements, sanctions, embargoes, boycotts, trade policies to reward or punish, and other coercive but nonviolent measures.

The Church and others often fail to teach and apply the just/unjust war principles. These principles can be and have been misused in self-serving ways. As an evolving tradition, these principles need constant testing in light of the changing nature of warfare. Their proper use depends on political wisdom and historical knowledge of the situation. We affirm this approach humbly and self-critically. We encourage further deliberation about its faithfulness and adequacy.

Another voice with deep historical roots in the Christian tradition also speaks in our church. This church today needs the witness of its members who in the name of Jesus Christ refuse all participation in war, who commit themselves to establish peace and justice on earth by nonviolent power alone, and who may suffer and die in their discipleship. We support members who conscientiously object to bearing arms in military service.

We must continue the perennial discussion in the Church universal about whether Christian love and discipleship prohibit participation in war in all circumstances, or whether they may permit it in some circumstances. This discussion poses important and difficult biblical, historical, theological, and ethical questions. Even when Christians may differ on these questions, there is still a basis for practical cooperation in their common presumption against violence and commitment to peace.

We make decisions about participation in war knowing that what we do or do not do falls short of what love requires. No matter what conscientious people decide, they remain under God's judgment and in need of God's mercy given in the cross of Christ.

5. Tasks

What should we do to keep, make, and build international peace today? This section identifies tasks and arenas for action. It draws out implications of our faith and incorporates judgments of reason, which always are open to development and correction. Naming these tasks voices our hope that international relations can be ordered in ways that contribute to a just, free, secure, and nonviolent world. Yet we pursue this hope within the constraints and brokenness of our complex world.

A. A Culture of Peace

Foster a dynamic vision of difference in unity. All people in their amazing diversity are God's creatures, sinners for whom Christ died. In a time when increasing integration endangers the bonds of communities and when an idolatrous allegiance to one's own community endangers our oneness, we must voice with clarity the powerful vision of difference in unity. This vision calls us to engage differences, not to ignore or fear them. The hope for earthly peace challenges people to strengthen their own particular communities in ways that promote respect and appreciation for people in other communities, for all share a common humanity. We urge our congregations to promote understanding through people-to-people exchanges.

In many situations today, religious differences are a source of enmity. Religion is used to incite people to violence. The Church faces new challenges in being a reconciling presence among the religions of the world. We need to learn from Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others, discovering the ways they strive for peace, correcting distorted images, and working for

mutual understanding.¹⁰ We rejoice where people of different religions work together to overcome hostility.

Promote respect for human rights. "Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." These words from the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) are consistent with our understanding of humans created in God's image. Human rights provide a common universal standard of justice for living with our differences, and they give moral and legal standing to the individual in the international community.

We, therefore, will continue to teach about human rights, protest their violation, advocate their international codification, and support effective ways to monitor and ensure compliance with them. Our priorities are to:

- oppose genocide and other grievous violations of human rights such as torture, religious and racial oppression, forced conscription (impressment), forced labor, and war crimes (including organized rape);
- provide for the most basic necessities of the poor; and
- defend the human rights of groups most susceptible to violations, especially all minorities, women, and children.

Counter and transform attitudes that encourage violence. A significant cause of violent conflict, domestically and internationally, are attitudes that view violence as a readily acceptable way of dealing with differences and disputes. Fear of others, disregard for people's dignity, personal experiences of violence, and images in movies, television, videos, and music that glorify violence and war help form these attitudes.¹¹

The Gospel strikes at the heart of what promotes such attitudes, freeing us from fear to see others as brothers and sisters for whom Christ died and lives. The media should depict honestly the violence, brutality, and terror of war and should expose falsehoods. We encourage efforts in education, the arts, and communication to portray the beauty and goodness of peace and to enhance appreciation of our world's diversity.

Strengthen the will and ability to resolve conflicts peacefully. Disagreements, conflicts, and competition among nations, groups, and individuals are inevitable, but wars are not. One essential ingredient for reducing the likelihood of war is the steady resolve and intense effort of the parties involved to settle conflict nonviolently. Another essential ingredient is the ability to explore all avenues for common interests, to compromise interests, to conciliate differences, and to prevent, moderate, or isolate destructive conflicts. These ingredients are as vital for resolving conflict in international diplomacy as they are in families and communities.

We renew our commitment to carry on this peace task through education and practice, especially with children and youth. We call upon nations to provide leadership, education, structures, and funds for the peaceful resolution of conflict. Nations should do so with the same commitment that they prepare people to settle disputes with military force.

B. An Economy with Justice

Insist that peace and economic justice belong together. Massive hunger and poverty, alongside abundance and wealth, violate the bonds of our common humanity. Such economic disparities are a cause of conflict and war and spur our efforts to build just economic relationships necessary for peace. Justice points toward an economy ordered in ways that:

- respect human dignity;

- provide the necessities of life;
- distribute goods and burdens fairly and equitably; and
- are compatible with a life-sustaining ecosystem.¹²

Sustainable growth and fair distribution are vital in creating economic justice. Both should enable all to participate in the economy. Global economic integration should enhance economic well-being among and within nations. Fiscal policy, business practices, investment policies, and personal life styles, including patterns of consumption, should contribute to economic justice and the long-term sustainability of our planet.

Support just arrangements to regulate the international economy. In a world with growing economic integration and political fragmentation, global enterprises are increasingly unaccountable to either national or international standards. This lack of accountability can be a source of injustice and violent conflict.

We support efforts by nations to improve regulation and coordination of the global economy through reciprocal and mutually advantageous arrangements. International trade and financial agreements should help to increase partnership, prevent commercial wars among nations, protect the environment, provide assistance with debt management, check abuse by multinational companies, and protect poorer nations. Developing countries need better opportunities to foster capital investment and to profit through fair and open trade.

Revitalize aid. We affirm that our nation has responsibility to contribute a portion of its wealth to people in poorer nations through effective economic assistance. Assistance should come in the form of both humanitarian aid needed to relieve the consequences of disasters and development assistance that contributes to improvements in the quality of life in developing economies. While the United States has been generous in providing humanitarian aid, our nation dramatically trails the rest of the industrialized world in providing development assistance relative to our production of wealth.¹³ We support continued and increased assistance by the United States, and call for its gradual realignment toward more development assistance and a proportional reduction in subsidies to purchase weapons.

The guiding purpose of economic assistance should be to reduce hunger and poverty in sustainable and environmentally sound ways. Aid should be provided in ways that promote human rights and build self-reliant individuals, communities, and nations. Aid should be responsive to the need of many countries to reduce population pressure through greater opportunity for women and through voluntary, safe, and reliable means of birth control. Aid also should require accountability on the part of recipient governments. We support bilateral and multilateral aid and the use of non-governmental organizations as channels to reach local communities.

Support economic conversion. While recognizing its continuing and changing security responsibilities, the United States should evaluate carefully the balance between legitimate security needs and other priority uses of government revenues, and reduce military expenditures wherever possible. Where reductions occur, communities, businesses, and governments on all levels have responsibility to develop strategies that contribute to the well-being of those who bear the greatest burden of this economic conversion. We encourage congregations that serve these populations to participate in ministries of reconciliation and support to persons in economic and professional transition.

C. A Politics of Cooperation

Strengthen international cooperation. Belief in a common humanity, increasing global integration, and national self-interest all compel this task. In the Charter of the United Nations and in other international agreements, nations have stated how they believe their relations should be ordered. Normally nations comply with these principles. States pledge to respect the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of other states and not to intervene in their internal affairs, and to honor the self-determination of peoples. They also pledge to fulfill international obligations, to cooperate with other states, and to settle disputes peacefully. While states have the right of self-defense and may resist aggression, they are otherwise to abstain from the threat or use of military force.¹⁴ At present, such principles offer the best framework for a just ordering of international relations. Citizens have responsibility to hold governments accountable to these principles.

As is evident in internal conflicts today, however, the principles of international law are at times in conflict. For example, when a state massively violates the fundamental rights and freedoms of its people, particularly with acts of genocide, does the principle of nonintervention still hold? In our judgment it does not. Because of its responsibility for human rights, the international community, through its regional and global organizations, has an obligation to respond and a right to intervene, with military force if necessary. Yet any such intervention must be carried out with extreme caution and be accountable to the principles of the just/unjust war tradition.

In support for international cooperation, we:

- call for building confidence among nations through forms of state conduct that are legal, nonviolent, truthful, reliable, and open, and for minimizing all forms of covert action;
- advocate increased respect for and adherence to international law;
- support viable, long-term efforts to strengthen the United Nations as a forum for international cooperation and peace, including the International Court of Justice,¹⁵ and regional courts;
- support creation of an International Criminal Court, which would hold individuals accountable for violations of international law, for example, in cases of genocide and war crimes; and
- encourage continuing deliberation on the international community's responsibility for internal conflicts.

Improve structures of common security. In an increasingly integrated world nations cannot and should not seek only their own security. Their goal should be common or mutually assured security. Cultural interaction and political and economic cooperation can contribute to common security, as can stable balances of power and defensive alliances.

Collective regional and global security structures are also needed. We affirm the original vision and mandate of collective security given to the United Nations and its Security Council. We encourage sober assessment of the successes and failures of international peacemaking efforts. We support, without illusions, efforts to make stronger and more effective the work of the United Nations and regional bodies in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.

We understand that the United States' armed forces have a role in the structures of common security. This role requires the United States to maintain sufficient armed forces to participate effectively in common efforts to deter or defeat likely threats. Although this involvement entails a significant burden on our country, strengthening regional and global security structures is, in our judgment, in the long-term interests of the United States as well as other nations.

Give high priority to arms control and reduction. We particularly urge a sharp reduction in

the number of weapons of mass destruction. We call for arms control agreements that are substantial, equitable, verifiable, and progressive.¹⁶ We support mutual confidence-building measures to improve mutually assured security. In particular, we give priority to:

- agreements among the leading nuclear powers to reduce their nuclear stockpiles and to decrease the possibility of nuclear confrontation or accident;
- the successful negotiation of a renewed Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, the strengthening of mechanisms to monitor and enforce nuclear treaties, and efforts that move toward the elimination of nuclear weapons;
- treaties to ban the production, sale, and use of biological and chemical weapons; and
- agreements to ban the production, sale, and use of land mines.

Control and reduce the arms trade. Heavily armed nations continue to spend billions on arms. As one of the world's leading arms exporters, the United States has special responsibility to reduce arms sales and to seek proper international control agreements over the worldwide sale and transfer of arms by the major exporters. We:

- support legislation to prohibit United States military assistance and arms transfers to governments that use them to oppress their own citizens or to engage in acts of aggression; and
- encourage international efforts to make arms sales open to public scrutiny and to reduce the arms trade.

Advocate participatory and accountable political structures within nations. In view of the high number of internal wars, the concern for political structures and processes within nations is crucial for peace. The success or failure of democratic efforts may have significant impact on international peace, since historically democracies have seldom declared war on each other. We expect governments to be accountable to law and people, provide for the participation of all and space for loyal opposition, protect individual and minority rights, and offer processes for conflicts to be resolved without war.

In support for just political structures, we:

- call for assistance to nations struggling to form democracies, recognizing that in many nations grinding poverty and population pressure are major obstacles to democracy;
- acknowledge that the responsible use of sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop oppressing their people; and
- insist that one of the most important contributions the United States can make to peace is to have its own democracy work for a just and peaceful ordering of its diverse society.

Encourage non-governmental organizations and their work for peace. Freedom of association and activities of non-governmental local, national, and international organizations are indispensable to building peace today. These organizations counter the abuse of state power and mediate between individuals and organized centers of power. Through them, people expose serious human rights violations, respond to human need unmet by governments, organize people who are poor and oppressed, keep attention focused on the brutality of wars, and help resolve conflicts.

In support of non-governmental organizations, we:

- recognize and strive to further the role churches play as a worldwide network of communication in the defense of human rights;
- encourage people to become active supporters of one or more such non-governmental organizations;
- call upon nations to protect by law and nurture in their culture the freedom of their citizens to

join together in voluntary association; and

- support the emerging forms of service in which teams of highly-trained volunteers seek peace through nonviolent intervention in conflicted and war-torn areas of the world.¹⁷

Encourage and support nonviolent action. In this century nonviolent movements have impressively shown their ability to protest violence and injustice and to bring change in situations of oppression.

We strongly support efforts to develop the potential of nonviolence to bring about just and peaceful change, and we:

- call for education on nonviolence in our church and elsewhere;
- encourage members of our church to give conscientious consideration to participation in nonviolent action in situations where it holds promise of being an appropriate and effective way to bring about greater justice, calling on them to appraise the situation with the principles of the just/unjust war tradition¹⁸; and
- provide pastoral support for those who in conscience undertake nonviolent action for peace, including those who do so in symbolic ways to dramatize an evil and to witness to the power of the cross of Christ.

Care for the Uprooted. Tens of millions are refugees in foreign lands. At least as many are internally displaced. In unprecedented numbers people have had to flee their homes because of persecution or general violence.

We support compassionate survival assistance for refugees and vigorous international protection for them. The world community has a responsibility to aid nations that receive refugees and to help change the situations from which they have fled. In our own country, we support a generous policy of welcome for refugees and immigrants. We pledge to continue our church's historic leadership in caring for refugees and immigrants.

"Go in Peace"

The elusive quest to build earthly peace is multifaceted, and for us belongs in a context that extends far beyond our own efforts and time. Our faith active for peace begins and ends with God, the alpha and omega of peace. Living still in a time when hate, injustice, war, and suffering seem often to have the upper hand, we call on God to fulfill the divine promise of final peace.

"Give God no rest" (Isaiah 62:6-7) until that day when "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together. . . . They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord" (Isaiah 65:25).

"Give God no rest" until that day when the nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).

We await the fulfillment of God's promise of eternal peace, not in resignation, but in grateful joy and active hope, for our time and place are also God's. God, who makes earthly peace possible, calls us to gather in worship. Baptized into Christ, we hear the Gospel and share Holy Communion, the foretaste of the peaceful feast to come. The Holy Spirit sends us into our everyday communities to be agents for peace. We are called to pray, and to live, for peace in God's world.

We do the liturgy and we disperse, trusting that the peace of God in Christ Jesus, "which surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7), goes with us and prepares us to be peacemakers.

"Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God."

Notes

1. The social statements on peace and global affairs from The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America are one sign of this legacy. We affirm and seek to build upon these statements: "Conscientious Objection" (LCA, 1968), "National Service and Selective Service Reform" (ALC, 1970), "World Community" (LCA, 1970), "Peace, Justice and Human Rights" (ALC, 1972), "Human Rights" (LCA, 1978), "Mandate for Peacemaking" (ALC, 1982), and "Peace and Politics" (LCA, 1984).
2. Romans 15:33; 16:20; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:16; Hebrews 13:20.
3. Colossians 1:15-20; Philippians 2:10-11; Romans 8:19-25; 1 Corinthians 15:23-25.
4. See the ELCA social statement, "The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective," 1991, pages 5-8.
5. See the message on "Community Violence," adopted by the ELCA Church Council, April 1994.
6. "The Augsburg Confession," Article XVI. Note also its reference to Acts 5:29: "We must obey God rather than any human authority." Law and sword are meant to be God's servants to restrain evil and provide order (Romans 13:1-7). Nonetheless, political authority may itself become the embodiment of evil (Revelation 13).
7. For more on the just/unjust war teaching see, "Peace: God's Gift, Our Task" (ELCA 1993), pages 19-21, and 41-43. For congregational study, consult Joseph L. Allen, War: A Primer for Christians—Crusade, Pacifism, Just War (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991).
8. "Peace and Politics," page 5; "Mandate for Peacemaking," pages 5 and 7.
9. "The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America supports those of its members who conscientiously object to bearing arms in military service at any time, those who in conscience object to participation in a particular war or military activity (such as the refusal to use weapons of mass destruction in combat), and those who in conscience choose to participate in armed service." (Resolution adopted by the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1987.)
10. Martin Luther writes that all Christians should "put on" their neighbor, and so conduct themselves toward the neighbor as if they "were in the other's place." See "The Freedom of the Christian," tr. by W.A. Lambert and revised by Harold J. Grimm, in Luther's Works, 31 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), page 371.
11. See the ELCA message on "Community Violence."
12. See the ELCA social statement, "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice," 1993.
13. In 1993 the United States ranked last among 21 industrialized nations, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. See "10 Myths and Realities of Foreign Aid" (Washington, D.C.: Interaction, 1994).
14. See Dorothy V. Jones, Code of Peace: Ethics and Security in the World of the Warlord States (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
15. This includes strengthening United States support for the International Court of Justice. "For the sake of strengthened confidence in the evolving structures of international law and institutions, nations holding self-judging reservations to the Statute of the International Court of Justice by which they reserve the right to reject the Court's jurisdiction should repeal these

reservations." See "World Community" (LCA social statement, 1970), page 2.

16. See "Peace and Politics" (LCA social statement, 1984), page 8.

17. For more on these forms of service, see Mary Evelyn Jegen, SND, *Seeds of Peace, Harvest for Life: Report on a Global Peace Service Consultation, from an International Consultation at the Church Center for the United Nations, New York, N.Y., November 18-20, 1993* (St. Meinrad, Indiana: Abbey Press, 1994).

18. See the resolution, "Civil Disobedience," adopted by the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1987. Also, the social statement, "Human Law and the Conscience of Believers" (ALC, 1984).

Following the adoption of the social statement, "For Peace in God's World," Bishop Chilstrom stated, "Historically, looking back many, many years from now, even though it did not generate the kind of heated debate that we sometimes have on statements in this church, I believe future generations will look back and say that this was one of the most significant actions this church took. Now, I want to urge you to take it home and share it with people in your congregations and in your area so that we can, as a church, think very carefully about this deep, critical issue."

Report of the Memorials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued from Minutes, pages 65-90, 139-157, 246-249; continued on Minutes, pages 452-463, 586-616, 637-644, 660-661.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Donald M. Hallberg, co-chair of the Memorials Committee, to continue the committee's report. Pastor Hallberg indicated that the assembly would consider first the items remaining en bloc.

The following action was taken without further discussion:

Assembly

Action Yes-765; No-55

CA95.5.25 To adopt en bloc the recommendations of the Memorials Committee as the response of the Churchwide Assembly to the synodical memorials as listed in Categories 4 (Parts 1-2), 7, 9 (Parts 1-4), 11, 12 (Parts 1-5), 13, 14 (Parts 1, 2, and 4), 15 (Part 3), 17, 19, 22, 23, of the committee's report:

Category 4: Environment—Part 1,

Care of Creation

Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the World Watch Institute in 1990 forecast that at the current rate of environmental degradation, in 40 years our world will lose its capacity to recover from the destruction caused by our consuming ways; and

Whereas, the magnitude of change demanded, if we are to adopt a sustainable manner of living within creation, requires not only a broad sweep of behavioral and programmatic changes but also a profound change in our thinking and relating to God, to ourselves, to each other and to our environment; and

Whereas, worship and most especially, prayer, is our central expression of the priorities and nature of our relationship to God, to ourselves, to each other and to our environment; and

Whereas, virtually all Minneapolis Area Synod congregations participate weekly in "prayers of the church" which involves multiple petitions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly urge all member congregations to include at least one petition per Sunday in the prayers of the church concerning some dimension of care for creation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly urge all member congregations to develop at least one activity during the next 12 months which publicly witnesses to the congregation's commitment as a community of stewards of the environment; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly similarly to petition all synods and congregations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

BACKGROUND

This memorial is consistent with the call made in the "Social Statement on Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice," adopted by the third Churchwide Assembly on August 28, 1993. In section V.B.3., "Education and Communication," it states:

This church will encourage those who develop liturgical, preaching, and educational materials that celebrate God's creation. Expanded curricula, for use in the many contexts of Christian education, will draw upon existing materials. We will promote reporting on the environment by church publications, and encourage coverage of this church's environmental concerns in public media.

In the section under "Commitments of this Church," the assembly called upon the church to "encourage those who develop liturgical, preaching, and educational materials that celebrate God's Creation."

Churchwide Activities and Resources: The Environmental Stewardship and Hunger Education Program of the Division for Church in Society has cooperated with the National Council of the Churches of Christ—Eco-Justice Working Group to produce a resource packet entitled "God's Earth, Our Home." This packet consists of worship resources including litanies and prayers for children, youth, and adults. A second resource entitled "Care for the Earth: An Environmental Resource Manual for Church Leaders" was produced by the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago with the cooperation of the Division for Congregational Ministries. This resource also contains prayers for the care of the earth. The Environmental Stewardship and Hunger Education Program has produced a poster entitled "Make Your Church a Creation Awareness Center," listing activities congregations can do in the care of God's creation. In addition to this poster, the division also produced information sheets on lighting efficiency programs for congregations, congregationally supported agriculture, resource conservation, and environmental tithing. These resources contain many practical ideas that congregations can put into practice in their lives.

The Division for Church in Society will continue to produce worship resources for congregations in cooperation with the Division for Congregational Ministries' Outdoor Ministries and Hunger Education programs. These resources will have special petitions for each Sunday. The division also will continue the number of small grants given to congregations and other church-related institutions to develop simple environmental stewardship activities such as lighting efficiency, congregationally supported gardening, rooftop gardens in urban areas, resource conservation and recycling programs, and environmental tithing.

The Stewardship Team of the Division for Congregational Ministries has developed the Pelican project, a comprehensive stewardship education program for children. This program has been offered to congregations, schools, camps and other programs within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A three-year cycle of emphases was offered. In the first year, care of creation was emphasized; in the second year, the focus was stewardship of money and tithing; in the third year, the emphasis was stewardship of lifestyle.

ASSEMBLY

ACTION En Bloc

CA95.5.26a To affirm the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod on Care of Creation; To call on congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage regularly in prayer related to the care of creation and to engage in at least one activity during the next year that publicly witnesses to the congregation's commitment as a community of stewards of the environment; and

To call upon churchwide units to assist the congregations, synods, and related agencies and institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to implement this church's "Social Statement on Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice."

Category 4: Environment—Part 2,

Energy Audits

Western Iowa Synod (5E) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the unwise and extravagant use of fossil fuel, water power, and nuclear resources for energy is a known source of pollution of our air, water and land; and

Whereas, as Christians and good stewards of creation, we are called upon to be moderate and thoughtful in our use of those resources; and

Whereas, Chapter 4, Section 4.03., of the ELCA constitution declares that this church shall affirm this commitment by encouraging and equipping all members "to be stewards of the earth, their lives and the Gospel"; and

Whereas, advances in technology offer us the opportunity to reduce our energy consumption in a cost effective manner; and

Whereas, numerous energy efficiency studies have shown that buildings of all types in the United States have a huge capacity of reduction of their energy consumption through energy efficiency measures; and

Whereas, it makes sense to strive to make the fullest use of the contributions our members make to our ELCA congregations by being wise and frugal in our use of energy; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this synod strongly urge all its congregations, members, agencies, and institutions affiliated with this synod to perform or arrange for the performance of building energy audits for churches, parsonages, homes, and offices to determine how they can wisely reduce their energy consumption and energy expenditures; and be it further

RESOLVED, that they should be strongly encouraged to implement wherever possible the results of those audits through lighting renovations, new insulation and other building improvements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Environment Committee of this synod make information available to all mentioned parties on how such energy audits may be conducted and implemented; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to support energy audits and implementation by all its synods, congregations, members, affiliated agencies, and in its own facilities.

BACKGROUND

This memorial is consistent with the “Social Statement on Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice.” In Section V.C. the statement reads, “We will undertake environmental audits and follow through with checkups to ensure our continued commitment.”

The Environmental Stewardship and Hunger Education program of the Division for Church in Society has prepared a packet providing congregations with information on conducting a lighting audit. The Metropolitan Chicago Synod’s Environmental Stewardship Task Force has established a revolving loan fund with a grant from the Division for Church in Society to encourage congregations to conduct a lighting audit consistent with the guidelines of the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Green Lights program. To date, two congregations have completed this audit and implemented lighting efficiency programs. One of these has already paid back the loan—in less than a year. Two other synods are planning to establish similar revolving loan funds in the very near future. One of the foremost authorities on lighting in this country, Mr. John Fetters—who is also a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—agreed to advise congregations on lighting efficiency. So far six congregations have utilized his services.

Aid Association for Lutherans awarded a grant to the Division for Church in Society to train building managers of ELCA-related institutions to undertake energy audits. Nearly ten institutions participated in that training program. As a result, Luther Seminary in St. Paul, the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and Wittenberg University in Ohio have initiated energy audit programs. The Lutheran recently published an article on the successful lighting efficiency program at Augustana Lutheran Church in Chicago and directed interested readers to contact the Division for Church in Society for further information. In the June 1995 issue, *The Lutheran* published an article entitled “How to ‘Green’ Your Congregation” (*The Lutheran*, June 1995, pp. 11-12).

The Division for Church in Society will continue as able to provide grants for energy audits, especially lighting renovations, to synods. The American Society of the Green Cross has received a small grant from the Division for Church in Society to produce a booklet, entitled, “The Lord’s House: A Guide to Creation and Careful Management of Church Facilities.” This booklet will be available to congregations interested in energy conservation, landscaping and grounds, purchasing materials, and other practical environmental stewardship actions. The division is also working on establishing standards for new church construction which include embodied energy (energy required for the manufacture and transportation of construction materials) as well as operating energy.

In addition, the churchwide office has also undertaken the following related actions: indoor air quality assessment; installation of high efficiency lighting; planned disposal of the ethylene glycol used for winterizing the cooling coils and replacement with non-toxic propylene glycol; ongoing discussions and changes in lighting ballast and lamps; audit of electric rates; monitoring of cleaning supplies; review and improvement of paper recycling program; and source reduction in packages (tools, towels and tissue, cleaning supplies).

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.26b To affirm the memorial of the Western Iowa Synod; and

To encourage members, congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in energy audits of their buildings and to use the results of such audits to reduce energy consumption and energy expenditures through lighting renovations, new insulation, and other building improvements.

Category 7: Candidacy Process

Southeast Michigan Synod (6A) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's "Social Statement on Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture" specifically calls for those with responsibility and authority in the church to provide leadership in addressing the sin of denying baptismal identity through racism, sexism and classism; and

Whereas, the Michigan Multi-Synodical Candidacy Committee, consisting of representatives from both synods in lower Michigan, and the ELCA Division for Ministry are charged with assisting in the formation of such leaders; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeast Michigan Synod direct its members on the Multi-Synodical Candidacy Committee to urge that the committee develop a process for reviewing a candidate's progress in personally and professionally addressing issues of racism, sexism and classism. This review will be initiated at the beginning of the candidacy process. Specific recommendations for continued progress through training, course work and other means deemed appropriate will be offered and monitored throughout the process. Progress will be reviewed as part of final approval; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeast Michigan Synod memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to direct the Division for Ministry to incorporate such review in their policies, procedures and examinations of candidates.

BACKGROUND

The Division for Ministry has developed churchwide procedures for candidacy committees related to an individual's potential for service in one of the rostered ministries of this church, as well as an individual's readiness to begin theological study. Included in the entrance part of candidacy (prior to beginning seminary study) is the reading of "What Shall I Say? Discerning God's Call to Ministry," which provides individuals with an introduction to ministry within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Individuals applying for candidacy in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are interviewed by a member of a candidacy committee, receive a psychological and career evaluation, and are registered by their home congregations. After receiving this data and interviewing an applicant, a candidacy committee makes an entrance decision which either approves an individual to begin theological study, postpones such study for a stated reason, or denies approval on the basis that the individual is not suited for rostered ministry. In every case there is opportunity to indicate growth areas or developmental needs which are to be addressed as the individual proceeds through candidacy.

Individuals are also provided with the document, "Vision and Expectations," which holds up the high standards and expectations of this church for those who would serve in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament, or in one of the rostered lay ministries.

The Division for Ministry—through its candidacy manual, discernment resource “What Shall I Say?” and the “Vision and Expectations” document—provides a description of rostered leadership which addresses the issues of racism, sexism, and classism. The policies and procedures already established by the Division for Ministry will continue to include appropriate attention to these and other issues for those preparing to serve this church.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.27 To transmit this information from the Division for Ministry to the Southeast Michigan Synod as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the synod’s memorial on the candidacy process.

Category 9: Discipline—Part 1,
Proposed Constitutional Amendment on
Disciplinary Action

Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the ELCA Church Council at its November 1994 meeting took action to propose that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly amend the ELCA constitution to add the following new provision:

9.23. In accord with constitutional provision 9.21.d. and bylaw 9.21.01., and without invoking the provisions of Chapter 20, a congregation that maintains as its pastor an ordained minister who has been removed from this church’s roster of ordained ministers by disciplinary action or that calls as its pastor one who has not been approved for the roster of ordained ministers may be removed from the roster of congregations of this church by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop;
and

Whereas, such circumstances may arise in which the procedures fully set forth in Chapter 20 are a more suitable process; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to amend proposed new Section 9.23. of the ELCA constitution by adding the following sentence at the end:

Upon notice that its roster removal is to be considered, a congregation may elect to have the issue resolved pursuant to Chapter 20 rather than by Synod Council.

BACKGROUND

ELCA constitutional provision 9.21. stipulates:

This church shall recognize, receive and maintain on the roster those congregations which by their practice as well as their governing documents:

. . .

d. agree to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of this church in accordance with the call procedures of this church except in special circumstances and with the approval of the synodical bishop; . . .

There have been instances where, without the approval of the synodical bishop, a congregation has called someone as its pastor who is not on the clergy roster. There have been other instances where a congregation has continued as its pastor someone who has been removed from the ELCA clergy roster for disciplinary reasons. These instances constitute a violation of

the criteria contained in 9.21.

Under the existing documents, when a congregation knowingly refuses to comply with the stated criteria, the only recourse to a synod or synodical bishop is to have the congregation removed from the ELCA roster of congregations through the disciplinary proceeding under Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution. The Church Council is proposing to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly the following amendment for adoption, the purpose of which is to provide an alternative, and far less expensive, process to accomplish the same result:

9.23. In accord with constitutional provision 9.21.d. and bylaw 9.21.01. and without invoking the provisions of Chapter 20, a congregation that maintains as its pastor an ordained minister who has been removed from this church's roster of ordained ministers by disciplinary action or that calls as its pastor one who has not been approved for the roster of ordained ministers may be removed from the roster of congregations of this church by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.

Under this amendment concurrence of both the synodical bishop and the synod council is required. Absent concurrence, either the bishop or the synod council could commence disciplinary proceedings under the existing provisions of Chapter 20.

The intent of the further amendment proposed in the Sierra Pacific Synod memorial may be better achieved by simply rejecting the amendment proposed by the Church Council, if the Churchwide Assembly is so inclined. Further, the amendment offered by the synod memorial cannot come before this Churchwide Assembly for final action under the provisions of 22.11.a., since this further amendment has been neither proposed by the Church Council nor been the subject of six months' prior notice to all synods; however, the further amendment proposed in the synod memorial could be acted upon under 22.11.b. as to passage at the first of two successive churchwide assemblies.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.28 To convey the action of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly on proposed amendment to ELCA constitutional provision 9.23. as the response of this assembly to the memorial of the Sierra Pacific Synod on changes in the discipline process.

Category 9: Discipline—Part 2,
Congregational Constitutions (Reconciliation)
Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the Lutheran reformers were intent not only on reformation, but also reconciliation within the established church; and

Whereas, reconciliation within the church serves the church's primary mission of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the process for reconciliation described in Matthew 18:15-20 can be positive and life-changing for those who are brought together; and

Whereas, Chapter 15 of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America carries the harsh title "Discipline of Members and Adjudication"; and

Whereas, the disciplinary process described in many congregational constitutions (such as Chapter 15 of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America) suggests punishment and may discourage use of the process described in Matthew 18:15-20 as a means of reconciliation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly encourage congregations of the synod to review and revise their constitutions to reflect more clearly the positive invitation to reconcile before discipline; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to revise Chapter 20 of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, Chapter 17 of the Constitution for Synods, and Chapter 15 of the Model Constitution for Congregations in a way that more clearly reflects the positive invitation to reconcile before discipline.

BACKGROUND

Experience has demonstrated that there are some occasions when earnest attempts at reconciliation do not achieve that result. It has sometimes been necessary to invoke disciplinary processes. When it is so necessary, it is preferable to have the prescribed disciplinary process in place prior to the events that give rise to the specific need. In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as well as in both of the major predecessors, the model constitutions for congregations have always included a disciplinary process applicable to members of congregations.

In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a process for discipline of members of congregations is set forth in Chapter 15 of the Model Constitution for Congregations. In addition, Chapter 20 of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions contains provisions governing the process for the discipline of congregational members; these provisions are applicable irrespective of the constitution of the local congregation. In both of these documents, the principles of Matthew 18:15-17 are explicitly emphasized (churchwide bylaw 20.41.02.: “The procedure which Christ instructed his disciples to follow [Matthew 18:15-17] shall be adhered to in every case, proceeding through these successive steps . . .”; and *C15.01.: “Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps . . .”).

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.29 To affirm the emphasis upon reconciliation as a means preferable to invoking a disciplinary process in attempts to resolve controversy within a congregation;

To urge congregational pastors and leaders to make earnest attempts at reconciliation in every case; and

To decline to consider constitutional or bylaw amendments in the disciplinary process for members of congregations in response to the memorial from the Southwestern Minnesota Synod.

Category 9: Discipline—Part 3, Removal of a Pastor

Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the relationship of a pastor and a congregation is a caring, trusting relationship, not unlike that of the marriage covenant; and

Whereas, it is a sacred calling to be an ordained pastor and serve a congregation; and

Whereas, the emotional and physical damage done by physical abuse can be devastating to

the person(s) being abused; and

Whereas, we would like to see the synod constitution (†S14.13.) be made more responsive to immediate needs and more prompt removal of the pastor; and

Whereas, we realize that the constitution needs to be changed by a Churchwide Assembly before our synod constitution can be affected; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to change article †S14.13. to make it possible for a bishop immediately, upon factual evidence of physical abuse, to remove a pastor from a congregation when he or she has physically attacked or abused someone.

BACKGROUND

The process for terminating a pastor's call by action of the congregation "when local difficulties imperil effective functioning of the congregation" is set forth in †S14.13. of the Constitution for Synods and *C9.05 of the Model Constitution for Congregations. The disciplinary process for suspending or removing an ordained minister from the clergy roster for "conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office" is found in Chapter 20 of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions.

Common to both processes is the authority of the synodical bishop to temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice, and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund, and with housing provided by the congregation (ELCA churchwide bylaw 20.21.23.; †S14.13.f.; and *C9.05.f.). This provision provides ample authority for a synodical bishop to move promptly, if the circumstances so require in the judgment of the synodical bishop.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.30 To convey this information to the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the synod's memorial on the discipline process.

Category 9: Discipline—Part 4,

Proposed Changes in the Discipline Procedures

A. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the integrity and credibility of the pastoral office are protected only where allegations of clergy sexual misconduct and other misconduct are investigated, disclosed and adjudicated in a process that is free from conflicts of interest and bias, real or apparent; and

Whereas, the synod has a duty to its congregations and their members to assure that its pastors are physically, psychologically, and morally fit to fill the sacred role of the pastoral office, and such assurance must be part of any resolution to allegations of clergy misconduct and other misconduct; and

Whereas, the bishop, as spiritual leader of the synod and care provider to pastors and congregations, can be most effective in the process to resolve allegations of clergy sexual misconduct and other misconduct as the person who initiates and directs a program of healing for the accused, the victims, the congregations and other affected parties; and

Whereas, the bishop's roles as confidant and friend to pastors and as spiritual leader and

healer to the congregations, the accused and the complainants are severely compromised and in direct conflict with his/her roles, under current procedures, as an investigator and prosecutor of pastors and other rostered persons accused of sexual or other misconduct; and

Whereas, allegations of sexual misconduct and other misconduct must be received, investigated and, if necessary, presented to the Committee on Discipline in an open and fair process by a committee whose members have no known conflicts of interest or bias, who are independent of the bishop's office and who are elected by the synod assembly, such committee being the Consultation Committee or a panel appointed by the Consultation Committee from its membership; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to make requisite amendments, deletions and changes to Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to permit the Consultation Committee of each synod or a consultation panel appointed by the Consultation Committee from the membership of the Consultation Committee to receive and investigate allegations of sexual misconduct and other misconduct against persons on the synod roster, to make and refer charges of sexual misconduct and other misconduct against persons on the synod roster to the Committee on Discipline and to present evidence and examine witnesses before a discipline hearing committee, all independently of the synodical bishop; and be it further

RESOLVED, that such amendments, deletions and changes to Chapter 20 provide that prior to a hearing before a discipline hearing committee, the Consultation Committee or a consultation panel appointed by the Consultation Committee from its membership may make efforts to resolve allegations of misconduct against persons on the synod roster independently or, at its discretion, request assistance in these efforts from the synodical bishop.

B. West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has established through its constitution in Chapter 20, a procedure for consultation, discipline, appeals and adjudication; and

Whereas, Chapter 20 is designed to afford due process and due protection for all parties; and

Whereas, it is desirable that Chapter 20 be a flexible document with capacity to respond to evolving times and circumstances; and

Whereas, the manner of implementation of Chapter 20 can also impact procedural fairness and due process; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod sponsor and actively pursue a resolution amending Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and its rules implementing same, in the following manner:

A. Temporary Suspension without Prejudice of Ministers or Rostered Laypersons

1. To provide that if a cause for discipline is believed to exist which is unrelated to local conditions or the present assignment of an ordained minister, then such minister shall continue in such assignment until a consultation panel has conducted its review, and thereafter with the approval of the council of the ordained minister's congregation until the Discipline Hearing Committee has made its decision and all rights of appeal have been concluded (Reference: ELCA 20.21.23.).

B. Consultation: The Process before Charges Are Brought by the Synodical Bishop

1. To require synodical bishops to utilize consultation panels in all cases where there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist, of such nature that resignation/removal of an ordained minister is a possibility (Reference: ELCA 20.21.04. et seq.).

2. To require synodical bishops to remove themselves from the consultation panel process and require a bishop from an unrelated synod (the investigating bishop) to review the causes for discipline and confer with the consultation panel.

3. To require consultation panels to meet with and interview complaining witnesses, as well as the accused.

4. To require consultation panels to seek corroborating statements and an independent confirmation of allegations believed to be a cause for discipline; and to require a majority vote of the panel in determining its conclusion.

5. To require the synodical bishop to be bound by the findings and recommendations of the consultation panel and to provide that a copy of the findings and recommendations be provided to the accused. (Reference: Rules Governing Disciplinary Proceedings against an Ordained Minister, a Rostered Layperson, or a Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—hereinafter “Rules”—D3.e.).

C. The Hearing Officer of a Discipline Hearing Committee

1. To provide, no less than 30 days before a discipline hearing is scheduled to begin, that the accused be furnished with lists of witnesses and summaries of anticipated testimony, subject to the provisions and limitations contained herein.

2. To prohibit, prior to the beginning of a disciplinary hearing, any contact with the other party’s witnesses by either party or representatives of either party.

D. The Hearing Before the Discipline Hearing Committee

1. To require that complaining witnesses appear before the Discipline Hearing Committee, be subject to cross-examination, and that hearsay testimony be expressly prohibited (Reference: Rules, I10., I22.).

2. To confirm that an accused has the right to testify or remain silent. If the accused elects to remain silent, no adverse inference should be drawn from the election (Reference: ELCA 20.12.).

3. To provide that the accused may not be called as part of the accuser’s direct case, but if the accused elects to testify, the accused shall be subject to cross-examination by the accuser (Reference: Rules, I19.).

4. To require that the accuser has the burden of proving the allegations by “clear, cogent and convincing evidence” (Reference: Rules, I23.).

E. Discipline Committee—Post-Hearing Matters

To require that the decision of the discipline hearing committee (including any disciplinary action imposed) shall be made by a two-thirds vote of those voting members that attended the entire hearing (Reference: ELCA 20.21.22.);

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the resolution be communicated as soon as possible to the ELCA Church

Council and that this synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its next Churchwide Assembly to amend Chapter 20 and related rules in the manner indicated in the resolution.

BACKGROUND

Under the existing provisions the synodical bishop plays a key role in deciding whether to invoke the disciplinary process against an ordained minister or other rostered layperson. The synodical bishop is one of those who may file written charges that could lead to a hearing before a discipline hearing committee (churchwide bylaw 20.21.03.). Even before written charges are filed, the synodical bishop is required to resolve the situation through consultation if possible (churchwide bylaw 20.21.04.). For this purpose he or she may convene an advisory or consultation panel to advise on whether written charges should be filed or to make other recommendations for the resolution of the controversy that would not necessitate proceedings before a discipline hearing committee (churchwide bylaw 20.21.05.).

In all instances where written charges have been filed against ordained ministers those written charges have been signed by synodical bishops. The person or entity who signs the written charges is then responsible (usually through a representative) for the presentation of evidence in support of the charges at the hearing.

The memorial from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and one of the subpoints of the memorial from the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod propose to have all of the functions that are now the responsibility of the synodical bishop transferred to the synodically-elected Consultation Committee. During the past year the Conference of Bishops had this question under consideration and, after a 15-month study that included reviewing four very specific proposals for alternative models, decided to recommend no change in the role of synodical bishop in the discipline process.

While this is an issue where there is disagreement, central to the discussion is an understanding of the role of bishop, and the expectations not just of rostered persons, not just of victim advocates, not just of any one synod, but of this entire church as to what it understands the office and authority of a synodical bishop to represent. Even if the Churchwide Assembly were to decide that the disciplinary function now exercised by synodical bishops were to be exercised by some other office, the choice of the synodically elected Consultation Committee is only one of several alternatives that should be considered.

The West Virginia-Western Maryland memorial raises in addition a number of more specific issues as follows:

- a. Temporary suspension. The proposal would eliminate the use of temporary suspension in instances where it has been needed and utilized in the past.
- b. Procedure during consultation. Any discussion of the discipline process involves a tension between two differing points of view. One stresses the need to be pastoral; the other emphasizes the need to protect rostered persons against unfounded allegations. The existing process seeks to accomplish both by a system that is exceedingly flexible and informal—and thereby provides great opportunity to be pastoral—before written charges are filed and with precise and detailed rules of a more “legal” nature that apply after written charges are filed. The proposal for regulation of the way in which the consultation process is conducted could likely come at the expense of being less pastoral.

- c. Witness lists and summary of testimony. Existing rules provide for the simultaneous exchange of witness lists and summary of testimony, but not as early as proposed in the memorial. Basic fairness suggests simultaneous exchange. To require this exchange of the accused 30 days in advance of the hearing will impose significant burdens on the accused, who has already received the written charges that must set forth the who, when, where, and what happened in specific detail.
- d. Testimony of complaining witness. The ELCA general counsel reports that in all of the disciplinary hearings involving rostered persons, every complaining witness named in the written charges has appeared and testified and been available for cross examination. He further reports that in every case involving rostered persons where written charges were filed, but hearings were not held because of resignation of the accused, all complaining witnesses named in the charges were prepared to testify and be cross examined if the hearing had taken place. He further regularly advises any synodical bishop who is considering filing written charges, that no person should be named as a complaining witness unless that person has agreed to testify at the hearing if such hearing is held.
- e. Hearsay. The existing rules permit hearsay evidence but caution as to the weight or importance to be afforded to hearsay evidence. If hearsay evidence were to be allowed only to the extent that it is allowed in secular judicial hearings, the process before discipline hearings would become far more complex because of the many exceptions to the prohibition against hearsay evidence. In short, use of civil rules of evidence would place any party without an attorney at substantial disadvantage and would probably require that all hearing officers be attorneys.
- f. Burden of Proof. A voting member's resolution at the 1993 Churchwide Assembly calling for use of "clear and convincing evidence" burden of proof standard was referred to the Church Council that directed that an extensive study and analysis be undertaken (see 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 276-277). After this study the Church Council voted to retain the "preponderance of the evidence" as the burden of proof standard in proceedings before discipline hearing committees.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.31 To refer the memorials of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod to the Conference of Bishops for ongoing study and dialogue, with report to the Church Council through the chair of the Conference of Bishops.

Category 11: Calendar of Commemorations

A. New England Synod (7B) [1994 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod Assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly to add to the list of commemorations in Lutheran Book of Worship the following: October 16, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1556, martyr and renewer of the Church; and Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley, martyrs and renewers of the Church, 1555.

B. Southeastern Synod (9D) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, John Martin Boltzius was born December 1, 1703, and at the age of 29 held the

post of inspector-vicar in the Latin School at the Lutheran Orphanage at Halle, Germany; and

Whereas, for 33 years John Martin Boltzius was the spiritual and secular leader of the German speaking colony at Ebenezer, Georgia; these colonists were among thousands of Lutheran Protestant immigrants who had been driven from the archiepiscopal duchy of Salzburg; who in spite of the exceeding difficulty of relocating the original settlement, a high mortality rate, and the inherent hardships of pioneer life, did attain prosperity and industry; and

Whereas, The Rev. Boltzius led this community in the faith and traditions of the Halle Pietists, so that the settlement established itself as a model for social ministry through its development of the first orphanage in Georgia, formal schools, medical/pharmaceutical care, for other early leaders to emulate, including John Wesley, George Whitfield, and Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg; and

Whereas, The Rev. Boltzius entered the church triumphant on November 19, 1765, having served the Evangelical Lutheran congregations of the St. Matthew Parish (present day Effingham County, Georgia,) at Jerusalem Church and its preaching missions at Zion, Gishen, Bethany, Savannah, and to the German speaking colonies at Purrysburg and Charleston, South Carolina; today the history and influence of these colonies proclaim the evangelical gospel of Jesus Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Synod, ELCA, ask the church to add the name of John Martin Boltzius, Missionary to America, to the calendar of Lesser Festivals and Commemorations and encourage our congregations and this synod to remember his example of faith and evangelism.

BACKGROUND

Two synod memorials ask that the following names be added to the list of commemorations as printed in Lutheran Book of Worship, pages 10-12:

The New England Synod proposes the addition of October 16 for Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1556, martyr/renewer of the church, and Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley, 1555, martyrs/renewers of the church; and

The Southeastern Synod proposes the addition of November 19 for John Martin Boltzius, 1765, missionary to America.

There is no system or established procedure through which the list of commemorations is reviewed or altered. The list, as such, has no official status in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It would require an assembly action to adopt the calendar in order for it to be amended.

The list of commemorations was the work of the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship and coincided with the publication of Lutheran Book of Worship. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has taken no action with respect to Lutheran Book of Worship or portions of its content. It continues as our principal worship book by custom rather than specific decision or action. There is at present no body which corresponds to the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship.

If the 1995 Churchwide Assembly were to adopt the resolutions of the New England and Southeastern synods, there would be no practical way to implement them. There are no present plans to publish any new edition of the calendar. This does not mean, however, that it would be impossible to lift up the names of these saints for the edification of our congregations through various churchwide resources (e.g., Sundays and Seasons, an annual worship planning guide

under development by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers). In addition, synodical or regional emphases in this arena are also possible.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.32 To refer as information the memorials of the New England Synod and the Southeastern Synod on the calendar of commemorations to the Division for Congregational Ministries.

Category 12: Governance—Part 1, Voting Privileges for Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities

Western Iowa Synod (5E) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, as followers of Jesus Christ we are mandated to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord to all peoples, including the church and the unchurched, our enemies as well as our friends and peoples of every color and culture; and

Whereas, all Christians individually and corporately have been called through baptism to be Jesus' example within the diverse cultures of the world, the Church universal and God's world at large; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has correctly committed itself to inclusion of multicultural membership by its constitution and through its constituting assembly, and the Churchwide Assembly deemed and recorded, "It shall be the goal of this church that within 10 years of this establishment, its membership shall include at least 10 percent people of color and/or primary language other than English"; and

Whereas, it is very important in view of the ELCA constitutional commitment (ELCA 5.01.b.) that "This church in faithfulness to the Gospel commit itself to be inclusive even in the midst of divisions in society," and, therefore, in outreach and organization, the synods, congregations, and other communities of this church "shall seek to exhibit the inclusive unity that is God's will for the Church"; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is encountering many wonderful opportunities to provide effective and productive evangelism to all races; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its Churchwide Assembly in Kansas City in August 1993 approved a new churchwide category, "The Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community," in the Western Iowa Synod under ELCA bylaws 10.02.03.; and

Whereas, El Renacimiento Lutheran Church in Sioux City, Iowa, has been officially designated a "Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community" in the Western Iowa Synod under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03.; and

Whereas, El Renacimiento Lutheran Church members have not received the right to be considered to postulate candidates to the next Churchwide Assembly, the multicultural youth leadership event in September 1994, nor to this Western Iowa Synod Assembly; and

Whereas, this very same church which avers its support for human diversity and scriptural responsibility, should take seriously the enactment and performance of its established rules, and provide encouragement to its congregations and synods to include ALL its affiliated people and Christian communities with full rights and responsibilities; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1994 Western Iowa Synod Assembly urge the Western Iowa Synod Council and its bishop to begin immediately to establish a process, consistent with S7.26., which would grant members of Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities membership in synod

assemblies with voice, vote, and the right to be elected to office; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 1994 Western Iowa Synod Assembly urge the Western Iowa Synod Council and its bishop to take formal steps to urge a similar policy and acceptance at the churchwide level, particularly urging that members of Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities be granted voting membership to multicultural youth leadership events; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 1994 Western Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to receive members of Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities into voting membership at future churchwide assemblies.

BACKGROUND

Constitutional provisions in both the churchwide organization and synods stipulate that officers and members of the board of directors, as well as other governing boards or committees, must be voting members of congregations of this church.

While synodically authorized worshiping communities may be acknowledged as related to the respective synod (ELCA churchwide bylaws 10.02.03. and 10.41.04.; S7.26. in the Constitution for Synods), participants in such worshiping communities are not voting members of a congregation of this church.

Acknowledgment of a relationship to synodically authorized worshiping communities involves care for the mission and ministry on the territory of the synod. Such acknowledgment, however, does not grant to participants in such communities the privilege of serving as officers of the synod or this church or as voting members of a Synod Council or the Church Council.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.33 To affirm authorized worshiping communities related to the respective synods as strategic places of ministry and outreach;

To note that—in accord with the established policy, as required by ELCA bylaw 10.02.03. and adopted by the Church Council—persons received by baptism or affirmation of faith as participants in the authorized worshiping community are to be recorded as members in a congregation of record and, thereby, become baptized members of this church;

To refer this memorial to the Division for Outreach to encourage the affiliation of participants in authorized worshiping communities within the membership of an established congregation; and

To decline to alter the legal character of the churchwide organization to grant the possibility of governance privileges to individuals who are not members of congregations of this church, as requested in the memorial of the Western Iowa Synod.

Category 12: Governance—Part 2,
Synodical–Churchwide Relationship
Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, matters pertaining to the faith and life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America voted upon at Churchwide Assembly affect the life and faith of each congregation; and

Whereas, each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is not directly represented at the Churchwide Assembly but is directly and proportionately represented at their respective synod assemblies; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Chapter 5, Principles of Organizations of the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, be amended by adding a new Section 5.01.k. to read as follows:

k. When any resolution, motion or other formal action with matters affecting the faith and life of this church comes before any Churchwide Assembly for consideration, the following procedures shall apply:

1. If either the Church Council has designated the action as one which requires synod approval, or if at least ten percent (10 percent) in number of the synod assemblies have requested that such approval be required, then the action at the Churchwide Assembly shall not become effective unless it has been submitted to and approved by a majority of the synod assemblies.

2. If neither of the conditions described in subsection 5.01.k.1. is applicable, then the matter shall come before the Churchwide Assembly for action in accordance with procedures specified elsewhere in these bylaws;
and be it further

RESOLVED, that any other provisions of the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America which are inconsistent with Section 5.01.k. be amended with its provisions.

BACKGROUND

If this memorial were implemented, it would require a fundamental change in the definition and organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Under the ELCA's polity, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization are the three primary expressions of this church. Therefore, in accord with the ELCA's polity, this church is seen neither as a union of synods nor a union of congregations. Rather, as stated in ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 8.11.: "This church shall seek to function as people of God through congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, all of which shall be interdependent. Each part, while fully the church, recognizes that it is not the whole church and, therefore, lives in a partnership relationship with the others."

The Churchwide Assembly serves as the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 12.11.). As such, the Churchwide Assembly has the responsibility and authority for acting on amendments to the churchwide constitution and bylaws and for adoption of the required provisions in the Constitution for Synods and the Model Constitution for Congregations. The Churchwide Assembly also may adopt recommended provisions for both the synodical and congregational constitutions.

Social statements, churchwide policy matters, and ecumenical commitments also are under the authority of the Churchwide Assembly.

If the definition and organization of this church were to be altered significantly to permit the adoption of this proposed revision in the "Principles of Organization," debate could be endless on what types of resolutions, motions, or other formal actions that may relate to "the faith and life" of this church that would need to be submitted to referenda.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.34 To decline to endorse the revision of churchwide constitutional provision 5.01.k., which was proposed in the memorial of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, as contrary to the

definition and organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Category 12: Governance—Part 3,
Representational Principles

A. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the Church of Jesus Christ confesses the beauty and goodness of God’s inclusive and diverse creation (Genesis 2:1-2), and gives praise and thanks that the redemption and reconciliation brought to us in Christ has broken down the dividing walls of hostility between us (Ephesians 2:14), so that there is no more Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, and we are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28); and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America confesses one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, whose purposes are to “manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ” (ELCA 4.02.f.); and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America strongly condemns racism as a “sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity” . . . which . . . “fractures and fragments both church and society,” and encourages church members to work for racism’s eradication (“Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture,” a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America); and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America “in faithfulness to the Gospel, is committed to be an inclusive church in the midst of the division in society,” and has expressed this commitment to inclusiveness and diversity through constitutional principles of organization that will ensure “that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be lay persons; that as nearly as possible, 50 percent shall be female, and at least 10 percent . . . shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English” (ELCA 5.01.b. and f.); and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, at its constituting convention, set a goal “that within 10 years of its establishment, its membership shall include at least 10 percent people of color and/or primary language other than English (ELCA 5.01.A87); and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has been enriched by the presence of the diversity of the people of God, and further enriched by the implementation of a multicultural mission strategy adopted by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly; and

Whereas, despite these commitments and gifts, the difficulties in fulfilling these goals and strategies have become increasingly evident, as both church and society face the problem of diminishing commitment to issues of gender and racial justice; and

Whereas, God’s Holy Spirit promises continuing guidance, strength and wisdom to illuminate the path of the Church in its movement toward fulfilling God’s redemptive purposes; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thanks for the gift of amazing grace that has reconciled the world to God through Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation by which an increasingly inclusive and diverse synod and member congregations can be established; and give thanks for the many manifold gifts and abilities that are experienced when past divisions are overcome, and all members of the body of Christ—women and men, laity and clergy, and people of every race, ethnicity and culture—are enabled to participate fully in the life of this synod and its congregations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaffirm the constitutional commitments of this synod and its congregations to the intentional measures necessary for this vision to become reality:

- commitments to inclusiveness and diversity;
- organizational principles of inclusive representation; and
- goals of increased synod membership of people of color or whose primary language is other than English;

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod call upon synod staff, committees, and all who have been given leadership and authority within synodical offices, organizations, and congregations to develop and strengthen specific programs of education and action that promote fulfillment of these constitutional commitments, and that the synod council be charged with the responsibility of guidance and oversight in developing and implementing these programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon the synod and all its member congregations to develop and strengthen programmatic efforts to understand and eliminate racism and sexism as they are manifested individually and institutionally in church and society, utilizing anti-racism and anti-sexism resources available through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its ecumenical partners; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 1995 biennial Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

- to give thanks for the gift of grace that reconciled the world to God through Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation that enables an inclusive and diverse church and society;
- to give thanks for the many different gifts and abilities that are experienced when divisions are overcome and all members of the Body of Christ—women and men, laity and clergy, and people of every race, ethnicity and culture—are enabled to participate fully in the life of the church;
- to reaffirm the constitutional commitments of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to inclusiveness and diversity, to principles of inclusive representation, and to goals for increased ELCA membership of people of color and/or persons whose language is other than English;
- to call upon bishops, boards, staff, and all who have been given leadership and authority within churchwide offices and organizations, synods, and congregations to develop and strengthen specific programs of education and action that promote understanding and fulfillment of these constitutional commitments, and to charge the Church Council with the responsibility of guidance and oversight in developing and implementing these programs;
- to call upon all expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to develop and strengthen efforts to understand and eliminate racism and sexism as they are manifested individually and institutionally in church and society, utilizing anti-racism and anti-sexism resources available through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its ecumenical partners; and
- to recognize and reaffirm the existence and importance of the ELCA Commission for Women and Commission for Multicultural Ministries and to provide sufficient support and resources for these commissions, in order that they can fulfill their responsibilities to assist this church in its

ministry to women and people of color and/or persons whose language is other than English, and to fulfill the commitments of this church to inclusiveness and diversity.

B. Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states that “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” (2.03.); and

Whereas, the Holy Scriptures unequivocally state that “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28); and again, “Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but Christ is all and in all” (Colossians 3:11); and in other places also teach us that the body of Christ is not to be divided into separate and competing groups based upon the distinctions of worldly society, but is to be united in lowliness, meekness, patience, the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-6); and

Whereas, the Holy Scriptures further teach us that the individual participation in the structures and ministries of the Church should be based upon the gifts of the Spirit (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-30); and

Whereas, in the Church we are called to represent not ourselves, but Christ who is Lord of the Church (Philippians 1:3-11); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to strike from its constitution sections 5.01.f. and 5.01.g. (which mandate the “quota system” throughout this church), while continuing to strive for the inclusion of all peoples at all levels of service in this church.

C. Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, St. Paul has written in Galatians 3:28, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus”; and

Whereas, this statement by St. Paul declares our unity in Christ Jesus; and that while ethnic, social, and gender differences do not vanish, being in Christ makes these differences before God irrelevant; and

Whereas, current requirements in the ELCA governing documents (10.41.01.c. and S7.21.c.) may restrict congregations from electing voting members best able to serve the congregation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to amend sections 10.41.01.c. and S7.21.c. to delete all references to “males” and “females.”

D. La Crosse Area Synod (5L) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly will revisit the matter of representation policies currently in practice; and

Whereas, the La Crosse Area Synod and its predecessors have long and often expressed support for inclusion in decision making at all levels of our church; and

Whereas, in S6.04. of the La Crosse Area Synod constitution, the Synod Council is required to ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and other organizational units shall be lay persons; that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units

shall be female and 50 percent shall be male; and that, where possible, the representation of the ordained ministers shall be both male and female; and also to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of the members of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English; and

Whereas, one of the La Crosse Area Synod's partnership organizations, the Lutheran Human Relations Association, has encouraged widespread communication with churchwide leaders and the 1995 Churchwide Assembly urging continuation of broad and inclusive representation at all levels of our church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the La Crosse Area Synod in its assembly affirm section S6.04. of our synod constitution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the La Crosse Area Synod memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to take action to affirm representation policies currently in practice.

E. Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the current ELCA practice of requiring one male and one female voting member at synod assemblies results in the under-representation of some congregations due to the inability to find voting members of both genders; and

Whereas, some congregations would be willing and able to bring two voting members of one gender but are not permitted under ELCA policy; and

Whereas, the denial of same gender seats is discriminatory and unjust to both congregations seeking to be fully represented in assembly and to women/men who are willing to serve in these positions but are denied admission as voting members because of their gender; and

Whereas, the problem of being unable to have one voting member of each gender is especially acute among small member congregations who have fewer numbers of volunteers with disposable time from whom to draw; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to amend the ELCA constitution and whatever other documents are necessary to eliminate any language which requires congregations to have one male and one female voting member at synod assemblies, substituting instead language which permits two voting members of either gender, with equal representation of men and women encouraged but not mandated.

F. Allegheny Synod (8C) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, St. Paul has written in Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus"; and

Whereas, this statement by St. Paul declares our unity in Christ Jesus; and that while ethnic, social, and gender differences do not vanish, being in Christ makes these differences before God irrelevant; and

Whereas, current requirements in ELCA governing documents (10.41.c. and S7.21.c.) may restrict congregations from electing voting members best able to serve the congregation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Allegheny Synod memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to amend sections 10.41.01.c. and S7.21.c. to delete all references to "males" and "females"; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Allegheny Synod send a recommendation to the ELCA Church

Council to amend sections 10.41.01.c. and S7.21.c. to delete all references to “males” and “females.”

G. Allegheny Synod (8C) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states that “this church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life” (ELCA 2.03.); and

Whereas, the Holy Scriptures unequivocally state that “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28); and again, “Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but Christ is all and in all” (Colossians 3:11); and in other places also teach us that the body of Christ is not to be divided into separate and competing groups based upon the distinctions of worldly society, but is to be united in lowliness, meekness, patience, and the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-6); and

Whereas, the Holy Scriptures further teach us that the individual participation in the structures and ministries of the Church should be based upon the gifts of the Spirit (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-30); and

Whereas, in the church we are called to represent not ourselves, but Christ who is Lord of the Church (Philippians 1:3-11); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Allegheny Synod memorialize the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to strike from its constitution sections 5.01.f. and 5.01.g. (which mandate the “quota system” throughout the church), while continuing to strive for the inclusion of all peoples at all levels of service in this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Allegheny Synod send a recommendation to the ELCA Church Council to strike from the ELCA constitution sections 5.01.f. and 5.01.g. (which mandate the “quota system” throughout the church,) while continuing to strive for the inclusion of all peoples at all levels of service in the church.

H. Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in Chapter 7, section †S7.21. establishes the composition of the membership at synod assemblies; and

Whereas, Section †S7.21.c. states in part, “A minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation related to this synod, one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members”; and

Whereas, some congregations in this synod have great difficulty electing the minimum lay members as required by Section †S7.21.c.; and

Whereas, by not being able to elect one male and one female as voting members to the synod assembly, those congregations are deprived of 50 percent of their voting members; and

Whereas, it is this synod’s belief that synod assemblies and congregations have largely achieved the goal of inclusivity of male and female; and

Whereas, this synod both celebrates the achievement of this goal and recognizes the continuing need to achieve inclusivity of race among synod assemblies and congregations; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that all congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continue to strive for equal representation of male and female lay voting members at synod

assemblies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to change the minimum male and female voting members requirement; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly adopt a minimum of two voting members regardless of gender; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly cause the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to be amended, reflecting the voting membership at synod assemblies to be a minimum of two lay members from each congregation, regardless of gender.

BACKGROUND

As a result of action by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, substantial discussion of the ELCA's representational principles occurred during in the past biennium. Emerging from this discussion process is a resolution proposed by the Church Council that affirms the ELCA's representational principles, while making a change in them that would provide more flexibility to synods in the area of congregational representation at synod assemblies (see the report and recommendation on page 745-783 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2). The responses of the Conference of Bishops, seminary faculty, Commission for Women and Commission for Multicultural Ministries, together with background information related to representational principles, are also included in this material. The 1995 Churchwide Assembly will have opportunity to vote on the recommended resolution of the Church Council and the related changes in the ELCA's governing documents.

The memorial of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, "Call to New Life," includes additional resolves, some of which have been addressed in the ELCA Social Statement, "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture," which was overwhelmingly adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. In addition, the 1995 Churchwide Assembly will vote on the budget proposal for 1996-1997, which provides \$1.1 million for the work of the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and \$370,000 for the work of the Commission for Women.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.35 To acknowledge the action of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly on representational principles as the response of this assembly to the memorials on this subject from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, La Crosse Area Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Allegheny Synod, and Delaware-Maryland Synod; To affirm this church's commitment to implement the social statement, "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture," which addresses concerns raised in the memorial of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod; and

To acknowledge the action of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly on the 1996-1997 budget proposal to be the assembly's response to the request of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod for adequate financial support for the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Commission for Women.

Category 12: Governance—Part 4,

Voice and Vote for Retired Associates in Ministry
Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the Northwest Washington Synod has, from its beginning, supported and encouraged associates in ministry in their ministries and in education opportunities; and

Whereas, associates in ministry are, by design, well represented on boards and committees of the synod; and

Whereas, the 1993 Churchwide Assembly granted voice and vote at synod assemblies to all associates in ministry under call; and

Whereas, retired clergy of this synod were granted voice and vote at Northwest Washington Synod Assemblies in the original synod constitution; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to approve the granting of voice and vote to retired associates in ministry at synod assemblies, as a further indication of full partnership in the life of this church.

BACKGROUND

Decisions on the possibility of granting retired ordained ministers voting privileges within synodical assemblies reside within each synod. Likewise, in regard to associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the official lay rosters of this church, it is noted that S7.23. in the Constitution for Synods is not a required provision. Therefore, synods may adopt a provision that would grant such voting privileges to retired associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.36 To transmit this information to the Northwest Washington Synod in response to the synod's memorial regarding voting privileges in synodical assemblies for retired associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

Category 12: Governance—Part 5, Model Constitution for Congregations

Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, Scripture enjoins, "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy" (1 Corinthians 4:1-2); and

Whereas, the 1993 amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly include revision to C9.03.c. "for greater clarity" by separating the section into two items and renumbering the remaining items; and

Whereas, the 1991 amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America approved by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly included revisions of C9.03., "to clarify the intention that the introductory phrase relates to all the subsections of the provision"; and

Whereas, proper enactment of the biennial amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America incurs an expense to every congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in secretarial time and printing

materials; and

Whereas, proper enactment of the biennial amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America incurs the expenditure of earth's resources, both renewable and non-renewable; and

Whereas, proper enactment of the biennial amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America incurs an expenditure of congregational leaders' energy and congregational energy in explaining and defending constitutional changes; and

Whereas, constitutional changes such as the 1991 and 1993 amendments to C9.03. are merely trivial tinkering; and

Whereas, Jesus charged the pharisees with neglecting "the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith" (Matthew 23:34); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to consider appropriate actions to limit revisions and amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to be no more frequently than every other biennial Churchwide Assembly, that is, every four years, and even less frequently than that, if possible, with the next revisions occurring no sooner than 1997.

BACKGROUND

Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations have been proposed on the basis of (a) requests from congregations for clarification of certain provisions, and (b) experience that has pointed to the need for certain changes and additions.

Because certain provisions in the Model Constitution for Congregations are identical to provisions in the synodical and churchwide constitutions, simultaneous amendments, at times, have been necessary.

Restriction of such amendments to a quadrennial or greater pattern would preclude needed changes being accomplished in a timely way.

While the initial years in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have been a time when significant amendments were needed and adopted for the Model Constitution for Congregations, it is likely that considerably fewer amendments may be anticipated in future years.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.37 To decline to propose restrictions on future Churchwide Assemblies for the amendment process for the Model Constitution for Congregations, as a response to the memorial from Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Category 13: Budget and Staffing of Churchwide Units

Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) call for this church to be an inclusive fellowship with full partnership and participation of all members in witness and faithfulness to the Gospel; and

Whereas, this church's organization and outreach, the congregation, synods and churchwide

units of this church shall seek to exhibit the inclusive unity that is God's will for the church; and

Whereas, this church exists as an interdependent partnership sharing the responsibility in God's mission with and among its partners; and

Whereas, this church seeks to function as people of God through the congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization with each part living in a partnership relationship with the others; and

Whereas, it is the responsibility of the Commission for Multicultural Ministries (CMM) to fulfill its mandate by assisting this church with its commitment to be an inclusive church and to achieve the goal of full partnership and participation in the life and mission of this church for persons of color and/or those persons whose primary language is other than English; and

Whereas, CMM fulfilled its mandate through four ethnic-specific ministries, each served by a director from his/her respective ethnic community; and

Whereas, these ministries served as conduits through which these communities were able to present their gifts and talents to the entire ELCA; and

Whereas, on April 1, 1994, the African American, Asian, Hispanic and Native American ministries were eliminated, absenting this commission's ability to fulfill its responsibility to this church on behalf of persons of color and/or those persons whose primary language is other than English; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we recommend that the budget cuts for the Commission for Multicultural Ministries (CMM) be rescinded to include the restoration of the four ethnic ministries and their directors:

- that four ethnic-specific ministries be the priority of CMM; and
 - that no budget reduction or funding limitations be allowed which affect the ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to people of color and/or those persons whose primary language is other than English; and
 - that the inclusiveness goals and CMM mandate of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be elevated to the same level of priority as theological education, global mission, and outreach/evangelism; and
 - that an evaluation be done of the CMM ministry's impact upon the inclusiveness goals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with a view toward a further commitment (financial and otherwise) toward accomplishing the mandated goals of CMM;
- and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod in assembly submit the above recommendations to the ELCA Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly for appropriate action.

BACKGROUND

This resolution of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod calling for restoration in funding for the Commission for Multicultural Ministries was considered by the Church Council in 1994 following the significant budget cuts in churchwide programs that were necessitated by a reduction in anticipated income for the churchwide organization. The Church Council responded to the Metropolitan Chicago Synod resolution, along with a number of resolutions of other synods that called for the restoration of funding for staff and programs of other churchwide units (e.g., peace education in the Division for Church in Society; specialized pastoral care in the Division for Ministry).

At its November 1994 meeting, the Church Council reviewed these requests and voted:

To recognize the validity of the concern of these synods about the impact of the reduction in funds available for churchwide ministries, specifically the elimination of churchwide staff positions serving:

- the ethnic desks in the Commission for Multicultural Ministries,
- the peace education program in the Division for Church in Society, and
- specialized pastoral care in the Division for Ministry;

To request the Office of the Bishop to share with these synods the three areas that were earmarked for priority treatment within the budget of the churchwide organization: global mission, planting and supporting congregations, and theological education. These functions are distributed across unit lines. Most of this work, however, is housed in four divisions: the Division for Global Mission, Division for Outreach, Division for Congregational Ministries, and Division for Ministry. These priorities were established by action of the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly as budgetary priorities. The consequent actions, we believe, were in concert with these priorities and these choices were made with great difficulty.

To decline to restore funding for specific churchwide programs, noting that such restorations would by necessity be at the expense of other churchwide programs or grants to synods and other partners in ministry;

To request the Commission for Multicultural Ministries to share with [these synods] information that indicates the measures that were taken to continue the work related to these responsibilities;

To request the Division for Church in Society to share with [these synods] information that indicates the measures that were taken to continue the work related to these responsibilities;

To request the Division for Ministry to share with [these synods] information that indicates the measures that were taken to continue the work related to these responsibilities; and

To thank these and all synods for their ongoing support for churchwide ministries and encourage them to continue to discuss with their members and congregations the connection between declining levels of income shared with the wider church and the elimination or reduction of churchwide programs that support ministry in synods and congregations (CC94.11.72).

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.38 To acknowledge the November 1994 action of the Church Council on budget cuts in churchwide programs as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the memorial of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod on this topic.

Category 14: ELCA Medical-Dental Plan—Part 1,
Equalized Health-Care Expenses
Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expresses God's love and proclaims the Gospel through many different means in different locations throughout the world (congregations, hospital chaplains, institutions of higher learning and other special ministries that are located in many different locations); and

Whereas, one of our basic tenets is to consider all such expressions of ministries and those who fill them equally important regardless of size or location and we want to convey this to those who minister; and

Whereas, health care is a major concern of our time; and

Whereas, we do express our appreciation for the work done by the Board of Pensions to contain the costs of health care; and

Whereas, the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan does differentiate benefits according to location and whether or not a member can participate in “Point of Service Benefits” or “Standard Benefits”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod memorialize the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to investigate how out-of-pocket medical expenses for participants in the Board of Pensions medical plan might be equalized throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

BACKGROUND

The following information has been provided by the Board of Pensions:

The benefits available under the Standard Benefits program have, at times, been compared with the benefits available under the point-of-service program. At first examination, it appears that the benefits available under the point-of-service program are significantly richer than the benefits available under the Standard Benefits program. This is because members compare the \$15 co-payment per physician visit under the point-of-service program to the \$300 deductible under the Standard Benefits program. Additionally, members have compared the 90 percent reimbursement under the point-of-service program with the 80 percent reimbursement under the Standard Benefits program.

While the first dollar coverage for physician services is greater under the point-of-service program than under the Standard Benefits program, it should be noted that the maximum annual out-of-pocket amount under both programs is identical (\$1,500 per year per individual, \$3,000 per family). Also, while costs for physician visits are applied towards the maximum out-of-pocket amount under the Standard Benefits program, the \$15 copayment amounts under the point-of-service program do not apply toward the out-of-pocket amount. Thus, in the case of a hospitalization, it is possible that a plan member covered by the point-of-service program will actually pay more in out-of-pocket costs than a member covered by Standard Benefits.

In addition, the copayment feature of the point-of-service program was designed to encourage plan members to utilize the physicians in the Aetna network with whom Aetna has negotiated significant discounts. The Board of Pensions have received considerable feedback from plan members in the point-of-service program who have found that their current physicians are not included in the Aetna network. These plan members are faced with (1) changing physicians in order to receive the enhanced first dollar coverage for physician visits or (2) paying a \$500 deductible, 30 percent after the deductible and a \$2,000 annual maximum out-of-pocket amount (\$4,000 per family) if they wish to enjoy “freedom of choice” when they receive medical care. Members covered by Standard Benefits continue to enjoy the same “freedom of choice” they currently enjoy when receiving medical care, but pay only a \$300 deductible, 20 percent after the deductible and a maximum out-of-pocket amount of \$1,500 per year (\$3,000 per family) for eligible medical expenses.

The Board of Pensions is continuing to monitor the benefits available under the Standard Benefits program to ensure the benefits continue to be (1) comparable to “indemnity” plans provided under other employer-provided health plans and (2) equitable when compared to the

point-of-service program.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.39 To transmit the information provided by the Board of Pensions on equalized health-care expenses to the Saint Paul Area Synod in response to the synod's memorial on this subject; and

To encourage the Board of Pensions to continue to monitor this matter, reporting regularly to the Church Council during the coming biennium.

Category 14: ELCA Medical-Dental Plan—Part 2,
Marriage Counseling Coverage

Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, this church is called to be an example and model of caring, understanding and compassion; and

Whereas, this church's pastors in specialized ministry, having served three years in the parish, are especially valuable resources; and

Whereas, marriage counseling is not currently covered and general resources for covered counseling are unnecessarily limited by an over-emphasis on one type of supervision; and

Whereas, mental health is conducive to the ministry and the witness of the Church as a whole; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod meeting in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 1995 to recommend that the Board of Pensions amend its articles so that marriage counseling be considered an eligible expense according to current mental health reimbursement rates and that care provided by appropriate licensed, and/or certified, and supervised counselors be a covered expense.

BACKGROUND

The Metropolitan Chicago Synod submitted an almost identical memorial to the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. Having received this memorial and information provided by the Board of Pensions, and after lengthy discussion, the 1993 Churchwide Assembly declined to act on this memorial.

In its response below, the Board of Pensions (1) addresses coverage of marital therapy under the ELCA health plan and (2) clarifies the definition of a qualified mental health therapist under the plan.

Marital Counseling

From time to time the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions has evaluated coverage of marital counseling under the terms of the ELCA health plan. For the reasons set forth below, the board of trustees [of the Board of Pensions] has concluded it should not recommend to the ELCA Church Council that the plan be expanded to include coverage of marital therapy:

1. Marital counseling is not covered by employer-provided group-health benefit plans. The ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program (pension, disability, survivor, and medical and dental benefits) is a voluntary rather than mandatory program. Therefore, a congregation may decide to sponsor its eligible employees in the ELCA program or in another program purchased through the marketplace. Because of this option, the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan is,

effectively, competing in the marketplace against other health benefit plans available to employers. The goal of the ELCA health plan is to provide benefits which are consistent with those found in the general insurance industry so as to remain competitive. To the extent that the plan provides more benefits than are available under a typical employer plan, the ELCA health plan will be more costly.

2. The purpose of the ELCA health plan is to provide financial protection against catastrophic expenses incurred as the result of “medically necessary” illness or injury. Marital discord, while certainly being disruptive to a family, is not “medically necessary” treatment. The Board of Pensions could administer benefits for marital counseling and other services that have been requested by plan members but that also are not deemed to be “medically necessary” treatment (health-club memberships, cosmetic surgery, etc.). The cost of benefits for these services not deemed to be “medically necessary” treatment would be borne by congregations and other employers in the form of increased contributions. Furthermore, a precedent would be established for covering other services which are not “medically necessary” and would drive up costs even more.

3. If the Medical and Dental Benefits Plan were expanded to cover marital counseling that is not “medically necessary” treatment, it is estimated that costs to the plan would be \$600,000-\$800,000 per year (0.9–1.3 percent of incurred costs). As noted above, these costs would be borne by congregations and other employers.

4. The ELCA health plan does cover family/couple conjoint therapy when that therapy is incurred as part of a family member’s mental health treatment. The plan covers family/couple conjoint therapy when a member of that family suffers a mental health disorder because it is recognized that the patient does not exist in a vacuum but must transition her/himself back into the family unit. Unless the family receives family/couple conjoint therapy, the family would be unable, in many cases, to assimilate the patient back into the family. The family/couple conjoint therapy incurred in connection with a family member’s mental health treatment is eligible for consideration as an expense of the patient.

The 1993 Churchwide Assembly considered a memorial from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod to recommend that the ELCA plan be expanded to include coverage of marital counseling. The assembly voted not to adopt the memorial.

Qualified Mental Health Therapists Definition

Prior to July 1, 1994, the Medical and Dental Benefits Plan limited psychotherapy or chemical dependency treatment to:

Treatment for nervous and emotional disorders or chemical or substance abuse by a duly licensed psychiatrist or duly licensed or certified psychologist who has a doctorate degree in psychology and a declared competence in psychotherapy (or by a psychotherapist, psychiatric worker or pastoral counselor, certified by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, acting under the written orders and supervision of such a psychiatrist or doctorate-level psychologist.)

Under this definition, treatment by other than licensed psychiatrists or licensed doctorate-level psychologists (such as therapy performed by pastoral counselors) was covered only if provided under the direct orders and supervision of a licensed psychiatrist or licensed

doctorate-level psychologist. The appropriateness of the supervisory requirement was questioned by pastoral counselors, other mental health professionals and plan members.

Effective July 1, 1994, the definition of an eligible outpatient mental health provider was revised to eliminate the supervisory requirement. Therapy provided by the following therapists is eligible for consideration under the ELCA health plan:

- Licensed Psychiatrists;
- Licensed doctoral-level psychologists (Ph.D.s, Ed.D.s, Psy.D.s);
- Pastoral Counselors (A.A.P.C. Diplomates, A.A.P.C. Fellows);
- Masters-prepared therapists, provided the therapist possesses:
 - A degree in social work or counseling from an accredited institution; and
 - A license as a mental health clinician from a state that licenses or a certificate as a mental health clinician from a state that certifies rather than licenses; and
 - A minimum of two years of full-time clinical experience, or its equivalency.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.40 To affirm the prior action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly on coverage of marriage counseling under the ELCA health plan; and

To convey this information to the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the synod's memorial on coverage of marriage counseling.

Category 14: ELCA Medical-Dental Plan—Part 4,

Expansion of Aetna Roster

New Jersey Synod (7A) [1995 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to urge the Board of Pensions to continue to review and seek health-care options at a reasonable cost; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Pensions be urged to evaluate the Aetna plan on a regional basis and, where inequities exist, to consider changing the carrier and/or coverage to eliminate inequities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Pensions encourage Aetna to expand its roster of doctors in areas where needed.

BACKGROUND

During the period of December 1992 to July 1993, the Board of Pensions conducted a strategic evaluation of the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan. Its evaluation indicated that changes to the plan were necessary to ensure the plan remains financially sound in the long-term.

A member survey was conducted as part of this strategic evaluation process. The board found that plan members desire a national program that provides continuity of coverage as they move from one ELCA congregation or employer to another. Only national insurance plans provide continuity of coverage as plan members move from one congregation or employer to another.

As a result of our strategic evaluation and the member survey, the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions authorized a six-month evaluation of major national insurance companies that offer national point-of-service managed care programs. It evaluated Aetna, Blue Cross/Blue

Shield, CIGNA, Met Life, The Prudential and The Travelers. Aetna and The Prudential were the two finalists for the ELCA program. Nationally, Aetna and The Prudential have strong, high-quality programs. Aetna has networks that will cover approximately 50 percent of ELCA plan members located in metropolitan areas across the United States. For the reasons of (1) network access; (2) cost savings; and (3) consistent benefits and claims administration, Aetna was selected by the board of trustees as the national point-of-service carrier for the ELCA program.

Three major factors guide Aetna's provider recruitment efforts in a given geographic area:

1. The local Aetna network manager determines what geographic area Aetna is able to effectively serve in a given network.
2. Aetna determines whether its enrolled population in a given area is sufficient to warrant the dedication of resources to recruit new providers.
3. Providers make a business decision regarding whether to join the Aetna network and comply with all contract requirements, such as financial, utilization management, and administrative requirements. Some providers would not benefit sufficiently to make such an arrangement worthwhile. Therefore, even when Aetna does approach a provider to request participation in a given network, a provider may elect not to join. This third factor may limit the number of providers interested in joining Aetna's networks when Aetna is recruiting providers.

The Board of Pensions does not have the resources to directly contract with providers throughout the country for the point-of-service program. Also, because of the cost and administrative inefficiencies associated with multiple carriers, the Board of Pensions does not anticipate offering local health-care plans.

The Board of Pensions acknowledges that some members are disappointed that their physicians do not participate in Aetna's point-of-service program. The Board of Pensions monitors member satisfaction with the point-of-service program and provides feedback to Aetna. If plan members advise that a network in a given area is not adequate to meet members' needs, Aetna is requested to investigate the sufficiency of physicians in that particular network. If Aetna then determines the network should be expanded, it will do so according to the process outlined above.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.41 To convey the above information on the Aetna point-of-service program to the New Jersey Synod as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the memorial of that synod; and

To encourage the Board of Pensions to continue to work with Aetna to expand the possibilities for physician participation in order to meet the needs of plan participants.

Category 15: Advocacy with the U.S. Government—Part 3, Federal Disaster Damage Regulations

Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, hundreds of thousands of structures have been affected by natural disasters in the United States; and

Whereas, a structure determined to be substantially damaged pursuant to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations must be brought into compliance with federal, state, and local building code requirements for new construction (e.g., demolished and elevated in a flood plain); and

Whereas, FEMA regulations require a structure to be considered substantially damaged if the cost of repairs to return it to its before-damage condition is more than 50 percent of its before-damage market value, and these regulations are applied on a five year cumulative basis; and

Whereas, FEMA intends to audit all areas in the United States affected by natural disasters; and

Whereas, in Hernando County, Florida, more than 1,600 homes were damaged by the No-Name Storm of March 13, 1993; and

Whereas, Hernando County was the first county in the United States to be audited by FEMA for compliance with the foregoing regulations; and

Whereas, there are an estimated 800 structures in Hernando County alone which are a minor damage incident away from being condemned and torn down due to the five year cumulative damage rule; and

Whereas, insurance companies question their responsibility for the cost to rebuild a home that has suffered a minor loss, believing they are only responsible for the minor loss; and

Whereas, these regulations have the potential to create undue suffering for all survivors of disaster as well as local government and the building industry; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod in assembly respond to the call of First Lutheran Church of Brooksville and Lutheran Ministries of Florida by utilizing the resources of agencies, such as Inter-Lutheran Domestic Disaster Response, in supporting and assisting Florida communities in assessing the FEMA regulations' impact on property owners; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the congregations of the Florida-Bahamas Synod be asked to offer themselves as points of information, discussion, and advocacy in relation to local and county considerations of these issues; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod in assembly call upon the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in its Churchwide Assembly to express these concerns to others in similar situations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the bishop of the Florida-Bahamas Synod ask the Conference of Bishops to give consideration to this issue through the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs to seek national action on this matter.

BACKGROUND

If the Churchwide Assembly elects to recommend referral of this memorial to the Division for Church in Society:

1. The Division for Church in Society, through its Domestic Disaster Response program, will work with Inter-Lutheran Disaster Response to assist the synod in assessing the impact of FEMA regulations on property owners. The issue is complicated in Florida by the responses of insurance companies.
2. Working with Lutheran Ministries of Florida, ELCA Domestic Disaster Response will provide information necessary for congregations of the synod to serve as points of information, discussion, and advocacy in relation to local and county consideration of the FEMA regulations

issues.

3. The Domestic Disaster Response Program will share its information with the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs and will work with that office in seeking national action on issues referred by the Florida-Bahamas Synod.

The consideration of cumulative damage over a five-year period in deciding whether or not to condemn a house is at the heart of the issue raised by the Florida-Bahamas Synod. Although the intention of the FEMA regulation is to avoid multiple rebuilding/destruction/rebuilding patterns, a desirable goal in itself, the regulation can indeed represent serious hardship to those who have rebuilt their homes in areas vulnerable to further flooding or hurricane damage. The slightest additional loss may put them over the 50 percent damage level and require demolition of a house that really requires only minor repair. While this is not the intention of the regulations, ways of avoiding this situation can be developed without abandoning the beneficial practice of avoiding multiple successive losses. This problem certainly also applies very directly to property owners who suffered damage approaching 50 percent in the Midwest floods of 1993.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.42 To refer to the Division for Church in Society the memorial on Federal Disaster Damage Regulations from the Florida-Bahamas Synod; and

To convey to the Florida-Bahamas Synod the information provided by the Division for Church in Society on this matter.

Category 17: Worship Resources

Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, current printed worship resources continue to be excellent for congregations wanting historical, catholic worship forms; and

Whereas, there is a large body of liturgical, hymnic, and lectionary material both available and being developed in different media; and

Whereas, congregational worship needs vary widely; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to report to and consult with synods regarding the development of worship resources and materials before a new worship book is authorized by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

BACKGROUND

The Division for Congregational Ministries maintains a network of synodical worship leaders. These are people whose appointment is requested of synodical bishops. It is the ongoing practice of the division to inform this network of people of plans in worship ministry which have an impact on the life of this whole church.

Policies and procedures for review of liturgical material were established by a Church Council action in April 1991. It acknowledges that "worship touches the lives of the church members more frequently than any other contact that they have with congregations. It involves both corporate and evangelical aspects." The procedures provide for review of proposed materials early in the development process. Specified reviewers include theologians, artists, and

intended users (including leaders in various ministries, synodical bishops, and worshipers).

The term, “authorized,” as used in the liturgical review policy, means “resources that have emerged from ecumenical consultations and the processes of this church and liturgical review, and which also are authorized by the Church Council or the Churchwide Assembly.” Another pertinent degree of endorsement would be material that is “commended.” That term is used to refer to “resources that have extensive liturgical review and now are commended, normally by the Churchwide Assembly, for general use in this church, such as Lutheran Book of Worship.” While synods are not the final decision makers, they would be included in the review and discussion that might lead to such decisions.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.43 To assure the Northwest Washington Synod of the intention of this church to engage in broad-based input in the development of all worship resources;

To call attention to the process of appointment of and consultation with synodical worship leaders and to encourage them to be in close contact with the Division for Congregational Ministries for the sharing of information and to make known the synod’s interests;

To draw attention to an established policy and procedure for review of liturgical material prepared by ELCA churchwide units;

To inform the synod that no specific plans are in place for the development of a commended worship resource similar to Lutheran Book of Worship; and

To express appreciation to the Northwest Washington Synod for its concern for this significant area of the church’s life.

Category 19: Family Farms

South Dakota Synod (3C) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, we are people of faith who see unique blessings from the hand of God upon the land and on those who care for and love the land, going back to the ancient call of God to “till it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15); and

Whereas, the cool wet spring led to flood conditions in many South Dakota counties and poor planting conditions throughout the heartland; and

Whereas, our rural communities and the unique values and way of life that the family farm represents and supports seem to be threatened by the combined and cumulative negative impact of these factors; and

Whereas, the congregations and people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are historically rooted in the land, family farms, and rural small town life, and the values to which God has called us on the land; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 South Dakota Synod Assembly encourage the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, at future national assemblies, to continue and increase its prayer, study, support, and advocacy for our family farmers in the critical economic, political, and spiritual problems and challenges that they face, and the impact that they have on all of us; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod call upon our voting members and congregations to:

1. Pray for our family farmers, their families, and rural communities with prayers such as,

“God, our Creator, you have ordered seedtime and harvest, sunshine, and rain. Grant that all the people of our nation give thanks to you for food, drink, and all that sustains life; may honor the land and water from which these good things come; and may respect those who labor to produce them; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” (Lutheran Book of Worship, page 43);

2. Learn about the challenges that face our family farms by talking with our farmers, their families, and business associates, listening to their concerns, hopes, and fears; and

3. Support our family farmers by standing with them and advocating response and compassionate national and farm legislation that protects family farms, the land, and the small towns that they make possible;

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod direct its new bishop to make the spiritual, emotional, and economic needs of family farmers a high priority in the life of this synod, region, and church.

BACKGROUND

This memorial requests that churchwide assemblies continue and increase the attention given to issues related to family farms, including support through prayer, study, support and advocacy. The 1993 Churchwide Assembly had a major emphasis on rural ministry and adopted a rural resolution raising up a variety of issues related to this subject. That resolution charged the Division for Outreach with coordinating this church’s response to the type of concerns that are raised in the memorial from the South Dakota Synod. In addition, the Division for Congregational Ministries and the Division for Church in Society support rural ministry and raise up rural concerns in their ongoing work.

The responsibility for the development of the agenda of the Churchwide Assembly rests with the bishop of the church (ELCA 13.21.c.).

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.44 To express the concern of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly for family farmers and to echo the call of the South Dakota Synod for all members and congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to:

- pray for family farmers, their families and rural communities;
- learn about the challenges facing family farms; and
- support family farmers through advocacy for just legislation that protects family farms, the land, and the small towns they make possible;

and

To refer the memorial of the South Dakota Synod to the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as the bishop provides for the agenda of future churchwide assemblies.

Category 22: Roster Language

Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the 1993 Churchwide Assembly voted to provide three lay rosters (associates in ministry, deaconess, and diaconal ministers); and

Whereas, it is important that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod be a leader in implementing this

language change in order to uphold, support, and promote the unique contribution of each roster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod begin at this assembly to use language of either all three rosters or the term “lay rosters” when speaking or using written communication; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly meeting in Minneapolis in August to encourage each of the 65 synods, each seminary, as well as congregations and conferences to lift up by appropriate roster language use the ministry of each lay roster.

BACKGROUND

The Division for Ministry affirms the intent of this memorial to encourage the use of the appropriate terminology to describe the various lay rosters of this church.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.45 To affirm the memorial of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod by encouraging synods, seminaries, congregations, conferences, and the churchwide organization to use appropriate terminology for each lay roster.

Category 23: Foundation Endowment for Evangelism

Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, evangelism is the sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, evangelism is central to the fulfillment of this church’s purpose and mission; and

Whereas, there are still those who have yet to hear the good news of Jesus; and

Whereas, financial constraints touch every level of the church; and

Whereas, the ELCA Foundation presently has no category for evangelism to which endowments may be made; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to establish, promote, and oversee an endowment for evangelism through the ELCA Foundation.

BACKGROUND

The Division for Congregational Ministries and the ELCA Foundation affirms the intent to the memorial of the Delaware-Maryland Synod. The internal mechanisms to “establish” and “oversee” endowment funds are already in place. The staff of the foundation continue to stress the importance of evangelism in presentations, in the hopes of establishing a major endowment for evangelism. The ELCA Foundation’s latest advertisement in *The Lutheran* lists the ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which could be beneficiaries of bequests. One of those listed is “evangelism programs of ELCA.”

One of the more than 50 different sub-accounts in the ELCA Endowment Fund has as its purpose “to promote evangelism.” Another in the making would have as its purpose “to support evangelism programs among youth.” (Restricted endowment funds with designated purposes are set up whenever a donor makes a gift with restrictions or designations, if the purpose of the fund is supportive of ELCA ministries and/or compatible with the mission of the Evangelical Lutheran

Church in America. Normally an endowment fund for a restricted fund with a designated purpose is “established” whenever funds are received.)

In addition, the Vision for Mission Fund contains an endowment component. The major focus of this fund is both international and domestic evangelism/outreach. This fund, which is being widely promoted throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, provides a broader means for achieving the intent of the Delaware-Maryland memorial.

Assembly

Action En Bloc

CA95.5.46 To encourage members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consider seriously current gifts and future bequests to the Vision for Mission Fund or to an endowment fund designated for evangelism in the ELCA Foundation.

Ms. Rebecca Yuille [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] requested that the stained-glass window be removed from in front of the stage to another location so the stage would be more visible. Bishop Chilstrom assured her it will be moved immediately following this session, since the weight of the window made it difficult to move during the business session.

Pastor Hallberg indicated that the report of the Memorials Committee would continue with consideration of memorials previously removed for separate consideration from the en bloc resolution for disposition of synodical memorials.

Category 14: ELCA Medical-Dental Plan—Part 3,
Policy on Abortion

A. Southeastern Iowa (5D) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, it has been discovered that the ELCA Board of Pensions health-care plan pays for all abortions of its plan members, no questions asked; and

Whereas, the ELCA Board of Pensions health-care plan has been involved in deception by the clarification of abortion under "miscarriage"; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in its 1991 Churchwide Assembly adopted a Social Statement on Abortion which limits the situations in which an abortion may be considered "morally responsible" to the following cases: to save the life of the mother, for rape or incest cases, and for fetal anomaly which would result in early death ("A Social Statement on Abortion," page 7); and

Whereas, the ELCA Division for Church in Society has advised the ELCA Board of Pensions not "to inquire or do further probing regarding the reasons for an abortion," (through the director for studies, Dr. Karen Bloomquist, in correspondence dated September 7, 1993); and

Whereas, the effect of this advice is to authorize the ELCA Board of Pensions to pay for any and all abortions; and

Whereas, we members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America cannot accept this policy as good stewardship of the church's offerings to God, nor believe it is consistent with our Lord Jesus' attitude toward children, nor understand it to be a faithful response to the Holy Spirit who is "the Lord and giver of life"; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to:

1. prohibit the use of church funds to pay for abortions except to save the life of the mother, for

rape or incest cases, and for fetal anomaly which would result in early death;

2. request the Board of Pensions to provide the church accurate and truthful accounting of any abortions thus undertaken;
3. affirm regarding church offerings what has already been said of "tax money," that is that it "not be used to pay for what some people consider profoundly wrong" ("Social Statement on Abortion," page 10);
4. bring appropriate correction to the ELCA Division for Church in Society; and
5. lead us to confess our past unfaithfulness and to implore God to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

B. Northwestern Ohio (6D) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, it appears that the ELCA medical insurance plan pays for induced abortions upon demand; and

Whereas, it appears that such payment for such procedures is not distinguished from coverage of costs for natural miscarriages; and

Whereas, the church must continually bear witness to the belief that God alone is the creator and preserver of life, and therefore, the sole rightful terminator of life; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to take steps to effect changes in existing medical insurance policies, such that only those induced abortions are paid for that meet the criteria of moral responsibility set forth in the 1991 ELCA statement on that subject.

C. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, it has been acknowledged that the ELCA health-care plan pays for abortions, without distinction as to the nature of or reasons for such abortions; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopted a social statement on abortion in 1991 which identifies the situations in which an abortion may be considered "morally responsible" as the following cases: to save the life of the mother, for rape or incest cases, or for fetal anomaly which would result in early death ("A Social Statement on Abortion," page 7); and

Whereas, the Lower Susquehanna Synod cannot recognize coverage for abortions—without distinctions as to the nature of or reasons for such abortions—as good stewardship of the church's offerings to God; or as consistent with our Lord Jesus' attitude toward children; or as a faithful response to the Holy Spirit who is "the Lord and giver of life"; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod affirm the 1991 abortion statement and its principle that "the language used in discussing abortion should ignore neither the value of unborn life nor the value of the woman and her other relationships" ("A Social Statement on Abortion," page 2); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to request the Board of Pensions not to pay for abortions, except to save the life of the mother, for rape or incest cases, or for fetal anomaly which would result in early death, consistent with the 1991 ELCA statement on abortion; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the Church Council to approve the Board of Pensions' action of May 11 and 12, 1995, to bring the health-care plan into conformity with the 1991 ELCA statement on abortion.

BACKGROUND

At its May 11-12, 1995, meeting, the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions proposed amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan that would limit coverage of abortions under the plan to the following three situations:

1. where the life of the mother is threatened;
2. where the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest; and
3. where the embryo or fetus has lethal abnormalities incompatible with life.

The Board of Pensions proposed these amendments in an attempt to reflect more clearly the social statement on abortion that was adopted by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly. Amendments to the ELCA health plan proposed by the Board of Pensions must be approved by the ELCA Church Council.

To further explore the implications of the ELCA's "Social Statement on Abortion" for the ELCA's health plan, a staff consultation was held June 21, 1995, including representatives of the Board of Pensions, staff of the ELCA's Division for Church in Society, and staff of the Office of the Bishop and Office of the Secretary. The results of this consultation were reported to the Board of Pensions at its early-August meeting and to the Church Council at its brief pre-assembly meeting. The Church Council will likely take up a full discussion of the proposed amendments at its next regular meeting in November 1995. Under the provisions of the ELCA's governing documents, the Church Council has the responsibility to "review policy established by the Board [of Pensions] and take action on any policy that would change the documents establishing and governing this program" (ELCA churchwide bylaw 17.61.02.a.).

The Memorials Committee notes the difficulties involved in the interpretation of the ELCA's "Social Statement on Abortion" within the context of our complex medical system. Full and complete information on medical codes and current medical and insurance practices, a thorough knowledge of the social statement itself, and adequate time for discussion of the ramifications of specific reporting procedures are needed in order to arrive at a sound decision on this matter.

Thus, the Memorials Committee recommends referral of these memorials to the Church Council, which has the constitutional responsibility for making changes in the documents of the ELCA Medical and Dental Plan.

Pastor Hallberg introduced the following recommendation of the Memorials Committee, subsequently adopted by the Churchwide Assembly without discussion:

Assembly

Action Yes-784; No-55

CA95.5.47 To refer to the ELCA Church Council the memorials of the Southeastern Iowa, Northwestern Ohio, and Lower Susquehanna synods on coverage of abortion by the ELCA health plan; and

To request that the Church Council inform these synods of any action it takes with regard to possible amendments to the ELCA's health plan, which seek to reflect this church's "Social Statement on Abortion."

Category 21: Future Churchwide Studies or Emphases

A. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, in the first years of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America various struggles have brought about a fragmentation of our church; and

Whereas, believing people of good will have stood on opposite sides of these questions; and

Whereas, Jesus prayed for the unity of believers and that is the common desire of believers in the Minneapolis Area Synod; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod adopt the following, "A Call to the Center for Lutherans":

Theological Statement

We are united in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America solely by the Gospel, that which God has done and is doing in Jesus Christ. Jesus is God's Word incarnate. He is our center. Christ meets us in the Bible, the written Word of God, which comes to us as both Law and Gospel. The Gospel gives us life and unity, calling the whole of humankind to faith in Jesus Christ.

The proclamation of the Gospel is the central, essential, ongoing task of the Church. Other human organizations are called by God to do good things, but they are not called to proclaim the Gospel.

We have a distinctive identity within the Church catholic, which is expressed in the Lutheran confessions. This identity is well summarized by the Reformation solas: Christians walk by faith alone, by grace alone, and by the Word alone.

Believers empowered by the Gospel have the Great Commission as their central calling—to reach out to others for the purpose of "making disciples of all nations." The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America needs greater focus on the missionary tasks of the church, at home and abroad.

Believers empowered by the Gospel are called to perform deeds of loving service on behalf of the neighborhood in Christ's name. ELCA members do not all agree on the specifics of how we are to be servants to the neighbor, nor need we reach agreement in order to manifest our unity in Christ. We are agreed, however, that such ministries are a necessary response to God's love and an integral part of our discipleship as Christians.

We encourage this church to dedicate itself to renewed learning among all of our members, focusing on our Scriptural heritage, our confessional base, our missionary mandate, and our opportunities for service in society. We yearn for this to be done in such manner that we may be able to celebrate afresh our unity in him who is our center, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Action Statement

To accomplish this, we propose:

- That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America develop a three-year series of teaching resources:
 - a first year on basic understanding of Scripture and salvation history;
 - a second year with an in-depth look at the Lutheran Confessions and key Lutheran theological themes;
 - a third year applying these themes to the missionary task and the call to Christian service.
- That ELCA members come together in all parts of the nation for group celebrations emphasizing unity in the evangelical opportunities facing this church.
- That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America suspend, for a time, the development of social statements, because they are likely to divide rather than unite this church.

- That congregations, synods, and the churchwide expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thoughtful attention to this call as a means of striving, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, toward greater unity in life and mission.

and be it further

RESOLVED, that this document be forwarded to the August 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly and be recommended for discussion and adoption.

B. Northeastern Ohio Synod (6E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA 2.03.); and

Whereas, theological reflection regarding how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands the authority of the Scriptures is of critical importance in this church as it bears its witness in the world; and

Whereas, the ELCA Division for Ministry is responsible in this church to "initiate, encourage, and promote theological reflection in cooperation with theologians, the Conference of Bishops, the Department for Ecumenical Affairs, the Division for Higher Education and Schools, the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, lay movements and others" (ELCA 16.11B91.d.); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Ohio Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in assembly to direct the Division for Ministry to initiate a study of how the Scriptures serve as authority in this church.

C. New England Synod (7B) [1995 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to authorize the establishment of a special committee to plan for the observance of the beginning of the third millennium of Christianity to the glory of God the Father and the honor of Jesus Christ, with a new sense of the Spirit's presence in the Church for the blessing of all humankind.

BACKGROUND

The "Call to the Center for ELCA Lutherans" of the Minneapolis Area Synod and the "Scriptures as the Authority of the Church" of the Northeastern Ohio Synod are memorials that, though different in content, make suggestions for future churchwide emphases or studies that could shape the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the coming biennium. Intensive conversation and congregational study for 1996-1997 is already scheduled for the proposals for full communion with the Episcopalian Church and the Reformed family of churches. An intensive churchwide study of this church's sacramental practices is also under way during that time period. Both of these efforts are scheduled to come to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly for action. In addition, future plans for the process for the development of a statement on human sexuality, including issues related to the interpretation of Scripture, will be determined after the time for congregational response to the second draft of the statement is completed in June 1995.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is currently engaged in the "Inquiry" process, which is intended to "promote open, honest, and careful dialogue and conversation among key

partners in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that reflect confidence and hope for the future." At the heart of this effort is theologically grounded discussion and reflection on the mission God has entrusted to this church. Conferences with lay persons and clergy, as well as congregational reflection this fall, are part of the "Inquiry." In addition, Bishop Chilstrom has issued a "Call to Prayer and Reflection," asking this whole church to participate in a time of prayer and reflection during the season of Pentecost. A report on the "Inquiry" and the full text of the "Call to Prayer and Reflection" are found in the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 709-715.

The election of a new bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is yet another factor to weigh in the response to these memorials. Plans for the coming years will be shaped by the new bishop's leadership and the emphases the bishop will wish to raise in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. (For example, one of the first initiatives of Bishop Chilstrom was Mission90, with its churchwide emphasis on the basics of the faith, on prayer and Bible study, on witness, and on service.)

The third of these memorials recommends the beginning of a planning process for the celebration of the third millennium of Christianity—a longer-range planning process that will involve the new bishop.

Assembly Action

The Rev. Nadine F. Lehr, co-chair of the Memorials Committee, summarized the actions requested in the three synodical memorials, stating, "In the memorial received from the Minneapolis Area Synod, the proposal was made that this church develop a three-year resource for the study of Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and our mission, and that we suspend the development of future social statements in the time being. The second [from the Northeastern Ohio Synod] proposed that the Division for Ministry initiate a study of how Scripture serve as an authority in this church. The third [from the New England Synod] proposed that a special committee be appointed to plan for the observance of the beginning of the third millennium of Christianity."

Pastor Lehr commented, "In our discussion, we noted that there were already several major studies and initiatives under way that will be considered during the next biennium, including the ecumenical proposals, the sacramental practices document, and the 'Inquiry' process. In addition, we were mindful of the election of a new bishop and the bishop-elect's need to be involved in these processes."

Pastor Hallberg then introduced the following recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Moved;

Seconded: To affirm the encouragement of the Minneapolis Area Synod that this church dedicate itself to renewed learning among all of our members, focusing on our Scriptural heritage, our confessional base, our missionary mandate, and our opportunities for service in society, thereby celebrating afresh our unity in our Lord, Jesus Christ;

To refer the specifics for action contained in the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod, "A Call to the Center for ELCA Lutherans," to the ELCA bishop and the Church Council;

To refer the memorials of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, "The Scriptures as the Authority for ELCA Lutherans," and the New England Synod, "Third Millennium of Christianity," to the

ELCA bishop and the Church Council;

To request that the ELCA bishop and Church Council develop a response to these memorials within the context of other churchwide activities that address the issues raised in the memorials of the Minneapolis Area Synod, Northeastern Ohio Synod, and New England Synod; and

To request the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to share with these synods the outcome of this discussion.

Mr. Ray D. Johnson (Minneapolis Area Synod) moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the following memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod on page 952 of Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, for the Memorials Committee recommendation in its entirety, changing the references from “Minneapolis Area Synod” to “Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” and deleting the last paragraph beginning with “and be it further resolved”: Whereas, in the first years of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America various struggles have brought about a fragmentation of our church; and Whereas, believing people of good will have stood on opposite sides of these questions; and Whereas, Jesus prayed for the unity of believers and that is the common desire of believers in the ~~[Minneapolis Area Synod]~~ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the ~~[Minneapolis Area Synod]~~ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopt the following, “A Call to the Center for Lutherans”:

Theological Statement

We are united in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America solely by the Gospel, that which God has done and is doing in Jesus Christ. Jesus is God’s Word incarnate. He is our center. Christ meets us in the Bible, the written Word of God, which comes to us as both Law and Gospel. The Gospel gives us life and unity, calling the whole of humankind to faith in Jesus Christ.

The proclamation of the Gospel is the central, essential, ongoing task of the Church. Other human organizations are called by God to do good things, but they are not called to proclaim the Gospel.

We have a distinctive identity within the Church catholic, which is expressed in the Lutheran confessions. This identity is well summarized by the Reformation solas: Christians walk by faith alone, by grace alone, and by the Word alone.

Believers empowered by the Gospel have the Great Commission as their central calling: to reach out to others for the purpose of “making disciples of all nations.” The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America needs greater focus on the missionary tasks of the church, at home and abroad.

Believers empowered by the Gospel are called to perform deeds of loving service on behalf of the neighborhood in Christ’s name. ELCA members do not all agree on the specifics of how we are to be servants to the neighbor, nor need we reach agreement in order to manifest our unity in Christ. We are agreed, however, that such ministries are a necessary response to God’s love and an integral part of our discipleship as Christians.

We encourage this church to dedicate itself to renewed learning among all of our members, focusing on our Scriptural heritage, our confessional base, our missionary mandate, and our

opportunities for service in society. We yearn for this to be done in such manner that we may be able to celebrate afresh our unity in him who is our center, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Action Statement

To accomplish this, we propose:

- That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America develop a three-year series of teaching resources:
 - a first year on basic understanding of Scripture and salvation history;
 - a second year with an in-depth look at the Lutheran Confessions and key Lutheran theological themes;
 - a third year applying these themes to the missionary task and the call to Christian service.
- That ELCA members come together in all parts of the nation for group celebrations emphasizing unity in the evangelical opportunities facing this church.
- That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America suspend, for a time, the development of social statements, because they are likely to divide rather than unite this church.
- That congregations, synods, and the churchwide expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thoughtful attention to this call as a means of striving, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, toward greater unity in life and mission.

Mr. Johnson spoke to the motion, stating, “On behalf of the Minneapolis Area Synod, I would like to present to you, ‘A Call to the Center for ELCA Lutherans,’ a document that was adopted by our synod by an overwhelming majority. We ask that you affirm it, so that the world may see that we and our new bishop leave this assembly affirming the Gospel and united in our task. Since the birth of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we have had many struggles. Our church has been wounded by these struggles and its ministry impeded. We humbly present this document as one way to help bring a new feeling of unity through deepening our sense of our rootedness and expanding bold outreach in the name of Christ.

“This document was developed by a handful of people from a very broad spectrum within this church. Three meetings were held, beginning with the sharing of faith stories followed by prayer and frank discussions concerning the fragmentation going on within our denomination. From these discussions came the document, ‘A Call to the Center for ELCA Lutherans.’ It has been affirmed by many ELCA Lutherans around the United States—female and male, lay and clergy. Interestingly, it has been rejected by some on both the ‘left’ and the ‘right’. Maybe that means we have found the center. In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it is important to settle some major issues. Any healthy family needs to do that, but sometimes, when people are deeply hurting, we need to go back and remember what our roots are, where we came from, what our stories are, as well as our history—not to press on to ‘I win and you lose.’ We, therefore, present ‘A Call to the Center for ELCA Lutherans’ as one small part of a move toward an exciting future unified in Jesus Christ. We ask that this resolution be recommended for discussion and adoption so that we may begin the healing process as we turn to expend our energies toward outward and positive ministry.”

Bishop Robert W. Kelley [Northeastern Ohio Synod] spoke against the motion to substitute and gave notice of his intention of moving to divide the question and to consider each of the three memorials separately, if the motion to substitute were to fail. He stated, “It would seem to me inappropriate that we adopt a substitute for three memorials with a memorial that has come

from one synod.”

Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl [Saint Paul Area Synod] spoke against the substitute, stating, “This has been very carefully considered by the Memorials Committee. Their means of affirming the call to the center [does not] shackle this church—in terms of vital areas of ministry—by the restrictions that are involved in that which is proposed as a substitute. We should stand by the recommendation of the Memorial Committee.”

Ms. Stephanie Olson [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the substitute, stating, “One of the things I like about the motion on the floor is a comparison to the topics offered in the recommendation by the Memorials Committee. The topics [offered by the substitute motion] are a little more basic and grounded in Scripture. What I have experienced in the parish . . . is that many people in the parish do not know the Scriptures well enough to understand what is coming down from the national level. I think we need to have a greater basic grounding in the faith and in the Scriptures.”

Bishop Lee M. Miller [Upstate New York Synod] spoke against the proposed substitute motion, stating, “It handicaps us, if this were to be adopted. We would agree to the suspension, for a time, of the development of social statements, because they are likely to divide rather than unite this church. I do not accept that premise. I believe we can be doing work in society today and that it is important for us to do so. I also think that we have our theological and Biblical act together sufficiently to enable us to do this.”

Bishop Harold C. Skillrud [Southeastern Synod] spoke against the proposed substitute motion. “I cannot imagine that a church the size of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with its prominence both in the national and international scene, would be rendered absolutely speechless over this period of time when critical issues could arise on the horizon of which we know nothing at the present time. The poor, the suffering, the needy of the world depend upon the Church to be their voice and I stand, therefore, against a resolution that would silence us.”

The Rev. Luther E. Peterson [Minneapolis Area Synod] proposed the following amendment to the substitute motion:

Moved;

Seconded: To delete the paragraph in the substitute motion that reads, “That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America suspend, for a time, the development of social statements because they are likely to divide rather than unite this church.”

Pastor Peterson spoke to the motion, stating, “It would seem to me that there are many times that crisis situations could come up, like the situations that Bonhoeffer dealt with in Germany, . . . which would mean that we would need to deal with social issues on an emergency basis, if not over a long-term basis.”

Bishop Donald H. Maier [Northwest Washington Synod] rose to a point of order and inquired whether the motion to substitute had been moved and seconded properly. Bishop Chilstrom responded affirmatively and indicated that both the recommendation of the Memorials Committee and the proposed substitution were now before the assembly.

Ms. Tia Bartos [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] called the question on all issues before the house.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Second; Yes-593; No-310

Defeated: To move the previous questions on all matters before the house.

Mr. Johnson, the originator of the substitute motion, indicated that he considered the amendment offered by Pastor Peterson to be a friendly amendment.

Bishop E. LeRoy Riley Jr. [New Jersey Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-832; No-53
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Second; Yes-675; No-210
Carried: To delete the paragraph in the substitute motion that reads, "That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America suspend, for a time, the development of social statements because they are likely to divide rather than unite this church."

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the substitute motion, as amended, as well as the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, were now before the assembly.

Bishop Harold S. Weiss [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] commented, "The substitute has now been improved, but I believe it is still unwise for us to try to develop an action plan in an assembly of 1,000 persons . . . before the newly organized Church Council and the bishop-elect have opportunity to deal with these matters carefully. The resolution of the Memorials Committee affirms the principles enunciated in items one, two, and three of the [proposed] three-year plan without nailing them down to specific kinds of strategies. It also refers [positively] to the whole of what is recommended by the three memorials for serious consideration. I believe this will serve our church better than to proceed to substitute a specific action plan at this time."

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-811; No-109
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Second; Yes-219; No-693
Defeated: To substitute the following memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod on page 952 of Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, for the Memorials Committee recommendation in its entirety, changing the references from "Minneapolis Area Synod" to "Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," and deleting the last paragraph beginning with "and be it further resolved":
Whereas, in the first years of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America various struggles have brought about a fragmentation of our church; and
Whereas, believing people of good will have stood on opposite sides of these questions; and
Whereas, Jesus prayed for the unity of believers and that is the common desire of believers in the [Minneapolis Area Synod] Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; therefore, be it
RESOLVED, that the [Minneapolis Area Synod] Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopt

the following, “A Call to the Center for Lutherans”:

Theological Statement

We are united in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America solely by the Gospel, that which God has done and is doing in Jesus Christ. Jesus is God’s Word incarnate. He is our center. Christ meets us in the Bible, the written Word of God, which comes to us as both Law and Gospel. The Gospel gives us life and unity, calling the whole of humankind to faith in Jesus Christ.

The proclamation of the Gospel is the central, essential, ongoing task of the Church. Other human organizations are called by God to do good things, but they are not called to proclaim the Gospel.

We have a distinctive identity within the Church catholic, which is expressed in the Lutheran confessions. This identity is well summarized by the Reformation solas: Christians walk by faith alone, by grace alone, and by the Word alone.

Believers empowered by the Gospel have the Great Commission as their central calling: to reach out to others for the purpose of “making disciples of all nations.” The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America needs greater focus on the missionary tasks of the church, at home and abroad.

Believers empowered by the Gospel are called to perform deeds of loving service on behalf of the neighborhood in Christ’s name. ELCA members do not all agree on the specifics of how we are to be servants to the neighbor, nor need we reach agreement in order to manifest our unity in Christ. We are agreed, however, that such ministries are a necessary response to God’s love and an integral part of our discipleship as Christians.

We encourage this church to dedicate itself to renewed learning among all of our members, focusing on our Scriptural heritage, our confessional base, our missionary mandate, and our opportunities for service in society. We yearn for this to be done in such manner that we may be able to celebrate afresh our unity in him who is our center, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Action Statement

To accomplish this, we propose:

- That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America develop a three-year series of teaching resources:
 - a first year on basic understanding of Scripture and salvation history;
 - a second year with an in-depth look at the Lutheran Confessions and key Lutheran theological themes;
 - a third year applying these themes to the missionary task and the call to Christian service.
- That ELCA members come together in all parts of the nation for group celebrations emphasizing unity in the evangelical opportunities facing this church.
- That congregations, synods, and the churchwide expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thoughtful attention to this call as a means of striving, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, toward greater unity in life and mission.

Bishop Robert W. Kelley [Northeastern Ohio Synod] referred to the notice he had given previously that he intended to move to divide consideration of the three memorials, in order to permit separate discussion of the memorial from the Northeastern Ohio Synod. Bishop Chilstrom stated that with the concurrence of the parliamentarian he would rule that the motion

must necessarily be made as a substitute for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee. Bishop Kelley then moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the following resolution of the Northeastern Ohio Synod for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Whereas, “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life (ELCA 2.03.); and

Whereas, theological reflection regarding how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands the authority of the Scriptures is of critical importance in this church as it bears its witness in the world; and

Whereas, the ELCA Division for Ministry is responsible in this church to “initiate, encourage, and promote theological reflection in cooperation with theologians, the Conference of Bishops, the Department for Ecumenical Affairs, the Division for Higher Education and Schools, the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, lay movements and others” (ELCA 16.11B91.d.); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Ohio Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in assembly to direct the Division for Ministry to initiate a study of how the Scriptures serve as authority in this church.

Bishop Kelley spoke to the motion, stating, “It is my considered opinion that one of the issues that is before this church is how we understand Scripture as a source and norm of the authority for all the things that we do by way of faith and life. The struggle that we had recently with the human sexuality statement was to me not so much an issue about human sexuality . . . [as] a question within the church as to how we understand scripture's authority. Quite clearly, we are not all on the same page. In past history, some of our antecedent church bodies have made some rather significant efforts in this direction—’Word and Witness’ from the Lutheran Church in America, and many years ago in The American Lutheran Church there was a book called, Bible: Book of Faith. It seems to me that something that gets us back into an understanding of how Scripture serves as authority—consistent with what you [Bishop Chilstrom] said in your address to us as bishop of the church—is that we use Scripture, but we use it carefully. It is my considered opinion, and it comes to you with the support of our Synod Assembly, that it would serve us well in this church if we were to ask the Division for Ministry to devote attention to this, to find a way in which this issue would be studied in this church and we could be together in our understanding of Scripture as authority.”

The Rev. Daniel J. Schwich [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] offered the following amendment to the substitute motion:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the substitute motion by deleting the phrase, “direct the Division for Ministry,” from the “RESOLVED” paragraph, and by substituting the phrase, “to request the Office of the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Pastor Schwich spoke to the motion, stating, “Particularly with both the incumbent bishop

and our bishop-elect, we have a great opportunity to call on our church leader to lead in a very pastoral and theological way in initiating and, I would assume, carrying out the study. I would urge us to take advantage of that opportunity.”

Mr. Benjamin J. Hertenstein [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] called the question on all matters before the house.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-677; No-246

Carried: To move the previous questions on all matters before the house.

Bishop Chilstrom reviewed the various motions immediately pending.

Ms. Edith M. Lohr, a member of the Church Council and chair of the council’s Budget and Finance Committee, rose to a point of order, stating, “This motion has significant budgetary implications, because it calls for a study.” She objected that the assembly’s Rules of Organization and Procedure require that such motions provide for funding for implementation. Bishop Chilstrom concurred, “It is true either way, whether . . . [the matter is referred] to the Office of the Bishop or to the Division for Ministry, that there are budgetary implications, so we can deal with the amendment. In the event that the substitute proposal were to be approved and adopted, it would, by our assembly rules, have to be referred [to the Church Council] because of its budgetary implications.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-523; No-402

Carried: To amend the substitute motion by deleting the phrase, “direct the Division for Ministry,” from the “RESOLVED” paragraph, and by substituting the phrase, “to request the Office of the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

The Rev. Susan L. Engh [Minneapolis Area Synod] inquired about the inclusion of the words, “the Northeastern Ohio Synod,” in the memorial as moved and asked whether such was an editorial matter. Bishop Chilstrom indicated that it was an editorial matter.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-277; No-658

Defeated: To substitute the following resolution of the Northeastern Ohio Synod for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Whereas, “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life (ELCA 2.03.); and

Whereas, theological reflection regarding how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands the authority of the Scriptures is of critical importance in this church as it bears its witness in the world; and

Whereas, the ELCA Division for Ministry is responsible in this church to “initiate, encourage, and promote theological reflection in cooperation with theologians, the Conference of Bishops, the Department for Ecumenical Affairs, the Division for Higher Education and Schools, the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, lay movements and others” (ELCA 16.11B91.d.); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Ohio Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in assembly to request the Office of the Bishop to initiate a study of how the Scriptures serve as authority in this church.

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the unamended recommendation of the Memorials Committee was now before the assembly.

Assembly

Action Yes-835; No-74

CA95.5.48 To affirm the encouragement of the Minneapolis Area Synod that this church dedicate itself to renewed learning among all of our members, focusing on our Scriptural heritage, our confessional base, our missionary mandate, and our opportunities for service in society, thereby celebrating afresh our unity in our Lord, Jesus Christ;

To refer the specifics for action contained in the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod, "A Call to the Center for ELCA Lutherans," to the ELCA bishop and the Church Council;

To refer the memorials of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, "The Scriptures as the Authority for ELCA Lutherans," and the New England Synod, "Third Millennium of Christianity," to the ELCA bishop and the Church Council;

To request that the ELCA bishop and Church Council develop a response to these memorials within the context of other churchwide activities that address the issues raised in the memorials of the Minneapolis Area Synod, Northeastern Ohio Synod, and New England Synod; and

To request the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to share with these synods the outcome of this discussion.

Review of the Division for Global Mission

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 420-422, Volume 2, pages 732-744.

Background

(Portions reprinted from 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 420-422.)

According to the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Church Council's Program and Structure Committee shall:

establish a process for the review of at least two churchwide units each biennium so as to review all units within a ten-year period. Such review shall include the recommendation for renewal of the mandate for the churchwide unit or recommendation of an alternative structure through which the unit's purposes shall be accomplished (ELCA continuing resolution 14.41.D91.).

In consultation with the Church Council, the Program and Structure Committee undertook a review of the Division for Global Mission (DGM) during the 1994-1995 biennium. The mandate for this unit, as specified in ELCA continuing resolution 16.11.F91., is printed in the 1995 Pre-Assembly Reports, Volume 1, page 503.

In fulfilling its responsibility for review, the Program and Structure Committee:

- received and reviewed documentation, including materials relating to an extensive internal unit

review, provided by the Division for Global Mission.

- reviewed the results of surveys of congregations, partner churches and mission agencies, persons related to the Companion Synods Program, and persons receiving the Global Contact Newsletter of the Division for Global Mission. The instruments used in these surveys and the final reports were prepared by the Department for Research and Evaluation, in close cooperation with the division.
- met with the executive director and the director for planning and evaluation of the division on a regular basis throughout the biennium and reviewed identified issues and responses by the division.

Having received the report of the Program and Structure Committee at its April 1995 meeting, the ELCA Church Council concluded its review of the Division for Global Mission with the following vote of affirmation [CC95.4.34]:

To affirm the renewal of the mandate of the Division for Global Mission; and

To express deep appreciation to the staff and board of the Division for Global Mission for their ongoing service in this ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Fulfillment of Constitutional Mandate
By the Division for Global Mission
1988-1995

16.11.F91. Division for Global Mission

This division shall be responsible for this church's mission in other countries and shall be the channel through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society. To fulfill these responsibilities, this division shall:

- a. engage the members and resources of this church in mission outside the territory of this church through the involvement in evangelism, witness, education, promotion of justice, service, relief, and development. To do so, the division will:
 - 1) establish relationships and cooperate in mission with Lutheran and other Christian churches, agencies, institutions, mission societies, and movements in other countries.

Global relationships and cooperation are conducted with:

- 70-plus Lutheran churches;
- 20-plus other churches;
- 70 ecumenical institutions and agencies (higher education, theological education, relief and development);
- 20-plus European mission societies and organizations;
- ecumenical organizations: national councils of churches and regional councils such as All Africa Council of Churches, Latin America Council of Churches, Central America Committee of Lutheran Churches, Middle East Council of Churches, Asia Council of Churches, etc.;
- Lutheran World Federation Department for Mission and Development and Department for World Service; and
- 30-plus Lutheran and Protestant English-language congregations primarily in Europe but also Australia, Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt, Guam, Japan, Jerusalem, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Tanzania.

2) develop and recommend policies and programs for this church's mission in other countries.

Since 1988, the board has adopted the following policies and statements to guide the program of the division:

- Governance (processes, relationships, responsibilities of the board) (1992);
- Long-Range Goals I-IV (1989);
- Priorities (1990);
- Criteria for Funding and Personnel (1990);
- Commitments for Mission in the 1990s (1990);
- Policy Statement Concerning Development (1991);
- Policy Statement Concerning Health Ministry (1992);
- Future Directions for the Division for Global Mission (1992);
- Major Program Directions 1994-1995 (1993; revised periodically);
- Process for Recognition of Relationship of Independent Lutheran Organizations (1994); and
- Mission in the 1990s: The Role of Missionaries in the Global Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1994).

The Priorities have guided decision-making in the division particularly during times of planning and of budget reductions. They are:

- Evangelism—particularly witness among people of other faiths: Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Asian secularism;
- Leadership Development—assisting churches toward self-reliance through equipping of leaders, especially women; developing new models of cooperation with churches based on mutuality and interdependence;
- South-South—facilitating the exchange of personnel and resources among the churches of Latin America, Africa, and Asia;
- Relief, Development, and Health Ministries—alleviating poverty and oppression and advocating for justice, peace, and the renewal of all creation; and
- Mission to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—enabling global churches to witness to this church and to encourage and inform the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in its own mission.

A Strategic Planning Document is a compilation of long-range goals and strategies related to specific countries and regions. This is updated on an ongoing basis. Strategies are currently under development or revision for Latin America, Europe, and Asia (particularly for witness among Buddhists, Hindus, and secularists).

The administration and staff are guided by policies and organization outlined in Office Organization and Decision Making Process (1993). The office staff is organized in work teams:

- Overseas Department
 - Eight geographic areas
 - Development and Health Ministries
 - International Scholarships
 - South-South/Global Community

Papua New Guinea/South Pacific	678,755	-0-
Europe and the Middle East	652,355	75,000

Human Resources

Overseas personnel including spouses who were serving through the Division for Global Mission as of March 1995, were:

- 267 long-term missionaries;
- 28 short-term missionaries (2-3 years; living expenses stipend);
- Nine "letter of agreement" missionaries (special contracts);
- 85 volunteers; and
- Five ELCA seminary interns.

Approximately 35.4 percent of the 1994 global mission budget or \$8,248,170 was expended to support ELCA's missionary staff overseas. It is estimated that volunteers independently raise \$500,000 from family, friends, and congregations to pay their costs.

In addition, the Division for Global Mission recognizes the overseas ministries of other ELCA members through a process and status entitled "Global Mission Associate." The division also processes the calls of ELCA clergy serving overseas in non-DGM-related ministries.

Major Trend One:

There has been an increase of personnel and resources designated for dialogical witness among people of other faiths. Dialogical witness is defined as witness to the crucified and risen Jesus Christ within conversations concerning life and faith and accompanied by activity devoted to fullness of life for the whole human family.

Much of global mission work in the past has been among people belonging to traditional and popular folk religions. The new evangelism priorities focus on more effective witness among Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and secularists in Asia. The initiatives include:

- Equipping for Dialogical Witness—including equipping DGM personnel through involvement in graduate study programs, and supporting or initiating training programs for local leaders;
- Supporting Local Initiatives Among Partner Churches—financial grants for churches' training and equipping programs, for consultations, for missionaries and consultants in specific areas of focus;
- Beginning New Initiatives in Bangladesh and Senegal—working in areas where there is no primary partner church; and
- Developing a Strategy for Witness Among People of Other Faiths in Asia—conducting studies and evaluation to assist the Division for Global Mission and the churches to which it relates in more effective witness among Buddhists, Hindus, and secularists.

The DGM budget for witness among Muslims is now approximately \$2,000,000 annually.

Major Trend Two:

There has been a decrease of missionary personnel dedicated to traditional DGM evangelism positions (from 116 to 55 personnel; financial resources from \$5.7 million to \$3.9 million or -30.79 percent). Equipping local evangelists and pastors has become the priority, rather than placing missionaries in positions that local ministers can fulfill.

Major Trend Three:

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the opening up of Eastern and Central Europe, the Division for Global Mission has begun to increase resources and personnel in Eastern and Central Europe while decreasing resources in Western Europe (1989—\$189,045; 1994—\$101,280; a decrease of 41 percent).

Major Trend Four:

Funding for Leadership Development has increased between 1988 and 1994 from \$2,352,524 to \$2,834,635 (+20.5 percent). There has been a small decrease in missionary personnel in this category, from 55 to 48 salaried units (-12.7 percent). Scholarship funds have increased from \$650,459 to \$842,426 (+29.5 percent).

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also shares human resources through the consultation and visitations of DGM staff members, churchwide and synodical leaders and visitors, membership on various international boards and councils.

Major Trend Five:

There has been an increase of South-South missionaries (from zero in 1988 to nine in 1994) and South-South scholarship programs (from zero percent of the International Scholarship budget to 20 percent). South-South programs enable partner churches to participate in the international life and mission of the body of Christ.

The purpose of the South-South program is to: (1) enhance relationships between churches in the South; (2) tap the gifts of the South and facilitate the exchange of personnel resources and international mission outreach from the South; (3) increase self-reliance in the South; and (4) enable more effective stewardship of resources.

South-South missionary programs have included persons from Lutheran churches in Brazil, Madagascar, Nigeria, Philippines, and India. They included pastors, theological professors, physicians, nurses, and educators.

Major Trend Six:

There has been a tremendous increase in personal contacts between members, congregations and synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and partner churches around the world. The Companion Synod Program (65 synods are now participating at some level) and the Global Mission Events to a great extent have made this possible.

Major Trend Seven:

Relief and development programs have been maintained through use of the ELCA Hunger Program funding, which has increased and/or remained stable between 1988 and 1994.

4) recruit, call, prepare, and send missionary personnel, including volunteers.

The Division for Global Mission recruits and sends personnel in the following categories:

- long-term missionaries (usually 10 years to career, full salary and benefits);
- short-term missionaries (2-3 years, modest stipend);
- contract missionaries (letter of agreement states specific period of time, usually modest compensation);
- ELCA seminary interns (one year, modest stipend); and
- Volunteers (three months to two years, self-funded).

The Division for Global Mission engages in a variety of recruitment activities including publication of needs in its Volunteer newsletter, Seeds for the Parish, and mailings to such special constituencies as seminaries and college career-placement offices.

The Division for Global Mission has cooperated with the Commission for Multicultural Ministries in developing recruitment strategies for missionary and volunteer candidates among ELCA African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American communities; in 1994, the Division for Global Mission set aside extra funding for a missionary position specially-designated for a person or family of color.

Due to limited funds, there is a trend toward new models for financial support. Candidates for missionary service occasionally are willing to serve for less than full salary. Others receive partial support from local sources or other mission organizations.

The Division for Global Mission prepares missionaries and long-term volunteers in orientation programs twice each year: in January and during June and July. The U.S.-based orientation programs focus on preparation for cross-cultural relationships and ministries. The Division for Global Mission cooperates in these programs ecumenically with Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics.

Missionaries, interns, and volunteers are sent only at the invitation of the local church or ministry in which they will serve. Upon arrival in the country of service the local church arranges for in-country orientation and language training.

Major Trend Eight:

There has been a large reduction in missionary personnel (excluding spouses), 1989-1994, from 299 to 192 salaried units (-36 percent). This was the result of increasing costs to support missionary personnel and 20 percent reduction in ELCA funding for global mission during these years. This reduction has made it impossible for the Division for Global Mission to respond to many new challenges and requests for missionary personnel. Greater reductions have been made in financial resources devoted to missionary personnel than to grants to partner churches and agencies.

Major Trend Nine:

There has been a significant increase in the number of volunteers and contract persons called by the Division for Global Mission. Self-supporting volunteers have helped the division compensate for the loss of salaried missionary personnel.

The trend in numbers of missionaries, not including spouses, serving in various programs, 1988-1994, is indicated below:

Program Assignment	1988	1994	Gain or Loss	
Evangelism		116	55	-61
Leadership		55	48	-7
Development	16	17	+1	
Health Care	29	15	-14	
Education		62	37	-25
Communications	6	2	-4	
Logistical Support	14	12	-2	
Interfaith	1	6	+5	
Total		299	192	-107

In many partner churches, the declining number of ELCA missionaries is a sign of success. It means that local leaders are now equipped to conduct the life and mission of their church and large numbers of missionaries are no longer necessary.

On the other hand, the Division for Global Mission continues to receive many more requests for personnel than its budget allows it to accept. Many partner churches are growing in membership far beyond the capacity of their leadership and leadership-development programs. Others invite ELCA's partnership in new areas of outreach.

The numbers of persons who served in DGM's Lutheran World Mission Volunteer program between 1988 and 1994 are indicated below.

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	
Africa	7	18	26	12	33	50	53	
Asia/Pacific	11		1	7	9	27	30	42
Europe/M. East		0	0	0	5	9	18	19
Latin America		0	2	6	4	4	8	7
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Total	19	21	39	30	73	106	124	
1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994		
Evangelism	2	2	3	4	6	16	21	
Leadership Dev.		0	0	1	6	8	18	18
Education		7	2	5	11	28	39	46
Medical	7	12		20	4	17	16	21
Development	3	5	10	5	14	17	18	
Total	19	21	39	30	73	106	124	

5) develop and administer personnel policies for long-term missionaries and, in consultation with the Department for Human Resources, recommend these policies to the Church Council.

The long-term missionary staff is administered by policies adopted by the board of the division and approved by the ELCA Church Council. These are outlined in Personnel Policies and Handbook/ELCA-DGM and amended annually at the October board meeting.

The Handbook includes policies regarding salary and salary schedule, benefits and allowances, orientation and language study, length of service, home leave and vacation, education of children, continuing education for missionaries, housing, medical, travel, vehicles, storage and shipment of personal effects, leave of absence, termination of service, interpretation responsibility to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, grievance procedures, sexual harassment, and equal opportunity employment.

6) participate in development and relief with Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran World Federation, and other ecumenical organizations and agencies.

Lutheran World Relief is the relief and development agency of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Through this U.S.-based organization, those churches are able to tap into financial and material resources

available from U.S. Lutherans and material aid from the United States government.

Lutheran World Federation (LWF)—Department of World Service is an operational relief and development agency with a highly acclaimed reputation for effective work. The major funding for that department comes from European government and church-related aid organizations. This division's director for development serves as an advisor to the Federation's council and its world service committee.

Lutheran World Federation (LWF)—Department of Mission and Development provides assistance to relief and development programs of the federation's member churches. DGM's executive director serves on the committee that approves churches' project requests for funding. This division's director for development annually selects projects for DGM funding according to criteria established in this division's development and health-ministry policy documents.

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC). DGM representatives participate in the NCCC-Church World Service and Witness committees for human rights and for disaster response and technological disaster.

7) administer the allocation of funds to combat hunger outside the U.S.A. in cooperation with the Division for Church in Society.

The DGM policy statements on development and health ministry and the ELCA World Hunger program criteria guide the decisions and the administration of funds designated for overseas relief and development.

Congregations and members contributed \$11,489,000 to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal in 1994. Of this total income, 72.4 percent was designated for overseas programs and channeled through the Division for Global Mission. The hunger funds channeled through this division are about 36 percent of the division's total budget.

8) cooperate with the global community in promoting justice and the equitable sharing of resources.

The Division for Global Mission cooperates primarily with two offices in the areas of advocacy on behalf of partners and people in other nations: Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs in Washington, D.C., and Lutheran Office for World Community at the Church Center for the United Nations in New York City.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the presentation, stating, "Our vice president mentioned in her report that the Church Council, as it does periodically, undertook a review of one of our churchwide units, in this case, the Division for Global Mission." He then called upon the Rev. Stephen M. Youngdahl, chair of the Church Council's Program and Structure Committee, to introduce the council's report, and invited the Rev. Mark W. Thomsen, executive director of the Division for Global Mission, to respond.

Pastor Youngdahl stated, "One of the tasks assigned to the Church Council's Program and Structure Committee is to review the various units of the churchwide organization. The purpose of such a review is to assist the council in either renewing the constitutional mandate of the unit, or in recommending changes in structure that would insure the ministry would continue. During the past two years, the committee completed an in-depth review of the Division for Global

Mission and began a review of the Division for Higher Education and Schools. At the spring 1995 Church Council meeting, the committee gave a strong, unanimous affirmation of the work of the Division for Global Mission and its constitutional mandate. Those recommendations were approved by the council.” The full texts of the actions follow:

To affirm the renewal of the mandate of the Division for Global Mission; and

To express deep appreciation to the staff and board of the Division for Global Mission for their ongoing service in this ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [CC95.4.34].

1. To affirm the continuation of global mission as a budgetary priority of the churchwide organization.
2. To express appreciation and support for the following five priorities of the Division for Global Mission (DGM), which were adopted previously by the division's board:
 - a. Evangelism. The primary involvement of the Division for Global Mission will be evangelism, specifically a holistic witness among people who have not heard or who have not fully heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Building on its strategic presence within the Muslim world and in Asia, the Division for Global Mission will give priority to engagement with Muslims and to witness within the world of Buddhism, Hinduism, and secularism in Asia.
 - b. Cooperation . . . Leadership. All the churches in which the Division for Global Mission relates identify more and better leadership as one of their most critical needs. This priority allocates Division for Global Mission resources to the discovery, formation, and undergirding of persons who are or can be leaders, especially women.
 - c. South-South Relationships. The Division for Global Mission gives priority to the developing, facilitating, and nurturing of exchanges, relationships, cooperation, and mutual involvement in mission among churches of the southern hemisphere—Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America.
 - d. Poverty, Ill Health, and Oppression. Within the scope of God's mission to this world, people who suffer from poverty, preventable diseases, and oppression have a special claim upon the concern, commitment, and resources of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. Mission to the ELCA. The Division for Global Mission education program will work to increase the concern and the involvement of every member and every congregation in Christ's mission to the world: expanding awareness, renewing prayer life, and increasing support for the ELCA global mission program. The primary methodology will be strategies that enable ELCA members to receive and experience the gifts and witness of members of churches with whom the ELCA cooperates.
3. To affirm the work of the Division for Global Mission in mission education, to encourage the division, in cooperation with other churchwide units, to explore new ways to share information about the global mission work being undertaken by the ELCA, and to enable members of the ELCA to participate in the life and mission of the body of Christ.
4. To express appreciation and support for the Companion Synod Program and to encourage continuing conversations between the Division for Global Mission and synods to further this effort.
5. To affirm the ongoing work of the Division for Global Mission in addressing the concerns and needs of women and in lifting up the role of women in many cultures.
6. To affirm the division's commitment to building relationships with African Americans,

Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans.

7. To express strong affirmation of the ELCA World Hunger Program and continuing commitment to strengthening this important churchwide effort; to affirm the continuation of the current practice of special appeals to respond to domestic and international disasters; and to express continuing support for the 70-75 percent allocation for the international hunger program, which was determined by the 1987 ELCA Constituting Convention; and to transmit to the Office of the Bishop without recommendation the following action taken by the board of the Division for Global Mission:

That the board request the ELCA Church Council and the Office of the Bishop to communicate to the Interunit Hunger Staff Team that it would be the board's desire that the 72.4 percent allocated to the international program be maintained or increased.

8. To request that the Office of the Bishop engage in conversation with the Division for Global Mission and other appropriate churchwide units about designated giving initiatives and bring a report and possible recommendations for action to the November 1995 meeting of the Church Council; to request that this report address the issue of coordination among churchwide units and other partners in ministry as they approach congregations for designated gifts; and to refer to the Office of the Bishop the following action by the board of the Division for Global Mission:

That the board of the Division for Global Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seek the cooperation and approval of the Church Council, the Office of the Bishop, and the Conference of Bishops to explore with the Division for Congregational Ministries and other churchwide units of the ELCA new avenues and sources of funding for global mission and to develop further opportunities for designated giving to global ministries over and above the division's annual budget.

9. To receive with appreciation the board's identification of ongoing issues and to request that results of the survey of missionaries be shared with the Program and Structure Committee. [CC95.4.35].

Pastor Youngdahl continued, "Through this process the committee grew in its appreciation for the breadth and depth of the work of this division through its staff and its board. On behalf of the Church Council, I would like to say a special word of thanks to the Rev. Mark W. Thomsen, who will be retiring this fall from his position of executive director of the division. His leadership has been greatly appreciated, and we are confident that the foundation he has helped us to establish will continue to be built upon as we answer the call to spread the Gospel to all the world." He then called upon the Rev. Nancy L. Maeker, chair of the board of the Division for Global Mission.

Pastor Maeker thanked Pastor Youngdahl and other members of the Church Council's Program and Structure Committee for their work in evaluating the work of the Division for Global Mission. She said, "The committee's final recommendations, which were endorsed by the Church Council, are received by the board of the Division for Global Mission with thanks and gratitude. As the board of Division for Global Mission, we are committed to carrying out the renewed mandate which you have again entrusted to us.

"Also now on behalf of the board and the staff of the Division for Global Mission, and on

behalf of this church, I want to express our deep gratitude to the executive director, Dr. Mark Thomsen, who has led the ELCA's Division for Global Mission during these past eight years, and for the six years prior to that, in leading The American Lutheran Church's Division for World Mission and Interchurch Cooperation. Mark, your entire vocation has been a witness to the love incarnate in Jesus, the cosmic Christ crucified. You have taught many of us in the church how the message of the Gospel is cruciform and, therefore, costly not only for Christ but also for his disciples. That shape of the Gospel message also shapes our participation in God's mission. Thank you for your clear witness in word and deed." Pastor Maeker then invited the members of the Churchwide Assembly to thank Pastor Thomsen for "his committed and passionate leadership in God's mission to the world."

A seven-minute video presentation of the division's work around the world then was shown.

Bishop Chilstrom expressed personal thanks to Pastor Thomsen for his direction of the division. Bishop Chilstrom noted that the Division for Global Mission represents the single largest expenditure in the ELCA budget. He said, "In these eight years, I have admired the very efficient and effective way in which he [Pastor Thomsen] has headed that division, making sure that your [individual's and congregation's] gifts are used to a maximum benefit for our mission around the world."

Quilt Project

Bishop Chilstrom referred to the quilts displayed throughout the assembly hall. He explained that someone, while planning the 1993 Churchwide Assembly held at Kansas City, Missouri, had the idea of using quilts to decorate the hall. "Congregations were asked to donate quilts and over 500 quilts were offered from individuals and congregations. So, we thought we would try it again this year," Bishop Chilstrom said. He then announced, "This year, 434 quilts have arrived. These quilts will be donated to Lutheran World Relief. On the other hand, if you should wish to acquire one of them, then that donation will be given directly to the benefit of our ministries through Lutheran World Relief." He then invited assembly members present who may have helped to stitch one of the quilts to stand. Bishop Chilstrom also acknowledged the members of Central Lutheran Church at Minneapolis, Minn., who had collected the quilts, and Ms. Judy Swanson, Northfield, Minn., who subsequently coordinated the hanging of the quilts in the assembly hall. He asked assembly members, "When you see folks in your congregations who have done this, please greet them from us and thank them."

ELCA World Hunger Program

Bishop Chilstrom then introduced the Rev. John L. Halvorson, coordinator of the ELCA World Hunger Program in the ELCA Division for Church in Society, and the Rev. Roger O. Livdahl, director of the World Hunger Appeal in the Division for Congregational Ministries. Bishop Chilstrom said, "I mentioned to you the other evening that the gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow and it is the widest here in the United States of any developed country. The challenge for us is to not only feed the hungry, but to assist them in providing for themselves. We do that through the ELCA World Hunger Program."

Pastor Livdahl reported on behalf of Pastor Halvorson and the hunger staff team, as well as the interunit hunger staff team that gives direction to the ministry of the program.

Pastor Livdahl drew the attention of assembly members to Matthew 25, which was chosen as a theme for the Lutheran World Relief jointly by The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod World

Relief, and the ELCA Hunger Appeal: "Lord, when did we see you hungry; when did we see you thirsty; when did we see you a stranger; and when did we see you naked?" He said, "These questions, deep from the heart of our Savior, come to us in a very straightforward way. If we take seriously the teachings and the ministry and the life examples of Jesus, it is obvious that we cannot have Jesus without the poor and suffering people. It is not possible to claim him separated from the hungry, the thirsty, the naked and homeless, the strangers and the refugees, the sick and the downtrodden."

Pastor Livdahl observed that seldom before has the question been posed more strongly of what will be the fate of poor people and poor nations, the homeless, and the prison population. He expressed his gratitude for the strong commitment this church has made "to serve Jesus wherever we see people hungry, thirsty, refugees, homeless, victims of disasters."

"Throughout our whole church, there has been strong support for this program. I am thankful for the way our members and congregations have seen and served Jesus as they support food shelves and shelters, and poverty intervention programs in their own communities. If we could total the cash value of all the donated groceries, commodities, labor, and all the cash that comes through our congregations, it would total many, many times the \$13,700,000 that was raised for the hunger appeal and disaster appeal in 1994. We rejoice in this."

Pastor Livdahl acknowledged this church's strong response to domestic disaster needs in Missouri, Kansas, Georgia, California, and Oklahoma City, and noted that ELCA funds, in cooperation with Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), also had provided relief in such places as Rwanda, Bosnia, and Haiti. Pastor Livdahl said, "We are faced with the question, 'What's the most effective way to help so that we do more good than harm?' After witnessing many domestic and international development projects, I am convinced we support some anti-poverty programs that really work. . . . Through self-help projects, people have homes, jobs, food, and pride." He then noted that, in 1995, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provided funding to domestic hunger programs in 191 communities. He commented on particular international relief work sponsored by Lutheran World Relief in the Philippines and India.

Greetings: Lutheran World Relief

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Ms. Kathryn F. Wolford, director of Lutheran World Relief, an agency in which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America works together with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, with board members elected by both churches. He said, "We are grateful for the work of this common agency, this year celebrating its 50th anniversary." A video was shown depicting the agency's history and work. The video featured Des Moines (Iowa) television news anchor John Bachman interviewing his father, the Rev. John W. Bachman, who recently completed the book, *Together in Hope—Fifty Years of Lutheran World Relief*, on the 50 years of work of Lutheran World Relief.

Ms. Wolford told the assembly of how U.S. Lutherans put their faith in action to respond to the needs of refugees and people in Europe after World War II through an agency they called Lutheran World Relief. She said, "Today, 50 years later, you continue to be present through Lutheran World Relief in a world that is marked by hunger, poverty, and conflict. Through Lutheran World Relief you make known Christ's love for all people, especially those who by the standards of our society and our world are certainly to be found among 'the least of these.'"

Recently, she continued, Lutheran World Relief had provided more than \$3.5 million of

financial and material aid to help families affected by the conflict in Bosnia and other parts of the former Yugoslavia. She stated that Lutherans were in Rwanda and Burundi long before CNN (Cable News Network) discovered the crisis, and “were there for the long haul even after the crisis had disappeared from your headlines.” Lutheran World Relief has provided about \$2.5 million of aid through local churches and the Lutheran World Federation. LWR aid provides not only medicines, food, and health care, but also trauma counseling and pastoral assistance and support for local church efforts to promote peace and reconciliation. Lutheran World Relief has been at the forefront of public policy efforts to promote protection for refugees in Rwanda and is still in Somalia, repairing wells destroyed during the conflict there, she said. She stated that LWR responds quickly and effectively and stays for the long haul because of an incredible volunteer network.

A brief video was shown on the making of quilts, health kits, school kits, and sewing kits by congregations. Ms. Wolford thanked members of the assembly, and the congregations they represent, for their faithful participation in the ministry of Lutheran World Relief during the past 50 years. She commented, “Given the needs and opportunities for us to minister to our neighbor in need in Christ’s name, we should all be working at doubling the world hunger appeal budget.” She cited examples of LWR’s support of approximately 150, long-term, community-development programs around the world, respecting local initiative and ownership and valuing the gifts individuals bring to the common task. A brief video of a project with a group of women in Kenya was shown.

Ms. Wolford concluded, “As we accompany people in their struggles for dignity and justice, we can also share in their successes and joys. . . . LWR’s golden anniversary is a wonderful time to give praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done through our caring hearts and helping hands. We at Lutheran World Relief invite all of you to join with congregations across the country in celebrating LWR Sunday on November 19 of this year. . . . All of us here today are Lutheran World Relief. Ours is a partnership that literally saves lives, gives new life, and transforms lives, which have been broken by hunger, poverty, and despair. It is a partnership which keeps hope alive.” Ms. Wolford thanked Bishop Chilstrom for his “faithful and enthusiastic support of LWR’s ministry” and presented him with a Lutheran World Relief T-shirt.

Conclusion of Plenary Session Eight

Secretary Almen reported an error in today’s edition of the “Daily Lutheran,” noting that Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson actually had received 698 votes on the fifth ballot. He reported that the two assembly worship offerings totaled approximately \$37,000.00.

Secretary Almen invited prayers for the family of Susan Weber, Roseville, Minn., who had died while the assembly was in session, and whose sister-in-law, the Rev. Susan M. Peterson [Saint Paul Area Synod] was a voting member of this assembly.

The Eighth Plenary Session concluded at 4:45 p.m. Bishop Norman Eitheim [South Dakota Synod] offered the closing prayer.

A video conference, “Live from the ELCA Assembly,” immediately followed the closing of the plenary session. While the stage was being set, Bishop Chilstrom asked the assembly organist, Mr. Scott Weidler, to lead assembly members in song. The video conference, which began at 5:00 p.m., was introduced and moderated by Mr. John Bachman, Des Moines, Iowa.

Plenary Session Nine
Monday, August 21, 1995
8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

The Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called Plenary Session Nine to order at 8:31 a.m. Central Daylight Time.

Opening Hymn and Prayer

The opening prayer was led by Mr. William E. Diehl [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod], a retiring member of the Church Council, assisted by Mr. Scott Weidler, assembly organist.

Bishop Chilstrom began the session by reviewing the proposed items of business for the day. He noted that he “thinks we are in good shape” but forewarned the assembly that a great deal needs to be accomplished today. He stated that the session will begin by considering the proposed mission-support formula.

Bishop Mark R. Ramseth [Montana Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To extend this afternoon’s session to 7:00 p.m. at the discretion of the chair.

Bishop Ramseth spoke to the motion, saying, “I have listened to you offer to us what needs to be done in the course of the day. I am offering the assembly and you the freedom of being able to extend the session rather than having to come back in the evening.”

The Rev. Frank E. Lay [Rocky Mountain Synod] spoke against the motion. He said, “There are some of us with dietary concerns for which that would be an extreme difficulty.”

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-583; No-313

Defeated: To extend this afternoon’s session to 7:00 p.m. at the discretion of the chair.

Mission-Support Formula

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 784-787.

Bishop Chilstrom reiterated, “What we are really dealing with here is the process by which the gifts that our members give . . . are divided for the work of the church—congregationally, synodically, and churchwide. The recommendation before you on page 784 [1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2] comes from the Church Council.” He then called upon the Rev. Mark R. Moller-Gunderson, executive director of the Division for Congregational Ministries and coordinator of ELCA mission support, to provide background information prior to the discussion.

Pastor Moller-Gunderson said, “In this church, we have organized ourselves through congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions, to accomplish God’s mission in a way that we hope is effective, efficient, and faithful. A key challenge before us has to do with financial support and the allocation of those resources throughout all expressions of this church. In practical terms, how do we live together as the body of Christ in a way that demonstrates our partnership and provides for mutual accountability? The specific issue that we face today has to do with mission-support dollars and the ways in which they are entrusted to synods and the churchwide organization by congregations to extend and expand our common ministries.”

He continued, “Synods and the churchwide organization have used several applications of methods to give us assistance as we make these kinds of decisions. In our first years we used a fairly straightforward percentage commonly referred to as the ‘55/45 split.’ Shortly after that, we worked on an alternate formula to try to take into consideration differences in synods, and used a core budget and membership statistics to guide our decision-making. Over time we have come to appreciate a greater diversity in size and style, in geography, in population, in cultures of giving, and in leadership throughout all of our synods. We have realized that ‘one size and one formula does not work for all.’ The 55/45 split was not very helpful for any of us. The alternate formula has worked well for about one-third of the synods, for another third it was too high, for another third it was too low.”

Pastor Moller-Gunderson commented, “At the direction of this church in assembly, a work group has been busy for the last several years giving regard to all of the information that we have received from synods and congregations. . . . I would like to thank the members of that working group for their wise counsel and for the ways in which they have exercised faithful stewardship leadership in their settings.” He noted the membership of the work group: Bishop James S. Aull, Ms. Edith M. Lohr, Bishop Robert W. Kelley, the Rev. Robert N. Bacher, the Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, Mr. Richard L. McAuliffe, and Mr. Gary K. Brugh. “This formula and process also has been reviewed by the ELCA Cabinet of Executives and by the Conference of Bishops and has taken into account their suggestions for revision,” he said.

While highlighting the key aspects of the recommendation of the work group, Pastor Moller-Gunderson listed a set of principles or desirable characteristics devised by the work group for a mission-support formula:

1. Simplicity; principles easy to understand and use;
2. Providing for covenantal agreement, with mutual support between synods and churchwide organization;
3. System-wide uniformity, with principles applicable to congregations, congregations, and the churchwide organization;
4. Promoting fairness, equity, flexibility, and challenge;

5. Realism; based on actual history and reasonable projections; and
6. Promoting stability and avoiding radical fluctuation.

Pastor Moller-Gunderson noted that “instead of a single formula, this approach would work with multiple frames of reference that would guide our thinking.” The frames of reference would include the following:

1. The historical income patterns and expenditure patterns in synods and the churchwide organization.
2. Past mission-support commitments and trends.
3. The size of synods, including geography and membership.
4. The core budget.
5. The numbers of extremely large or small congregations in a given synod’s territory.
6. Specific mission-support levels, the support of agencies and institutions within the synod.
7. Current and restricted fund balances.

The process, utilizing the foregoing information, would assist in arriving at a target number and range for each synod, Pastor Moller-Gunderson said. He characterized the process as initial conversations between a churchwide representative and a synodical bishop, which then would move to consultations between churchwide representatives and synodical leadership; agreement would then be sought between synod councils and Church Council; and finally, between synod assemblies and the Churchwide Assembly. “The annual consultations would take place in a variety of ways, through mail and telephone calls, through regional gatherings, or intensive visits with individual synods,” he stated.

Concluding the presentation, Pastor Moller-Gunderson stated that the proposed process “discourages unilateral decision-making by any expression of this church, includes ongoing research and development, provides for that target to be expressed as a percentage or dollar amount, and considers ratios in the funding categories. This calls us to a kind of mutual accountability that is relational and not legal—it is premised on trust and cooperation rather than coercion—and models behavior that can give evidence to our partnership in the Gospel. It builds on the best of what we have been doing for the past eight years.”

The following recommendation of the Church Council was adopted without debate:

Assembly

Action Yes-907; No-36

CA95.6.49 To receive the report, “Mission Support—Alternative Formula and Process”; and To approve the procedures, outlined in the report, “Mission Support—Alternative Formula and Process,” as the means for fulfillment of the required determination—under ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 10.71. and †S15.12. in the Constitution for Synods—of the sharing between synods and the churchwide organization of mission-support funds submitted by congregations for support of synodical and churchwide ministries.

Mission Support—Alternate Formula and Process

Historical Perspective

According to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical

Lutheran Church in America, "Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage of all donor unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod, such percentage to be determined by the Churchwide Assembly. Individual exceptions may be made by the Church Council upon request of a synod" (ELCA constitutional provision 10.71.).

This was the original agreed-upon method for determining how monies entrusted to the synod and churchwide organization for ministries beyond the congregation would be shared.

Suggestions for refinement of the process emerged from the experience of implementing the proportionate share pattern during the ELCA's first biennium. As a result, "An Alternate Approach to the Proportionate Share" was recommended by the Church Council to the 1989 Churchwide Assembly.

The general principles enumerated to guide such an alternate approach to proportionate-share commitments were:

1. The proportionate share is based on unrestricted giving by members through congregations. Designated gifts in support of churchwide approved ministries from congregations and individuals channeled through the synodical treasury are to be recognized and reported as support over and above the proportionate-share base.
2. A goal for the proportionate-share amount is established based on some common factors. That goal presents a challenge to current giving and sharing, provides flexibility in dealing with diversity, provides accountability, and is easy to calculate and interpret.
3. Consultations are held that develop relationships through shared decision making and partnership in God's mission.
4. After consultation, the division of proportionate-share receipts is to be projected in dollars for use in synodical and churchwide budgeting. The synod commitment can be expressed, however, in either percentage or dollar terms, or both.
5. Tentative agreements regarding proportionate-share goals made during consultations are to be approved by each Synod Council and the Church Council.
6. Reporting of year-end actual giving through synods is important for mutual accountability, not as a measure of faithfulness.

On the basis of these principles, the following approach was proposed in 1989 for testing the determination of the percentage division of proportionate-share giving by congregations:

1. That the churchwide organization budget approved by the Churchwide Assembly be allocated to synods based upon two factors:
 - a. the number of confirmed and communing members of congregations within the synod, and
 - b. common synodical current operating expenses. (Items such as salaries, office expense, synodical committee expense and programs would be included, but items such as travel costs and support of agencies and institutions would be excluded.)
2. That this allocation be presented to synods not as a flat amount, but as a range that will encourage participants in the consultations to explore both the current situation and the need for challenge.
3. That synodical-churchwide consultations be held in each synod, with consultation being the forum for dealing with issues of synodical diversity and for arriving at a mutually agreed-upon division of mission-support giving by congregations.
4. That the agreement(s) arrived at in the consultation, when approved by the Synod Council and Church Council, be the synod commitment in support of the churchwide organization.

This alternate approach has been in place since 1989. At the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, action was taken to evaluate the formula and process, and make recommendations for any changes at the 1995 Churchwide Assembly. This led to the formation of a working group (made up of staff, Church Council members, and synodical bishops) that was to prepare a recommendation for consideration.

Working Group Participants

This working group engaged in research and evaluation throughout 1994 and early January 1995. Members of the working group included:

- The Rev. James S. Aull, bishop, South Carolina Synod, Columbia, S.C.;
- Ms. Edith M. Lohr, chair, Church Council Budget and Finance Committee, Natick, Mass.;
- The Rev. Robert W. Kelley, bishop, Northeastern Ohio Synod, Akron, Ohio;
- The Rev. Robert N. Bacher, executive for administration, Office of the Bishop;
- The Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, director, Department for Synodical Relations, and assistant to the bishop;
- Richard L. McAuliffe, treasurer, Office of the Treasurer;
- Gary R. Brugh, budget director, Office of the Treasurer; and
- The Rev. Mark R. Moller-Gunderson, coordinator for ELCA mission support and executive director, Division for Congregational Ministries (chair).

General Findings

The original percentage sharing (55/45) was problematic in some areas because it did not allow for the diversity between synods and unique circumstances in particular areas of this church. The current alternate formula seeks to remedy that by including the factors of size and core budget in determining dollar amounts and percentages. It is the opinion of the working group that there is even greater diversity among synods, based upon historical patterns and current practices, which makes this task more, rather than less, complicated. One size does not fit all—and probably never did. The challenge is to find ways in which a formula and process can have a measure of application that is consistent throughout this church, yet takes into account the great variety of circumstances and practices throughout this church.

Principles and Desirable Characteristics

The committee identified several characteristics that they believe are important for the formula and process:

1. Simplicity (easy to understand and use).
2. Covenantal agreement, with mutual support, between synods and churchwide organization.
3. System-wide uniformity (principles should be applicable to synods, congregations, and the churchwide organization).
4. Fair, equitable, flexible, and challenging.
5. Realistic (based on actual history and reasonable projections).
6. Promote stability (avoids radical fluctuation).

Options

The basic options before this church are to (1) keep the current alternate formula, (2) revert

to the straight percentage split (55/45), or (3) adopt a new model.

Recommendation

1. Target Goal and Frames of Reference

A suggested range and target goal will be determined on an annual basis. A single formula alone does not appear to be able to account for unique circumstances in each synod. Therefore, the working group recommends the use of multiple frames of reference to guide decisions regarding the target goal. These frames of reference could include, but would not be limited to:

- a. historical income and expenditure patterns in the synod;
- b. past mission support commitments and trends;
- c. size of the synod (geography, membership, and congregations);
- d. core budget;
- e. numbers of extremely small or large congregations on the synod's territory;
- f. specific mission support levels;
- g. support of agencies and institutions in the synod; and
- h. current and restricted fund balances.

Using this approach, special consideration is possible for synods that present unique conditions.

The target goal (dollar amount and percentage) will be shared with synodical bishops by a churchwide representative prior to the annual consultation. Consultation participants will review the range and goal for each synod.

2. Process

The committee recommends a process of continuous consultation, information sharing, and negotiation. Annual consultations will be held between synods and the churchwide organization. Consultations develop relationships through shared decision making and partnership in God's mission. After the consultation, the division of mission-support receipts will be projected in both dollar amounts and percentage for use in synodical and churchwide organization budgeting, with the synod indicating which projection (dollar amount or percentage) is the predominant (fixed) commitment. The synod may express the commitment, however, in either dollar amount or percentage terms, or both, for use within their own synod.

Mutual ratification of a mission-support commitment would progress in the following stages:

- a. churchwide executive and synodical bishop (phone conversation);
- b. churchwide organization representatives and synodical representatives (annual consultation);
- c. Synod Council and Church Council (statement of intent); and
- d. Synod Assembly and Churchwide Assembly (budget adoption).

Any proposed change in the predominant commitment calls for additional consultation (i.e., phone, face-to-face, teleconference) as appropriate. That additional consultation may include synodical bishops, staff, officers or others, and churchwide organization staff, Church Council members, or other synodical bishops.

At the same time, changes in churchwide organization commitment to synods by way of staffing or expenditures would call for the same kind of consultation with synods.

Reporting of year-end actual remittances through synods continues to be important for mutual accountability, and is not a measure of faithfulness.

Form and Time Line for Annual Consultations

The coordinator for ELCA mission support is responsible to direct the process of target goal determination, in cooperation with the Office of the Bishop, the Department for Synodical Relations, and the Office of the Treasurer.

Consultations would be initiated by a churchwide organization team, including the Department for Synodical Relations, the coordinator for ELCA mission support, and the Office of the Bishop. Churchwide and synodical staff will work together to plan and lead these annual consultations.

These consultations may take place in the following ways:

- a. mail and phone calls; or
- b. regional gatherings; or
- c. intensive individual meetings with synods.

Each synod would be involved through one of those methods. The methods can rotate in any given year and would vary according to the needs of synods and the churchwide organization. The consultation also may include, but would not be limited to, conversation involving other issues, including:

- a. staffing;
- b. studies;
- c. joint planning;
- d. work of specific churchwide units;
- e. specific synodical issues; and
- f. other issues as determined.

Special Considerations

Synods and the churchwide organization are equal partners called to exercise joint stewardship of mission-support dollars from congregations. Careful attention needs to be given to the balance between synodical ministry needs (staff and programs), support of agencies and institutions, and churchwide mission support. Proportional adjustments should be considered with the effect on all other programs. The budgeting, planning, and prioritizing process in both synods and the churchwide organization should reflect this partnership.

Conclusion

The task before us involves how we make mutual decisions about monies entrusted by congregations to synods and the churchwide organization for the purpose of mission in the United States, the Caribbean, and throughout the world. The reality is that the synod receives these financial resources first. There is no mechanism for enforcement regarding how those funds will be shared with the churchwide organization. The possibility exists for decisions to be made in isolation. An equal number of Church Council members are not at the table when Synod Council members are making decisions about mission support. Mutual decisions need to be based on mutual trust. Those relations are built up over time and are dependent on leadership that can advocate for the whole church. The key recommendations highlighted in this report will assist in building trust and strengthening partnerships.

Ecumenical Greetings

Bishop Chilstrom stated, "Today is ecumenical day, weaving into our agenda reminders of our partnership with other churches. We are going to hear greetings during the course of the day

from what we call ‘church-to-church’ dialogues and partners in cooperative ministry. You will hear from 14 of these folks from a variety of different backgrounds.” He reminded assembly members that during the coming biennium, conversations with The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. and with three churches of the Calvinist tradition—the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Reformed Church in America, and United Church of Christ—would intensify as this church looks toward the possibility of establishing closer relationships with them.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rt. Rev. Rustin R. Kimsey, bishop of the Diocese of Eastern Oregon, The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A.; the Rev. David Perry, ecumenical officer of The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A.; the Rt. Rev. Edward W. Jones, bishop of the Diocese of Indiana and co-chair of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee; the Rev. James E. Andrews, stated clerk, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and the Rev. Eugene Turner, associate stated clerk, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A.

Bishop Kimsey brought greetings from the Rt. Rev. Edmund Browning, presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. He said, “Edmund sends his special greetings and congratulations to George Anderson. I also greet you from one of your own, Sue Ann Foster, a faithful Lutheran who labors with commitment and sensitivity as my executive for administration. . . . One further introductory word is an expression of our gratitude for Herbert Chilstrom and his ecumenical leadership on behalf of both of our communions over many years.” He noted that the Lutheran and Episcopal communions are “on the edge of what I believe to be the most significant ecumenical decision in our histories. If we affirm the ‘Concordat of Agreement’ in 1997, moving us into full communion and mutual recognition of ministerial orders, we will not only open wide the doors between us, but our actions will echo an invitation of inclusivity to countless others. . . .

“Institutions continuously stand in the need of transformation. Perhaps the church most of all. The arenas in which we are most vulnerable are often those which we deem most important. For you, one such focus would be the confessional tradition and your focus on the Word of God. For us one such example would be the historic episcopate.” Within the Episcopal House of Bishops, he said, in recent years, “we have changed our behavior from what I would call parliamentary posturing to breaking the Word of God open in our midst and listening to one another and to the world in new ways. We are praying that Christ through his Holy Gospel will transform us and mold us into a clear re-presentation of God’s image for episkope.”

He said that dialogue with Lutherans had contributed immeasurably to Episcopalians in their quest to become more obedient to Scripture and to God’s presence here and now, and that Episcopalians served the same function for Lutherans in dialogue both formal and informal. “We need each other,” he said, “not out of some kind of ecclesiastical nostalgia but with the conviction that the various and sundry parts of the body of Christ hold for us the wisdom and the strength we need to offer Jesus Christ to a broken world.”

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Bishop Chilstrom then invited Stated Clerk Andrews to address the assembly. Pastor Andrews said that Bishop Chilstrom was held in “high regard by ecumenical partners in the United States and around the world.” He observed that he had opportunity in the past day to greet and converse with the Rev. James R. Crumley Jr. and the Rev. Robert J. Marshall, both

previous bishops of the Lutheran Church in America, and with Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson. He said, “That seemed to set an image in my mind of what is happening in major denomination leadership at this point in history. Just two years ago, Richard L. Hamm took over as the general minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); this week Bishop-Elect Anderson succeeds Bishop Chilstrom; next year I will reach the constitutionally established limit for service in my office; the year after that Bishop Edmund L. Browning will retire as presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church (U.S.A.); and I know of at least two others, who are often together for similar responsibilities, who are considering the same step. In a space of a bare four or five years it is possible, or even likely, that all but one or two leaders of the primary churches on which the National Council of Churches depends for strength and vision will be gone. A generation of historic memory will vanish, and I am the first to say that is not all bad.

“There are those who would say that is a wonderful chance to clear away the deadwood of the past. But, that does not diminish the need for people to build a sense of community that goes beyond their institutional walls to establish trust that includes the capacity of sharing an increased proportion of personnel and fiscal resources in common ministry.” A main challenge for new leaders, he said, will be to deal with “the concept of large centralized church bureaucracies that will no longer be dominant. The church is often considered irrelevant in a world secular and paganized.”

Pastor Andrews commented that churches are not alone in society in the diminishing number of their members—“a whole range of volunteer organizations that are the key to the future of this nation—the Parent-Teacher Association, Red Cross, labor unions, fraternal groups, anything that builds and identifies and strengthens community and provides space for civil discourse—have all experienced equal or greater losses during the same period of time. Meeting that national, perhaps world, situation is a job that must be shared by all of us. Those of us who are leaving this scene still have a dream. But, those coming on stage must create a new vision of a future in which the concept of community, of ‘covenant’ community (if you will permit a Presbyterian phrase), can be reborn and extended to neighborhoods, cities, and even nations around us. It is time for us to recognize that the situation is critical, that no one church or denomination, no one of them, has the spiritual depth or the intellectual breadth to solve it alone, and that shared approaches are no longer optional. May God bless Lutherans with the vision to lead us all into a new millennium as they led us 500 years ago into the second half of the millennium that is now ending.”

Report on Sacramental Practices Statement

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 297-298, 370-371.

Noting the importance of study on the Means of Grace and their use, Bishop Chilstrom called attention to the recent distribution of a report on sacramental practices and said, “Surely, for us in this church nothing is more important than to think about issues of this kind as we try to deepen our understanding of the means of grace and how we use them in the life of the church.” He then introduced Ms. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive director of the Division for Congregational Ministries, and the Rev. Karen G. Bockelman, chair of the Task Force on Sacramental Practices, and invited them to present the report.

Ms. Bullock summarized the history and process behind the development of this document as reported in the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 370-371. She also referred to material on pages 297-298 in the same report. She said, “The first biennial Churchwide

Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America received six synodical memorials regarding a possible study on sacramental practices. The assembly's Memorials Committee responded, 'The Conference of Bishops has recommended that a statement on sacramental practices be prepared to guide the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.' Following the committee's report, the assembly voted to refer the memorials to the Conference of Bishops for use in development of a study on sacramental practices.

"Because of budget reductions, the implementation of this study was delayed, and in response to that delay, the 1991 Churchwide Assembly directed the Conference of Bishops, the Division for Congregational Ministries, and the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council to prepare a strategy for funding and conducting a study and statement for report to the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. Subsequently, the Church Council took action at its November 1992 meeting to designate the Division for Congregational Ministries as the lead unit in preparing this report and possible recommendation on a sacramental practices study statement."

Implementation of the plan began with appointment of a task force to begin the development of a statement. There was concern that the time line did not allow adequate opportunity for congregations to study the issue, she commented, and after consultation with all involved, the time line was extended "projecting a presentation of a final draft of the statement to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly." Ms. Bullock reported that the first draft of "The Use of the Means of Grace" was mailed to all rostered leaders of this church in April 1995. She then named the persons serving on the task force:

Staff members of the division who worked with the task force were: the Rev. Paul R. Nelson, director for worship; the Rev. Michael R. Rothaar, acting director for worship; and the Rev. Mary Ann Moller-Gunderson, former executive director of the division. The members of the editorial committee of the task force, who, Ms. Bullock acknowledged, worked especially long hours, were: the Rev. Gordon W. Lathrop, Ms. Marilyn Miller, the Rev. Mary Ann Moller-Gunderson, the Rev. Paul H. Rohde, the Rev. Michael R. Rothaar, and the Rev. Karen G. Bockelman.

Pastor Bockelman continued the report, stating, "So many of you at the open hearing held this past Thursday, and in letters and responses, have expressed your appreciation of the work of the task force that I want to begin by expressing on behalf of the task force members how truly honored and grateful we are for the opportunity to serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in this very important work. . . . We have sought and will continue to be faithful to the Gospel, to the Church, and to the trust you have placed in us."

Pastor Bockelman noted that in his report to this assembly, Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom had reminded the assembly of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, which identifies the Church as the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel: "For it is sufficient for the true unity of the Christian Church that the Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance with the divine Word" [Augsburg Confession, VII]. Bishop Chilstrom had reflected, "A healthy church is one that lives in creative tension between two extremes framed by two questions, 'How much unity shall we demand?' and 'How much variety shall we tolerate?'" Pastor Bockelman then observed, "Our Lutheran confessional understanding of the Church and those two questions have framed the work of the Task Force on Sacramental Practices."

Pastor Bockelman continued, "We have wanted to create a document that would encourage

extensive study and dialogue within our congregations about that which unites us. We wanted the document to teach our common center in Jesus Christ proclaimed in Word and Sacrament. We have sought to be invitational. We hope our work will encourage a climate of mutual respect and a spirit of cooperation, which have been characteristic of the task force itself as we have done our work. We are excited about the opportunity to work on a statement entitled, ‘The Use of the Means of Grace’—a that which is not just about our communion practices (and that was the only kind of statement we have had in our predecessor bodies until this time), but that also includes the concerns of our baptismal practices and our practices with regard to our gathering for worship and proclamation of the Word. We are excited about the ways in which we have sought to broaden the Scriptural grounding for this kind of statement. We are excited about an emphasis on discipleship, on teaching the faith, on lifelong learning. We are excited about an emphasis on mission and vocation. We are excited about what we hope you will perceive as this statement’s invitational tone.

“This first draft is not an official statement of this church. It is a work in process. We hope that this church eventually will adopt a version of the statement as a guide for practice regarding the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. We hope the statement will foster common practice and correct careless practice in our congregations without succumbing either to legalism or anarchy. We have done the best work we can do in the past 18 months but we are well aware that this statement and its commentary are not finished. You, your congregations and pastors, bishops and seminary professors, church musicians and worship committees—all the members of this church—are needed; you are essential in continuing this conversation. Already it has become clear to us that there are issues needing widespread scholarship, debate, and reflection over the next two years. Some of these issues include:

1. the place of confession and forgiveness in the use of the means of grace;
2. practical baptismal issues such as requests for baptism from non-members of congregations, theological issues relating to infant baptism and believer baptism;
3. the age of reception for first communion;
4. hospitality given the reality of widely divergent worship practices among the congregations of this church and our highly mobile society;
5. the appropriate handling of unused elements of communion and questions regarding alternative elements; and
6. the appropriate weight to give the various sources we have drawn upon in our work thus far.

“We assume that you will quickly discover other issues and questions, as well. I cannot tell you strongly enough how much we, on the task force, seek and will cherish your study and your passionate response to our work. We truly believe that the study and response of the members of this church will only strengthen what we have done and will continue to do. We are honored to work with you and we pledge that our work will be done *solī deo gloria*—to the glory of God alone.”

Ms. Bullock concluded the presentation, stating, “We are very privileged people in this church to be part of the fifth largest Protestant denomination in the United States, a church where every Sunday morning over 1.5 million people gather for worship. I continue to be humbled in my own congregation as I watch people come Sunday after Sunday to hear the Word and receive the Sacrament. It is a witness to the mystery of God’s love and grace. This first draft of the use

of the means of grace is a wonderful opportunity for us to teach about worship and the foundations of our faith. It is a chance for us to look at whose we are and it is a chance for us to pass the faith on to our children. I encourage you to use the document in your congregations as a teaching tool and also to send us your responses.” She called attention to the June 1, 1996, deadline for submission of responses to the first draft.

Report of the Memorials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued from Minutes, pages 65-90, 139-157, 250-253, 374-427; continued on Minutes, pages 586-616, 637-644, 660-661.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Donald M. Hallberg, co-chair of the Memorials Committee, to continue the committee’s report.

Category 16: Welcoming Gay and Lesbian People

A. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the Church of Jesus Christ is called to minister to all persons who seek sanctuary in the church, welcoming everyone into the community of faith, including gay and lesbian persons; and

Whereas, gay and lesbian Lutherans have been active and contributing members of our congregations, synods, churchwide staff, and the various divisions, commissions, offices, and task forces of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

Whereas, gay and lesbian members of our congregations have often been hesitant to let their affectional orientation be known, fearing embarrassment and exclusion for themselves and their families; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has affirmed that gay and lesbian persons are “entitled to understanding and justice in church and community” as they are often “undeserving victims of prejudice and discrimination,” (“A Social Statement, The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective,” adopted by the ELCA 1991 Churchwide Assembly); and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirmed that the church must be committed to “advocating dignity and justice for all people,” referring to the plight of gay and lesbian persons who often experience verbal and physical harassment, and calling for the support of civil rights legislation which protects gay and lesbian persons (from a resolution adopted by the Board of the Division for Church in Society in March 1993, by the Church Council [CC.93.3.37], and by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly [CA93.3.4]); and

Whereas, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod has a history of ministering to gay and lesbian persons, including the formation of a Lutherans Concerned chapter in our region with the assistance of one of our previous bishops, Larry Hand; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, in assembly, affirm the following three statements of welcome:

- Gay and lesbian persons share with all others in the worth that comes from being unique individuals created by God;
- Gay and lesbian persons are welcome within the membership of our congregations upon making the same affirmation of faith that all other people make; and
- As members of our church, gay and lesbian persons are expected to share in the sacramental and community life of our church;

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, in assembly, memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly, to adopt the same three affirming statements of welcome.

B. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, “Reconciled in Christ” (RIC) is a roster maintained by Lutherans Concerned/North America (LC/NA) seeking to promote inclusiveness in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by identifying congregations and synods who are engaged in ministry which is intentionally welcoming of gay and lesbian people; and

Whereas, RIC congregations, synods, and units affirm that gay and lesbian people:

- Share with all others the worth which comes from being unique individuals created by God;
- Are welcome within the membership of their congregation or synod upon making the same affirmation of faith that all other people make; and
- Are expected and encouraged, as members of a (RIC) unit, to share in the sacramental and general life of their church; and

Whereas, the 1989 Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Assembly affirmed the intent of the “Manifesto of the Washington, D.C., Synod” by adopting three similar statements of affirmation and welcome and was the first of the ELCA synods to adopt these or similar statements; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its several synods have consistently declared their intent that this church should strive to be an inclusive church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaffirm its commitment to being an inclusive unit of this church by reaffirming the following three statements of affirmation and welcome which were approved first by the 1989 Synod Assembly:

- Gay and lesbian people share with all others the worth which comes from being individuals created by God;
 - Gay and lesbian people are welcome within the membership of our congregations upon making the same affirmation of faith that all other people make; and
 - As members of our congregations, gay and lesbian people are encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of their congregations and this synod;
- and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod memorialize the next ELCA Churchwide Assembly to affirm the inclusiveness of this church by adopting these or similar statements of affirmation and welcome.

BACKGROUND

The 1991 Churchwide Assembly, responding to memorials from synods, passed the following resolution affirming this church’s intent to welcome gay and lesbian members:

To affirm that gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America . . . (CA91.7.51).

That resolution also called on individuals and congregations throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage actively in the process of deliberation and discernment that will shape the social teaching statement on human sexuality, prior to action by the Churchwide Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

Pastor Hallberg stated that the Memorials Committee had reviewed the memorials from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, as well as the response of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly to cognate memorials transmitted to it. The Memorials Committee, he said, affirmed the prior action and offered the following recommendation:

Moved;

Seconded: To affirm the prior action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly, that “gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and

To convey this action as a response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the memorial on this topic by the Southeastern Pennsylvania and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods.

The Rev. Daniel J. Schwich [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] moved to amend the recommendation by substituting the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the following for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee: That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 1995 Churchwide Assembly affirms the action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly, affirming the participation of gay and lesbian persons in the life of its congregations; and

The 1995 Churchwide Assembly adopts the “Reconciled in Christ” affirmation recommended by Lutherans Concerned/North America, namely, that:

- Gay and lesbian people share with all others the worth that comes from being individuals created by God;
 - Gay and lesbian people are welcome within the membership of our congregations upon making the same affirmation of faith that other people make; and
 - As members of our congregations, gay and lesbian people are encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of their congregations and this church;
- and

The 1995 Churchwide Assembly urge all congregations of this church to consider adoption of a similar affirmation of welcome to gay and lesbian Christians in the next biennium; and

That this action be communicated to all ELCA congregations.

Pastor Schwich spoke to the motion, stating, “I have amended the language that I originally submitted to make clear that the action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly that is being affirmed is the action relative to the welcome of gay and lesbian Christians and also to ask that this action be communicated to congregations. The reason that I offer this amendment is to make clear that

we need to be affirming and inviting of the participation of gay and lesbian Christians as full and active members in our congregations on the same basis as we do all other members.”

“There was a question raised in the Memorials Committee about whether the phrase, ‘on making the same affirmation of faith that all other people make,’ is some kind of litmus test for gay and lesbian Christians. In fact, this language, which is recommended by Lutherans Concerned/North America, if you read the words just before it, is, ‘welcome within the membership of our congregations.’ We ask all our members to make an affirmation of faith. It is provided for in the affirmation that is in Lutheran Book of Worship, page 198, and we expect that of all members of ELCA congregations. This is nothing special or additional that we are asking of gay and lesbian people, but that they be received into our fellowships on the same basis as all other people. I think it is extremely important that we use the language or something very similar to the language that I am recommending here.

“The question often is raised why, if the church says that all people are welcomed, we have to go on and explicitly say that this particular group of people also is welcome. I think our history is very clear that when in the past we have said, ‘all,’ we have meant almost all. This affirmation would make it very clear that all is all.”

Bishop Theodore F. Schneider [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod], spoke in support of the substitute motion, and said, “On the one hand, I resonate with strength with those who say this should be obvious; and, on the other hand, I am aware that there are times when the hurting is such and is so specific that a specific and very directed word needs to be spoken. It is a little like, I suppose, the couple that goes into some discussion of their relationship together. One asks the other, ‘Do you love me?’; and the other says, ‘You know that I do.’ The answer comes back, ‘Don’t tell me what I know, tell me what you feel.’ I think there are times when we simply need to be specific, and this is one of those times.”

The Rev. S. Kim Lee-Brown [Northern Illinois Synod] inquired about the meaning of the phrase, “to participate fully in the life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” and whether such would include ordination. Pastor Hallberg responded, “The Memorials Committee . . . did not deal with the ordination question, but [the committee’s intent was to suggest that] gay or lesbian persons would be welcome to participate fully in all the activities of the local parish.”

Mr. Joe McMahan [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute motion, and said, “I want to share with our brothers and sisters here some thoughts about what this substitute resolution is meant to be. First, some definitions. What most lesbian and gay Lutherans mean when they ask for acceptance as homosexuals in this church is to hold lesbian and gay persons to the same sexual standards expected for heterosexuals. That means intimacy takes place with same sex persons only in loving, lifelong, fidelity-based, affirming, and nurturing relationships.

“There is some urgency that I want to share with you as well about why you see gay and lesbian persons hurting so much. First, one-third of all of our teenage suicides are lesbian or gay related. Second, one-third of runaway, homeless, abused kids are lesbian or gay kids. In stripping away self-esteem and in shredding self-respect and self-confidence, lesbian and gay persons naturally begin to doubt their own self-worth. Thus, we have an inordinate amount of alcohol and drug abuse. When you add to that the denying of relationships, you drive people into intimacy forms that are anonymous and promiscuous. We all know that that leads to what we have so deadly before us—HIV and AIDS. It also leads many to leave the Church, to leave God,

and to leave their salvation.

“My cry, thus, is that, as we consider these resolutions, we will remember especially our young people—here in this assembly of whom we are so proud, and everywhere across this country. They need to know that it is okay to be gay and lesbian; it is okay to have intimacy in terms of lifelong fidelity-based relationships. When you feel lonely, as gay and lesbian persons will and frequently do, in your confusion you need to know that there are compassionate and non-judgmental resources. For example, there are many lay people and clergy who are there and will be there for you. In Washington, we have 12 RIC [Reconciled in Christ] congregations offering shelter and shalom. One-quarter of our clergy supported the ordination celebrations of Pastors Johnson, Zillert, and Frost. We have a synod that is a welcoming and affirming synod for lesbian and gay women and men. We have a bishop who is supportive as well, as you just heard. You need to know that you are not alone and we need to know that we need you as much as you need us.”

Mr. Kevin Anderson [Southwestern Texas Synod] moved to amend the substitute motion:
Moved;

Seconded: To amend the substitute motion by changing each occurrence of “gay and lesbian” to “gay, lesbian, and bisexual.”

Mr. Anderson spoke to the motion, stating, “At this Churchwide Assembly or in our synods or congregations, we do not have the authority to decide whether or not we will make Christ known. Our Christian calling, the Great Commission, sends us into the world to make disciples of all people. As we, the Church, have no other choice but to make Christ known to all people, this includes people of all sexual orientations. We do, however, have the authority to decide how this church will go about ministering to people of various sexual orientations. Many people have asked me, ‘Kevin Anderson, as a gay person, how can you be a Christian in what has been historically a hostile place for homosexuals?’ My answer is very simple. Jesus Christ is able to walk through the closed church door and break the silence. It is he who calls me into the Church. Even when the church fails to act, Christ finds a way to reach his people. It is Christ’s light and love that illuminates the dark closet in which homosexuals live. He calls us into new life out in the open in Jesus Christ. We all know that Christ loves us all, but, before we can love each other, we must first know each other. I confess that I do not know you as I ought, and I know by my own experience that you do not know me. Let us meet together at a place we have in common—the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Let him be the one who brings us together. Then we will create a relationship between people of all sexual orientations that cannot be broken. I implore this assembly with all my heart to take this opportunity to begin a process of welcome to people of all sexual orientations.”

Bishop Chilstrom interrupted the speaker and said, “I hesitate to do this, but I must interrupt you. It seems to me that you are going beyond the specific proposal, which was to insert the word, ‘bisexual,’ so the statement now should be on your reasoning as to why that particular word or phrase should be added.”

Mr. Anderson responded, “I am making the point that people are of all sexual orientations, and that does include bisexuals and the vast array of sexuality that we as humans experience.” Bishop Chilstrom then deemed that the speaker might continue his speech for an additional minute.

Mr. Anderson continued, “Let us then begin to break down and destroy the human barriers

that separate us from each other. Let us begin as the proposed substitute motion states, that we begin mission strategies that will boldly engage gay, lesbian, and bisexual people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the spirit of Christian love and community. Let us make our congregations safe sanctuaries for gay, lesbian, and bisexual people where people can be open about their sexual orientation without fear, and where people of all sexual orientations can worship together, study Scripture together, and fellowship together. Let us all then come together and unite our voices in praise and thanksgiving to the tie that binds us—Jesus Christ. When we can do this, our church will truly experience a peace that passes all understanding. That is why I believe that we need to include people of all sexual orientations in our welcome to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Ms. Stephanie Olson [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin], spoke against the amendment to the substitute motion, stating, “I would like to start with Romans 12:1-2, ‘I appeal to you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service to worship; however do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.’ At a previous assembly, somebody . . . [said] that a homosexual person came into the pastor’s office and asked, ‘What is the difference between me and someone who gossips?’ The answer to that question was, ‘There is no difference. You are both sinners; you both need salvation through grace.’ There is only one requirement to being to member of the Lutheran church and that is to be a sinner: ‘For we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God.’ However—and I would again like to turn to Romans—‘There is now, therefore, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.’ That is Romans 8. But, we go back and say in Romans 6, ‘What are we to say then? Are we to continue to sin that grace may abound?’”

Bishop Chilstrom reminded the speaker that the immediate issue before the assembly was whether or not to amend the substitute motion to include the word, “bisexual.” Ms. Olson continued, “I just mean, does this mean that we are promoting and encouraging this? We do not encourage gossiping, cheating on spouses, and other things. This is like being asked to promote and encourage this and I do not agree with that. It is pushing it more and more, and then do we go with pedophilia?” At this point, Bishop Chilstrom interrupted the speaker and declared the speech to be out of order, because it addressed an issue broader than the proposed amendment.

Ms. Luana Langford [Northwest Washington Synod] spoke against the amendment to the substitute motion, stating, “I am against this amendment. I want children of the living God to know that they are holy people, and I also want lesbian and gay people to know that they are people that God loves, too. Let us not be confused by what it is we are doing here. Know that God wants these people, all of you people, to serve God. So remember when you vote that you vote for God and for his Word. I know you might be upset, but I never worry about people being upset. Follow your mind and serve the living God. We love you, but we do not love your sin. Stand on God’s Word.”

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod], spoke in opposition to the amendment to the substitute motion, stating, “Speaking very narrowly against this amendment to add ‘bisexual,’ I oppose this on two points. One, as I listen to people in the church, I hear wide agreement that we need to offer some faithful welcome to gay and lesbian people or to people who are sinners in general. There is not widespread agreement on exactly what kind of behavior this church ought to uphold, or recognize, or approve of, or decry as sin, or whatever. There is

widespread agreement that we do not approve of promiscuity in general. It seems to me that sticking the word, 'bisexual,' in there inherently gives an approval to at least multiple sorts of sexual activities. Secondly, I oppose in general the attitude of including all sexual orientations, because then we do open the door to sexual orientations that are farther beyond the pale—pedophilia was mentioned. I could list a whole bunch of things that would turn your stomach to which people feel oriented sexually, and I do not think we ought to be opening that gate right now.”

Mr. Edward Hunsinger [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] spoke against the amendment to the substitute motion. He said, “I am a fairly new Lutheran and I don’t remember my wife or myself being asked my sexual preference. I think bisexuality seems to open up a wide door and bestiality and things of that nature would be next.”

The Rev. Clark M. Kilgard [Northeastern Iowa Synod] moved the previous question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-905; No-74
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-175; No-784
Defeated: To amend the substitute motion by changing each occurrence of “gay and lesbian” to “gay, lesbian, and bisexual.”

Bishop Steven L. Ullestad [Northeastern Iowa Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation from the Memorials Committee, stating, “As important as our sexuality is—it may be one of the most important things about us—it is not the most important thing about us. The theology of the Church is even more important than our sexuality. I am concerned that we do not have adequate information to reflect upon the theological grounding and foundation for the Reconciled in Christ movement. We can affirm that we have been created in the image of God, but we also affirm that there has been a fall and that there is a sense of original sin. What is even more important than being created in the image of God is that we have been saved through Jesus Christ. The document that finds our oneness in creation, in my judgment, is not as powerful as finding our oneness in Jesus Christ. So, I do not believe we have adequate information to make a decision about the Reconciled in Christ suggestion and ask that we consider only the recommendation of the Memorials Committee.”

Ms. Susan Rodine [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] requested that the chairs of the Memorials Committee have an opportunity to speak to the substitute motion. She asked that Pastor Hallberg comment on the motion to substitute.

Pastor Hallberg responded, “I do not think that Pastor Lehr nor I can speak on behalf of the whole Memorials Committee.” He nevertheless drew attention to the three bulleted items, which also appeared in the resolve of the memorial of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, stating that he believed them to be the “crux of the substitution.” He commented, “I do not think the committee would have taken much exception to those, except that we did have a 1991 welcoming statement and we affirmed that statement.”

Mr. Richard E. VonSpreckelsen [Florida-Bahamas Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute motion, stating, “Two hundred years ago, we were told people of color were not welcome in the

church. Thirty years ago, women could not participate as leaders of our congregations. Today, we are excluding gay and lesbian people. How long can we as Christians continue to discriminate against yet another segment of the children of God? Would Christ accept or deny any person his grace or love?"

The Rev. Richard A. Jespersen [Montana Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, saying, "I think anything beyond this would be divisive in this church at this time. Our bishop-elect, H. George Anderson, has indicated that whereas this may not be an impasse, it is at least a disagreement, something about which we need much more biblical study, much more dialogue and conversation. I think this prejudices that conversation and would unnecessarily divide this church at this time."

Mr. Walter Johnson [Western North Dakota Synod] inquired, "On the substitute amendment, when it says all sacraments, does this mean that we are approving the lifestyle and opening up [the possibility of] marriage between lesbian [couples] and between gay [couples]?"

Pastor Hallberg responded, "Marriage is not a sacrament, but that is the question, if I heard it correctly. We are talking about the life of the congregation, which is the sacrament of Baptism and the Eucharist."

The Rev. George W. Forell [Southeastern Iowa Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, stating, "We are all aware that this is a highly controversial issue, which we as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have not settled. All the problems that came to the fore as a result of the study of sexuality indicate that the action that the substitute suggests is premature. I think, therefore, that we should wait until we are ready to make this decision without dividing the church."

The Rev. James D. Kegel [Eastern North Dakota Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute, stating, "I am a pastor of a congregation that has a number of gay and lesbian people. Some of them have come there from other ELCA congregations, because they were told that they were pretty much unwelcome there. I am also involved in some community activities. Our local community was dealing with a human rights ordinance that would include the terminology, 'gay and lesbian people.' It was ELCA congregations and pastors that spread the word in this community that this was a divisive issue and that perhaps we would not want to add that terminology. It was because of the actions of those Lutheran pastors and congregations that those words were not added. We may say, because of our previous assembly decision, that we are welcoming, that we work for human rights in our community, and are welcoming in our congregations, but I especially speak in favor of the last part of Pastor Schwich's substitution—that this be communicated to our congregations so that our people, and our congregations, and our pastors know that we are on record as Evangelical Lutheran Church in America members in favor of welcoming."

Ms. Laura C. Bourdo [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute motion, stating, "With all due respect to the passionate voices that have been expressed and those that I know are being held in containment by a great number of people in this room, I would like to speak in clarification of the substitution that we are considering. This substitution does not speak to the rightness or the wrongness of homosexuality as an orientation or as a practice. This substitution speaks only to the rightness or wrongness of accepting with love, as we have been commanded to do, all those created by God. We do not have to agree on every aspect of this, just as we should all be able to disagree. Just as an analogy, even if a certain feminist action might be abhorrent to us as individuals, should we, therefore, exclude all women from the sacraments of

the church? Whether or not the practice or the orientation of homosexuality is abhorrent to you, or to any individual whom you feel you represent, is irrelevant to this discussion. We are speaking solely to the welcoming of the children of God to our congregations.”

Bishop Robert W. Mattheis [Sierra Pacific Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute, stating, “As I have struggled with this issue in my own life and wondered how to respond to it, I sensed the confusion of the church to be my confusion and uncertainty, and at that time determined that, if we as a church are to err when we are uncertain as to which way to go, we should err on the side of grace. It is my desire that at this point we would affirm the substitute. This morning as we opened our session, we sang with vigor and enthusiasm, ‘Jesus, Thou art all compassion, pure unbounded love Thou art.’ I would invite this assembly to embrace that verse in our action.”

The Rev. Paul J. Gravrock [Sierra Pacific Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, stating, “It seems to me that it is clear enough that we say that we do welcome gay and lesbian persons into our congregations. My congregation wishes to be open and welcoming to everyone. Yet, we do have difficulty with the lifestyle, and believe our church has not come to a different understanding of that at this point. My concern is that to adopt the substitute is, in essence, to be aligned with Lutherans Concerned and we are not sure that is where we wish to be at this point. We wish to be open, we wish to be welcoming, we may not always seem to be hospitable, but that is our desire. If to be hospitable means to affirm everything people do, then I suppose we would not be seen that way. At this point in time for this church, I think it is enough to say that we do welcome people, that we would like all to come and hear the grace and love of God. I think that is enough at this point.”

Mr. Warren Pertee [Delaware-Maryland Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, stating, “Like many of my fellow Lutherans here, I am all in favor of welcoming anyone who wants to come to Christ and God, but I do have some concerns and I speak against the substitute. There seems to be some confusion, and in that respect I am sort of confused, too, because I hear people using global terms like ‘all’ and ‘all aspects’ and ‘all phases.’ That bothers me, because it has not been made completely clear. I think there are two ways to look at homosexuality. With some people it is an activity or something that you do, a behavior. Others say that it is something that is innate, something that you are born with. I think that we are not the mighty Creator, so we cannot tell. I think that we should invite our bisexual, lesbian, and gay brothers and sisters to partake in worshiping and lifting up Christ, but I feel as though—as I heard someone say and I am sure others have heard this—‘Here I stand, I can do no other.’”

“I think that the Lutheran church has to be like a tree, planted by waters whose roots grow deep. I have heard us talk about Scripture and what it says. I have read and studied Scripture and it talks about behavior; it talks about sin. If you are born a particular way you cannot help how you are born, but you can help what you do. I remember Jesus Christ. He ministered to sinners, all those who had sinned; he ministered no matter what you did; he ministered to you and said, ‘Go and sin no more.’ I think we have to recognize sin for sin and not be afraid to say it, but at the same time to express love and welcome. But, I think we are responsible for our behavior. I think that we should not use analogies, as when Peter and Paul talked about circumcision, because that is something totally different. Jesus was in the world at that time, and so Jesus Christ made clear the difference between circumcision for the Jews and for the Gentiles. I think that we should also not use analogies like slavery when we talk about that, because, if we went by the laws that Jesus put out for us, or the things that he talked about, for us then slavery

would mean nothing. So let's stick with what the Bible says. Let's welcome gay and lesbian persons into Christianity, but let's not just throw open the door wide and forget how we are supposed to behave."

The Rev. Carl A. Jensen [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] called the question:

Moved;

Seconded: To move the previous question on all issues before the assembly.

Mr. Jerry Koontz [North Carolina Synod] sought clarification regarding what specifically was meant by the phrase, "participate fully in the life of the congregation." Bishop Chilstrom ruled the question to be out of order, because the question had been called.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-827; No-139

Carried: To move the previous question on all issues before the assembly.

Bishop Chilstrom then read the proposed substitute motion:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-363; No-622

Defeated: To substitute the following for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

That the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 1995 Churchwide Assembly affirms the action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly, affirming the participation of gay and lesbian persons in the life of its congregations; and

The 1995 Churchwide Assembly adopts the "Reconciled in Christ" affirmation recommended by Lutherans Concerned/North America, namely, that:

- Gay and lesbian people share with all others the worth that comes from being individuals created by God;
 - Gay and lesbian people are welcome within the membership of our congregations upon making the same affirmation of faith that other people make; and
 - As members of our congregations, gay and lesbian people are encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of their congregations and this church;
- and

The 1995 Churchwide Assembly urge all congregations of this church to consider adoption of a similar affirmation of welcome to gay and lesbian Christians in the next biennium; and

That this action be communicated to all ELCA congregations.

Bishop Chilstrom then called for the vote on the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Assembly

Action Yes-856; No-129

CA95.6.50 To affirm the prior action of the 1991 Churchwide Assembly, that "gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America"; and

To convey this action as a response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the memorial on this

topic by the Southeastern Pennsylvania and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synods.

Chair Hallberg reviewed the list of memorials that remained before the assembly for individual consideration. He indicated that the memorials related to the development of a possible Social Statement on Human Sexuality would follow a report on that matter from the Division for Church in Society and the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee; and that Category 6, Urban Ministry, would follow a presentation by the Division for Outreach on that matter.

The Rev. Geraldine C. King [Western North Dakota Synod] sought to offer a motion related to the report of the Board of Pensions, which had not been submitted before the deadline for submission of motions to be considered by the Reference and Counsel Committee. Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the motion might be offered when report of the Board of Pensions was presented. At that time, he said, the assembly would need to determine whether or not it wished to consider the motion.

1996-1997 Budget Proposal

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 811-850; continued from Minutes, pages 14, 60-64.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Edith M. Lohr, chair of the Church Council Budget and Finance Committee, and the Rev. Robert N. Bacher, executive for administration, for the third part of the presentation of the 1996-1997 budget proposal.

In a moment of personal privilege, Ms. Lohr said, "I would like to thank all of you and all other members of this church for the opportunity that I have had to serve this church as chair of the Budget and Finance Committee during the first eight years of our life together. . . . Our bishop has always kept us focused on the mission of this church, not on the money issues. He has kept us hopeful and when things were really at their lowest financial point, when we were at risk of having the cash flow define commitment rather than our faith and our belief, he has always come forward with a vision—a vision of strength for mission and a vision for mission." She thanked members of the ELCA Cabinet of Executives and others for their work related to budgeting and finance.

Ms. Lohr then presented the 1996 Budget Proposal and the 1997 Budget Proposal as recommended by the Church Council for action by the assembly.

Moved;

Seconded: •1996 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 1996 current-fund budget proposal of \$75,325,000, with an initial Mission Operating Fund allocation of \$1,500,000 and an Expanded Ministry Fund allocation of \$515,000;
To approve a 1996 World Hunger budget proposal of \$12,000,000; and,
To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after review of 1995 actual income and 1996 revised income estimates.

•1997 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 1997 current-fund budget proposal of \$76,325,000, with an initial Mission Operating Fund allocation of \$1,500,000;

To approve a 1997 World Hunger budget proposal of \$12,200,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after a review of the 1996

actual income and 1997 revised income estimates.

Mr. A. Dean Buchanan [Southern California (West) Synod] said, "I appreciate the work that has been done by the committee and the application of the principles that have been enunciated in our work. I recognize how difficult it is to allocate resources having been in that business in our Lutheran colleges for some 25 years. It is not an easy job. I also am aware of the fact that 52.8 percent of that budget is going for our central mission programs. However, as I read through materials, such as those of the Division for Global Mission, we read such words as these, 'The Division for Global Mission continues to receive many more requests than it is able to accept. Many partner churches are growing in membership far beyond our capacity in their leadership and leadership development programs. Others invited ELCA partnership in new areas of outreach. The Division for Global Mission dreams of new areas for outreach in mission, but is unable to follow that vision because of lack of funding,' and so on, I would only plead with the new Church Council and Bishop-Elect Anderson that in the whole 'Inquiry' process, we look at ways of augmenting funds for the Division for Global Mission and our other central mission programs—perhaps, through reallocation—and, as we look to the 'Inquiry,' we not look only at programs that are existing, but at whether there are programs we ought not to be doing, and, therefore, bring about reallocation."

The Rev. James D. Stender [Northwest Washington Synod] stated, "I have a concern about the budget insofar as the historical revenue is concerned. I know that in our synod we are not able to contribute any more to the churchwide organization than what we already are. With the increasing of that budget by \$1,000,000 a year over the next couple of years, I am concerned that it be a realistic projection and that we not get into a pattern once again of overextending ourselves and then of being disappointed when revenue comes in less than what we project."

Ms. Lohr responded, "I would say that the budget has built into it a perspective of pragmatic reality based on experience, and a degree of hope for what we think and believe based on the conversations and consultations and the commitments the synods have made, and that it is a realistically achievable budget."

Mr. James O. Hillis [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke in favor of the budget proposals, stating, "It is part of the function of responsibility of this group of people to go home to our churches and make sure that the million dollar increase comes to pass."

Ms. Stephanie Olson [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the budget proposals and said, "I would like to lift up to this group that there is another opportunity at worship this evening to add to this budget by our gifts. The total was \$37,000 [received in offerings earlier during the assembly], but there are over a thousand people here and that is only \$37.00 per person, so maybe we could even add to it while we are here, as well as in our home congregations."

Assembly

Action Yes-672; No-21

CA95.6.51 •1996 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 1996 current-fund budget proposal of \$75,325,000, with an initial Mission Operating Fund allocation of \$1,500,000 and an Expanded Ministry Fund allocation of \$515,000;

To approve a 1996 World Hunger budget proposal of \$12,000,000; and,

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after review of 1995 actual

income and 1996 revised income estimates.

•1997 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 1997 current-fund budget proposal of \$76,325,000, with an initial Mission Operating Fund allocation of \$1,500,000;

To approve a 1997 World Hunger budget proposal of \$12,200,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after a review of the 1996 actual income and 1997 revised income estimates.

Presentation: Lutheran Youth Organization (continued)

Reference: Continued from Minutes, pages 281-285.

Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to view a brief excerpt from a video documenting the 1994 Youth Gathering held at Atlanta, Ga. Three representatives of the Lutheran Youth Organization then presented Bishop Chilstrom with a gift, a carved statue from Kenya, entitled, "Hurumbi," meaning, "Let us pull together." Bishop Chilstrom expressed thanks and said that during retirement he would miss regular contact with youth from across this church.

Triennial Churchwide Assemblies

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 851-853.

Background: Schedule of Churchwide Assemblies

Upon recommendation of the Church Council's Executive Committee, the council discussed and proposed a shift in the schedule for Churchwide Assemblies from a biennial pattern to a triennial pattern. At the council's April 1994 meeting, members of the council received the following information:

Savings: The Churchwide Assembly represents a current annual budget allocation of \$750,000. A shift to a triennial Churchwide Assembly schedule would save about \$250,000 for each budget year. In addition, staff time devoted to assembly preparation would be spread over a three-year cycle, allowing greater staff attention to regular, ongoing aspects of churchwide programs and ministries.

Timing: In order to implement a triennial Churchwide Assembly schedule in A.D. 2000, the 1995 Churchwide Assembly would need to approve a constitutional amendment on this matter. Otherwise, planning and site selection must proceed for a biennial Churchwide Assembly in 1999.

Experience of Another: The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) follows a pattern of triennial conventions. The shift was made in the late 1970s from LCMS biennial conventions to triennial conventions.

Elections: Establishment of the six-year term for the bishop of this church would permit elections on a triennial basis. Council and board terms already are for six-years. Other terms could be adjusted to fit such a pattern.

Arguments Regarding Assembly Schedule

1. Connections

a. Pro—the 1,050 voting members of each Churchwide Assembly gain a broader picture of churchwide ministries and develop a deep sense of connection with this whole church.

b. Con—only 1,050 members out of 5.2 million can have such an experience on a biennial basis. Greater use of satellite links with Synod Assemblies may accomplish a stronger sense of connection with a larger number of members.

2. Congregational Awareness

a. Pro—a voting member returns to her or his congregation to recount the experience of the assembly and to remind members of their relation to this whole church.

b. Con—few voting members actually have opportunity to help their congregation, much less neighboring congregations, feel closer to this whole church.

3. Proportion

a. Pro—each Churchwide Assembly helps overcome the sense that the churchwide organization is huge and distant. People see and hear leaders in person.

b. Con—only 1,050 voting members, plus advisors and visitors, have this experience. Presence at synodical assemblies, if broader exposure were given to churchwide representatives, would reach more people and more congregations.

4. Governance

a. Pro—many of the agenda items for the Churchwide Assembly could be handled more economically and expeditiously by the Church Council.

b. Con—people may not feel the same sense of ownership of decisions of the council, in contrast to those of an assembly.

5. Other Savings

a. Pro—reduction in the size of division boards from 21 members to 15 members would save about \$75,000 a year. If division boards were reduced to 12 members, about \$112,000 would be saved each year. Three or four members of the council could be assigned the responsibility of serving as part of each division board, thereby building closing inter-action between major programming responsibilities in the churchwide organization and decisions of the Church Council.

b. Con—such an adjustment would reduce the opportunities for participation by members of this church in churchwide governance responsibilities and may weaken connections with synodical leadership where such may exist and be acknowledged now within synods. Many board members report never being asked to present information on their respective board participation at Synod Council meetings or at synodical assemblies. Few in their respective synods know of their involvement.

Recommendation of the Church Council

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

12.31. The assembly shall meet ~~biennially~~ ~~triennially~~ in regular session. Special meetings may be called by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. The purpose for a special meeting shall be stated in the notice. (The assembly shall meeting triennially, beginning in 1997.)

If the above amendment were to be adopted, the currently scheduled biennial assembly would be held in 1997. The first triennial assembly would take place in 2000.

Recommendation of
the Church Council

To adopt, contingent upon approval by the Churchwide Assembly of regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly on a triennial basis, amendments of the following constitutional provisions and bylaws:

14.32. Church Council members shall be elected to one six-year term and shall not be eligible for consecutive reelection.

19.04. . . . and with ~~one-third~~ one-half of the members of the Church Council and of each board elected each ~~biennium~~ triennium.

16.11.13. Each division board shall be composed of 21 persons elected to one six-year term, with no consecutive reelection, and with ~~one-third~~ about one-half of the board members being elected every ~~biennium~~ triennium, as provided in Chapter 19. . . .

17.51.01. This publishing house shall have a board of trustees of 21 members, elected for one six-year term with no consecutive reelection and with ~~one-third~~ about one-half elected every ~~two~~ three years as provided in Chapter 19. . . .

17.61.03. This board shall have a board of trustees composed of 21 persons elected to one six-year term with no consecutive reelection and with ~~one-third~~ about one-half elected each ~~biennium~~ triennium as provided in Chapter 19. . . .

19.06. One-half of those persons elected as members of the Church Council and boards by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly shall be elected to three-year terms with the possibility of reelection to one six-year term, and one-half of those persons elected as members of the Church Council and boards by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly shall be elected to six-year terms, notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary in the governing documents.

17.21.02. . . . shall be elected to a ~~four~~ six-year term. (Notwithstanding this or other constitutional provisions or bylaws to the contrary, an election of an editor to a six-year term shall occur at the first triennial Churchwide Assembly in A.D. 2000. This parenthetical stipulation shall expire at the completion of that election.)

19.51.04. The editor of the church periodical shall be elected to a ~~four~~ six-year term by the Churchwide Assembly. . . .

Background: The bishop of this church, elected in 1995 under constitutional provision 13.22. as amended by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, is to serve a six-year term. The vice president and secretary, under amendments adopted at this assembly to change the term of office, are now elected to serve a six-year term, rather than the previous four-year term. If the 1995 Churchwide Assembly were to approve proposals to move to a triennial pattern for regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, officers elected in 1995 would either need to have their respective terms extended or implementing amendments would need to be approved to provide for elections at the a.d. 2000 Churchwide Assembly.

Recommendation of
the Church Council

To adopt, contingent upon approval by the Churchwide Assembly of regular meetings of the assembly on a triennial basis, the following new constitutional provisions:

13.22.b. In the event that the term of the bishop expires in a year in which a regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly is not held, that term shall end, as provided in the bylaws, at the regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly prior to the expiration of the term. (This provision shall expire on September 1, 2000.)

19.07. In the event that the terms of the vice president, secretary, or editor of the church periodical expire in a year in which a regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly is not held, the respective terms shall end, as provided in the bylaws, at the regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly prior to the expiration of the term. (This provision shall expire on September 1, 2000.)

Assembly Action

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to introduce the proposed motions related to a possible bylaw change that would specify biennial to triennial churchwide assemblies. Secretary Almen summarized the “pro” and “con” arguments that appeared in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 851-852.

The recommendation of the Church Council was before the assembly for action.

Moved;

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

12.31. The assembly shall meet triennially in regular session. Special meetings may be called by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. The purpose for a special meeting shall be stated in the notice. (The assembly shall meet triennially, beginning in 1997.)

The Rev. Bruce G. Trethaway [Northeastern Ohio Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “This is the first time I have had an opportunity to serve as a voting member of a Churchwide Assembly and I will return home to my synod and to my congregation strengthened, and uplifted, and inspired, and better informed to tell the story of how we are sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. I would suspect that is the case for other voting members of this assembly as well. One of the problems of lengthening the time between assemblies is that in the long run, fewer people will have the opportunity to hear the story of our church in mission and return home to tell it.

“Secondly, as an early [i.e., recently formed] church we [ELCA members] do need to be about the business of making connections and developing ownership. I think those connections are better made in a personal way, rather than by satellite hookups. I think that the ownership of this church would be more difficult to make, if the time between assemblies were lengthened.

“Finally, this church has a number of issues before it in its early life that would benefit from the collective wisdom of this church gathering together in assembly. For example, if we are to

adopt the Church Council's recommendation regarding the timetable for the possible social statement on human sexuality, it would mean that the earliest possible time that we as a church could take action on the statement would be in the year 2000. I think that would be too long for us to wait. So, whatever resources we expend in drawing this church together in assembly in a biennial way are well worth the benefits received."

The Rev. Darrell H. Jodock [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] offered the following motion:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer the recommendations related to triennial churchwide assemblies, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 852 and 853, to the Church Council for consideration of alternatives that would retain a modified form of biennial assemblies. The modifications would affect assemblies in years when the election of a bishop does not occur. Examples of possible modifications include a shorter assembly, an assembly with fewer voting members, or a business meeting via an electronic hookup linking voting members in synodical or regional settings.

Pastor Jodock spoke to the motion and said, "I am in sympathy with the purposes of the material and recommendations before us. I am in sympathy with trying to save money and staff time, which are involved in lengthy and frequent assemblies. However, it seems to me, as already indicated, there are some competing considerations. For example, it is important that the leadership and the membership of this church keep in touch with each other. Less frequent assemblies are always in danger of resulting in people getting out of touch with the leadership, or the leadership getting out of touch with the people. I also feel our assemblies run the risk of shifting the weight more in the direction of the officers, the Church Council, and the national staff of the church. We do need a longer assembly when we elect the bishop, but I think that, if we pay attention to the matters of business that we have done here other than to elect a bishop, it could be done in a much shorter time. So, one option is to shorten the time, but I have the impression that would not save a lot of money and so I think that other alternatives, such as fewer people coming to the assembly when the bishop is not being elected, are one way to keep in touch, to check out the directions to make sure the programs and activities of the national staff are in congruence with people, and yet to save money."

"We also here conduct business by watching television monitors and using electronic voting. I wonder if we could see the same thing, if we had some kind of hookup, and whether or not that would be cost-effective. I do not know the answer to that, but I would like to have it explored. Also, there are other matters that we accomplish together here, but some of those things can be accomplished in alternative ways, such as regional gatherings or other means of educational and social encounter, and celebrations and worship with each other."

Bishop Paul M. Werger [Southeastern Iowa Synod] spoke against referral, observing that the Church Council "has studied this issue for a significant period of time. I think the options and alternatives have all been discussed, and I think they have made the decision to bring it to this assembly for our consideration."

Bishop James S. Aull [South Carolina Synod] spoke in favor of referral, stating, "I have prayed long and hard over this issue. I am quite concerned about the matter of the [continuity of] boards and their membership; to have half the boards and councils expiring each time the assembly would meet would be very difficult. If the matter is referred, I would like to call for the

Church Council to give further attention to the matter of the composition and the election of boards and councils.”

The Rev. Mark W. Holmerud [Sierra Pacific Synod] asked whether the Church Council had specifically addressed the issues and suggestions offered in the motion offered by Pastor Jodock.

Mr. William E. Diehl [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod], a member of the Church Council, responded, “Most, but not all, of the alternative considerations mentioned by the proposer of the motion to defer have been discussed by the Church Council—not all of them, but I think that enough of them have been discussed by the Church Council to support the reason why we are bringing this before the assembly. I believe that the democratic process can be handled very well and in this age of electronic communication we need to be more creative in how we use that possibility. Finally, remember that for every year we refer and have the Church Council study [the issue], we are putting \$250,000 into our budget that would be saved for other purposes in this church.”

Mr. David J. Hardy, ELCA general counsel, raised the question, “I am concerned under the provisions of Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions as to the appropriateness of disposing a validly proposed constitutional amendment by a motion to refer.” After consulting the ELCA secretary and the parliamentarian, Bishop Chilstrom deemed, “Not having Minnesota law in front of us [The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is incorporated in the State of Minnesota.], I trust the judgment of our general counsel, but what we are going to do is to proceed with this. If it is referred to the Church Council, we will have to deal with that issue between assemblies. We will continue to discuss and act on the motion to refer.”

Mr. Ron Onsager [Northeastern Iowa Synod] called the question on the motion to refer.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-780; No-137

Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-147; No-792

Defeated: To refer the recommendations related to triennial churchwide assemblies, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 852 and 853, to the Church Council for consideration of alternatives that would retain a modified form of biennial assemblies. The modifications would affect assemblies in years when the election of a bishop does not occur. Examples of possible modifications include a shorter assembly, an assembly with fewer voting members, or a business meeting via an electronic hookup linking voting members in synodical or regional settings.

The Rev. George W. Forell [Southeastern Iowa Synod] spoke against triennial assemblies, stating, “I do get around in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America all over the country and I am concerned about a sense of non-participation in the national church on the part of many people in our constituency. The danger that I see is that we shall become 65 churches with a very small emphasis on being one Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I think to reduce the number of times in which we get together with a representation from all the synods would increase the danger of this fragmentation.”

Ms. Patti Morlock [Southern Ohio Synod] spoke in favor of the Church Council’s

recommendation, observing, “Both the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the youth of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have triennial assemblies and they are not floundering. Financially, in a time when the national church is withdrawing financial aid to churches whose existence is dependent upon the national church, the money saved could be used for these church missions. Finally, perhaps the national assembly could find alternative ways for funding this assembly. As a first time voter, I have appreciated the fact that the national church has picked up the tab for my being here. However, perhaps that funding could be provided by the synods or in part by me as a voting member. That also would save additional monies.”

Ms. Andrea L. Dubler [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] stated, “How wonderful it is to be a voting member at this assembly. And because it is so meaningful to me, I speak here now in opposition to the recommendation for several reasons. I believe that we need to gather every two years—at least for a while longer while we are still making important decisions that affect our life together and while we are still in the process of solidifying our identity.

“Secondly, my synod—and I am sure that there are many other [similar] synods—does not have many minority members to speak out on important issues and matters of concern to this church. At these churchwide assemblies, we see faces and we hear voices different from our own. We are enriched by that diversity and our understandings are elevated to new dimensions.

“Thirdly, at these ELCA assemblies, a large percentage of the voting members are very active in their congregations and are synodical leaders. As the assembled church, we are strengthened to go back to our congregations and synods to implement many recommendations. We go back encouraged to foster unity and to work for inclusivity. One of the arguments for the triennial assembly notes that there are only 1,050 voting members plus visitors who attend—as if this number is too small to be of major importance. But, if you have ever baked a loaf of bread, you know that it only takes a little yeast to make the loaf rise. Christ calls us to be that leavening. What a powerful witness we 1,050 voting members can make in the life of this church.

“Fourthly, the argument states that it costs \$750,000 [annually] for each assembly. That is a large amount of money and very costly, but there are different kinds of costs. I believe that it could cost more in the long run, if people feel that they are not participating in the decision-making of this church and that too much power and control are in the hands of a few. We may lose more than we gain.

“Finally, I earnestly believe that this church needs to meet and to have face-to-face contact every two years. We need to hear one another, see one another, communicate, and relate to one another as this whole church gathered under one roof. Three years is just too long.”

Mr. Richard E. VonSpreckelsen [Florida-Bahamas Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation, stating, “During the past struggle during the merger of three different church bodies, the assemblies have continued to elect very qualified people to its council, boards, and committees of this church. In that sense, an extra year in those positions would only benefit the churchwide actions by having better continuity. Also, this would prove to be a better stewardship of the resources of this church as a whole. In our synod, we debated three years over going to biennial assemblies and it has finally passed this year.”

The Rev. John H. P. Reumann [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke against the recommendation. He said, “I came here as a loyal churchman expecting to agree with the proposal primarily for financial reasons. I have given some thought to it, however, and am no

longer convinced. To pick up some of the arguments on page 851, the experience of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, a shift made in the late 1970s. If you recall what was going on in the Missouri Synod in the late 1970s, that will cast some doubt on that as precedent.

“I now want to address a factor that runs through this debate that has not surfaced in the material on pages 851-852. That is the perceived division of trust between the church at the grass roots, congregationally and synodically, and churchwide staff. I say this not out of disloyalty to many friends who work at 8765 West Higgins Road [the street address of the churchwide office building at Chicago, Ill.], who are genuinely concerned about this church, who have suffered grievously in cutbacks, but also who in some cases have given the impression that they do not listen to the grass roots. This has to be a concern to be addressed. More than one nominee for the office of bishop spoke of listening and trust. I believe \$250,000 a small cost to pay to increase this kind of an occasion with the height, and length, and breadth, and depth of the variety of this church. I would be untrue to the Commission for a New Lutheran Church [CNLC], of which I was a part and of which I have not repented, in its concern for what are called ‘quotas,’ pluralism, and variety, that we be a church of the people. It is precisely the assembly every two years that is the primary focal point of the people’s participation through representatives elected by synods that allow us to engage in this sort of approach.

“Finally, I add that at the top of page 852, there is the note that division boards might also be cut from 21 to 15 members. I know the financial arguments, but I am in favor of wider and greater participation and, therefore, urge that we not make this step at this time. I would like to see, under a new bishop and all the leadership of this church, including all my friends at 8765 West Higgins Road, a growth of trust and confidence between all parts of this church, for the Commission for a New Lutheran Church regarded the nationwide expression, the synod, and the congregations as all equally ‘church.’”

At the request of Bishop Chilstrom, Secretary Almen clarified that the cost of a Churchwide Assembly is approximately \$1,500,000 not counting staff time for preparation, with \$750,000 budgeted each year of the biennium. He also acknowledged the substantial grants from the Lutheran fraternal benefit societies of about \$250,000.

The Rev. William L. Hurst Jr. [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Church Council, stating, “I think it is financially responsible, but also it allows us an opportunity to recognize another expression of the church that is sometimes forgotten, the regional expression. I suppose the bylaws are not the place to mandate regional gatherings. While they might not do business, per se, I really hope that we would encourage the regions to forge some better partnerships. A triennial national assembly would give us a chance to do that. I hope we would find some creative ways to go about that.”

Mr. Jerry Koontz [North Carolina Synod] spoke against the recommendation, and said, “I find the recommendation as presented in the report of the Church Council to be weak. Arguments one through three are the same argument from slightly different perspectives. The sense of these arguments is reversed. That is, the ‘pro’ arguments argue against the recommendation. All three of these arguments say that I, as an individual voting member, cannot make a difference—a notion that I wholeheartedly reject. Argument four suggests that items of business handled by the assembly can be addressed by the Church Council. After reviewing this assembly’s agenda, I find few if any items of business that can be handled by the Church Council without further constitutional changes moving decision-making authority from the assembly to the Church Council. If there are such items, then move these to the Church Council and shorten

the assembly. I find argument five not relevant to the issue. The changes suggested in argument five can be implemented regardless of the decision on the schedule of churchwide assemblies. In fact, these are not addressed in the recommendation. I also find it interesting that the argument of cost is presented not as an argument, but rather as information.

“The real issue here is how frequently does a vibrant church need to meet to conduct its affairs. Once we decide the frequency with which the Churchwide Assembly needs to meet, then we can make decisions regarding matters of finance. A growing church needs to act quickly. What this recommendation does is to add a one-year delay to our ability to implement change in response to the rapidly changing world in which we are called to make Christ known. If, indeed, cost is the primary issue, then let us so argue and be bold about it.”

Ms. Norah Bringer [Southwestern Washington Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation. She said, “I speak in favor of the motion to move to a triennial assembly primarily for financial reasons, while I recognize that it is necessary to first look at how often we need to meet as noted by the last speaker. I know that I and several of the other youth voting members, and other people I have talked to, have been quite amazed at the amount of financial resources that have been used from our church to support this gathering of people. I think those resources can be used to support other parts of our church and other areas of our church that need financial support more than this—such as our global mission and our world hunger program. Those are both important issues. I think that we need to focus more on those and other callings of this church, rather than this gathering of people.”

Bishop Theodore F. Schneider [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] spoke against the recommendation, stating, “I rise to say that, while I cannot take lightly the saving of a quarter of a million dollars each year by lessening by a third the number of times of our assemblies meet, I suspect I also need to say equally that the purpose of this church is not to save money, but to expend itself for the Gospel, and that this church in its very basic organization is the ecclesia, God’s called-out, gathered people who live, work, and serve under the Gospel in community in its several expressions. I have heard it said so many times at this assembly that there is a feeling that this church is finally coming together. It feels good. There is an excitement about it and I suspect all of us in our delegations want to go home and share that good news. This is a church that is coming-to-be in new and exciting ways. I would be much less happy to go home and to say, ‘But, we are going to do it less often.’”

Bishop Paull E. Spring [Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod] moved the previous question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-854; No-95
Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action:

[Motion Defeated] Yes-357; No-612

CA95.6.52 To adopt the following amendment to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

12.31. The assembly shall meet triennially in regular session. Special meetings may be called by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. The purpose for a special meeting

shall be stated in the notice. (The assembly shall meet triennially, beginning in 1997.)

The proposal was not adopted by a margin of 37 percent in favor and 63 percent opposed to the triennial plan.

Bishop Chilstrom announced that the subsequent two recommendations had been rendered irrelevant by the assembly action on constitutional provision 12.31.

Resolution on Violence against Women

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 805-806; continued on Minutes, pages 630-636.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Vice President Kathy J. Magnus, chair of the Church Council, to introduce the council's recommendation. She stated, "During this past biennium several of the units in the churchwide organization expressed their concern about violence against women and developed through their own boards and steering committees actions on this concern. Those concerns were then coordinated by the Commission for Women and brought in November of 1994 to the Church Council for its recommendation to this Churchwide Assembly. Violence against women is a tragic reality in the world in which we live. This recommendation begins to introduce the issue to us as a church." She also stated that Ms. Joanne Chadwick, executive director of the Commission for Women, was present to respond to questions regarding the issue.

Moved;

Seconded: Whereas, violence against women is a tragic reality that pervades societies worldwide, expressing itself in not only extreme forms (such as beating, sexual abuse, rape, torture, and killing), but also cultural practices (such as discrimination, female infanticide, genital mutilation, dowry, and widow deaths); and

Whereas, Jesus Christ calls each Christian and the whole Church into a mission of love and compassion toward all peoples, and the Holy Scriptures repeatedly call the people of God to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, participating in God's mission, commits itself in its constitution to "lift its voice in concord and work with forces for good, to serve humanity, cooperating with church and other groups participating in activities that promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged" (churchwide constitution provision ELCA 4.03.g.); and

Whereas, the Lutheran World Federation Council at its meeting in Kristiansand, Norway, in June 1993, asked the member churches to provide educational programs on the different forms of violence against women, to offer social support and practical aid for women, and to advocate for social policies and laws that protect women; and

Whereas, by action of the Church Council in April 1988, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America joined with other Christian churches in the "Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women," the focus of which is on:

- "the full participation of women in both Church and society,"
- "the commitment to justice and peace for all," and
- "theology and spirituality which flow out of women's faith and

life experience" (Church Council minutes, CC88.4.53); and

Whereas, widespread discrimination against women continues to permit the rationalization of

violence against women and may result in a violation of their human rights; and

Whereas, the report from the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, held in June 1993 in Vienna, Austria, calls for action by governments and non-governmental organizations to prevent violence against women, e.g., domestic violence, abuse, rape, and killing of women during civil wars and at refugee camps, and considers these abhorrent acts as violations of the human rights of women; and

Whereas, 130 nations have ratified the International Convention against the Discrimination of Women, but the United States is among the minority that has not; and

Whereas, the United Nations has drafted a Declaration against Violence against Women and the U.N. Commission on Human Rights has appointed a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women; and

Whereas, the international relief and development agencies with whom the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America cooperates have identified the suffering of women as a major concern and have called upon churches and global institutions to respond; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America:

1. denounce and combat the beating, sexual abuse, raping, and killing that threaten the life and safety of women everywhere;
2. encourage greater awareness among members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America about all forms of violence that threaten the life and safety of all women;
3. encourage all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make their homes, schools, and places of employment safe places where all may be free from physical abuse and those elements of the mass media that extol violence and the exploitation of women;
4. support the efforts of all members and congregations of this church, synods, churchwide units, and church-related agencies and institutions that seek to provide both justice and security for women in Church and society through law, policy, care, service, and support within the Body of Christ;
5. encourage the development of culture-specific resources and programs that advise and educate women who may experience violence in their lives;
6. express appreciation to the United States Senate for the ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination on June 24, 1994;
7. encourage the U.S. government to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and encourage church leaders and members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and church-related agencies and institutions to advocate for the ratification of this important agreement; and
8. affirm the call made by the Lutheran World Federation to combat violence against women.

Mr. Jeffrey P. Rush [Southeastern Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the word, "people," for the word, "women," in resolution items one through five.

Mr. Rush spoke to the motion, stating, "The problem of violence, in my estimation, cuts across all sexes and people. It is not just violence against women about which we should be

concerned, but violence against all people. We have children killing each other; members of minority groups killing each other. I would like us, as a church, to make a statement that we are against all violence rather than violence against a particular group.”

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Chadwick for comments on the proposed substitution. She said, “I think it does change the intent, and I do hear what you are saying. We do have a message on community violence, which, I think, addresses some of the issues that you are suggesting. This one in particular aligns us globally where rules are very much against women, in addition to, in this country, rules that are meant for everyone are sometimes administered in another way. So, I think I would like to suggest that we look at the message that we have on community violence, because I think it would get at that for you. It [the proposed amendment] really changes the intent of this resolution.”

Bishop Jon S. Enslin [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against the amendment, saying, “We did a major strategic planning process in our synod, which listened to people all around the synod, and this issue was lifted up as the highest priority within the synod. The fact is that the vast percentage of violence that is spoken to here is against women. This church has a justice responsibility to get at that question.”

Ms. Robin Kieffer [Saint Paul Area Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “It is very true that the increase of violence is against women. This resolution does not even talk about ‘date rape’ and it is against women. It is important that we have addressed violence with our peace statement. I think we need to concentrate on reducing the rape and the sexual violence that happens in homes as well as all over the world, as in former Yugoslavia where there is rape against women because of their ethnic persuasion. We need to concentrate on violence against women.”

Ms. Gladys Nelson [Southwestern Texas Synod] said, “I have some concerns here, some of which have already been addressed. Is it appropriate at this time for a general concern or shall we limit it only to the amendment that was proposed?” Bishop Chilstrom invited Ms. Nelson to proceed. She drew attention to the seventh item in the “Resolved” section, which read, “encourage the U.S. government to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.” She said, “My concern is that we are supporting an organization that has scheduled the international conference for women in a nation that is engaged in genocide of a type. There is great prejudice against the female child or the unborn female infant. I am not sure I would want to have that set up by an international agency where, as I understand it, if we ratify that as a nation, that becomes law above the laws of our land. I am open to hearing correction on that.”

An unidentified voting member was recognized by the chair and commented, “Earlier today we had a discussion about gay and lesbian persons and the decision of this body was that in 1991 the assembly said something about that and, therefore, we did not specifically have to do any more. What we are talking about now is the same type of situation. We previously said that we are against violence, but now we think that we specifically have to say something about women. It seems to me that we are a bit hypocritical when it has to do with women—it is okay to speak directly about them. But, when it is gay and lesbian persons, we do not want to do that. I think we need to be more consistent.”

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] spoke against the amendment, observing, “I would like to give voice at this assembly to a six and one-half year old girl, named Ava, who asks this assembly, ‘What kind of world are you giving me? The chances are one in

three that I will be raped in my lifetime. What kind of a world are you giving me? I see my gender exploited every day on the television and in media. I see violence against my gender depicted everywhere. What kind of a world are you giving me?" She would like to ask also, "What kind of a church will I inherit? Will it be a church that stands with those of my gender and generation against the violence that is visited globally against women." I urge that we vote 'no' on this amendment."

Bishop Robert D. Berg [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against the amendment, stating, "I do not believe there is anyone here who is for violence of any kind with regard to the matters that we are talking about. However, I believe that for us to follow through with this amendment would water down the impact and the intent of the resolution."

Ms. Norah Bringer [Southwestern Washington Synod] spoke against the amendment by virtue of the following reasons: "One, it does change the intent of the resolution. In addition, as a young woman in our society, I am close to many people who have been abused and raped in their situations, because among young people the highest occurrence of this kind of violence is against women. I think this is not just a redundancy of our peace statement, but rather a reaffirmation of what we said and a commitment to further our action against violence."

Ms. Doris Wanamaker [Northwestern Ohio Synod] spoke against the amendment, saying, "I am against all violence, but at this point we need to address ourselves specifically to the violence against women and to leave that word in this recommendation."

Bishop Donald H. Maier [Northwest Washington Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-870; No-60
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-94; No-851
Defeated: To substitute the word, "people," for the word, "women," in resolution items one through five.

The Rev. Larry V. Smoose [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved the following:

Moved;
Seconded: To replace the word, "combat," with the words, "work rigorously against," in the first item of the "Resolved" section of the recommendation.

Pastor Smoose spoke to the motion to amend, stating, "I simply think that in a statement against violence the word, 'combat,' is a more violent word to use. I am certainly in favor of this and would support it, but I think we ought to use language that is more appropriate."

The Rev. David P. Thielo [Northeastern Ohio Synod] noted the occurrence of the word, 'combat,' in item eight of the "Resolved" section of the recommendation. Bishop Chilstrom had ruled that the word could not be changed in that instance, because the language was consistent with that provided by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Pastor Thielo objected, "I am not convinced that it is not also appropriate for the last item. That is not a direct quote from the LWF statement and whenever we can avoid non-violent language in our statements, it is helpful.

That is not a direct quote, in my understanding.” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “There are no quotation marks there, but I have to go on my recollection and I am almost 100 percent sure that the word used in the LWF language is ‘combat.’”

Bishop Chilstrom then proceeded to call for the vote on the amendment.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-736; No-191

Carried: To replace the word, “combat,” with the words, “work rigorously against,” in the first item of the “Resolved” section of the recommendation.

The Rev. Connie S. Miller [Delaware-Maryland Synod] offered the following amendment:

Moved;

Seconded: To add, following the first item in the “Resolved” section of the recommendation, the following: “denounce the widespread portrayal within the mass media of a cultural apathy toward the beating, sexual and emotional abuse, rape, murder, and all other forms of behavior that demean women.”

Pastor Miller spoke to the motion to amend, stating, “We began this discussion by saying how all-pervasive this is within our culture. One of the arenas in which this is most pervasive is within our forms of mass media, print media, visual media, and now computer technology. It strengthens this recommendation, and this motion, by including or lifting up the role of mass media in this whole area of violence towards women.”

Bishop Harold S. Weiss [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] requested clarification, saying, “If I heard it correctly, it is denouncing the apathy in media.” Bishop Chilstrom read the motion again. Bishop Weiss suggested that the motion might benefit from “some editorial correction.” Bishop Chilstrom stated, “I would agree, but it is difficult to do on the floor and I think [the assembly] would have to make its judgment on that basis.”

Mr. Bachman Brown [North Carolina Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “If I understand the proposed amendment, it deletes the portion that was inserted previously in place of the word, ‘combat,’ and now we are just concerning ourselves with the media as opposed to working against violence.”

Ms. Mary Hodgin [Delaware-Maryland Synod] indicated, as a voting member who had helped to write the motion, that “we are denouncing both the portrayal that is in the mass media of apathy and the apathy in society that the mass media depicts.”

The Rev. John A. Clausen [Northwestern Ohio Synod] suggested that the phrase, “that leads to a cultural apathy,” replace “of a cultural apathy” in the proposed amendment.

Ms. Darie Kidwell [Southeastern Synod] commented, “I think that this motion would be repetitive, given that, in my understanding of the report, denouncing the beating of women, and sexual abuse, and so on would encompass denouncing this attitude toward women.”

Bishop Lee M. Miller [Upstate New York Synod] moved to postpone action to the next available time.

Moved;

Seconded: To postpone action to the next available time.

Bishop Miller spoke to the motion to postpone, suggesting that “it would be possible to have the mover of the motion, and Ms. Chadwick, and other interested parties caucus to straighten out the editorial language. When we get into this kind of bind—when we are trying to edit something and a lot of people are in somewhat general agreement on what needs to be done—if we can give a couple of people a chance to work on it, we will then have a better wording with which to work.”

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that discussion likely would be able to resume during the next plenary session.

The Rev. Connie S. Miller [Delaware-Maryland Synod], the maker of the motion, spoke in favor of the motion to postpone.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-851; No-75

Carried: To postpone action to the next available time.

Greetings: Women of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Ms. Jan Peterson [Northwestern Minnesota Synod], president of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Ms. Charlotte E. Fiechter, executive director. Ms. Peterson addressed the assembly, “I bring you greetings from the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America executive board and staff, and from the more than 500,000 women across this church who are involved actively as Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America participants. I have been overjoyed with the number of women here as voting members and visitors who are actively involved in the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. At this point, I would like to ask all the women and men who are here to stand who have participated in or attended a congregational unit, a synodical women’s organization, or churchwide event for the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the past. We look forward to partnership with all of you.

“The purpose statement for Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America says,

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

“These are powerful words. They do not tell us how to become involved, only that because we are created, called, and empowered, we commit ourselves to lives of mission and ministry. The ministry carried forward in this church by the women, lay and clergy, are as varied as the women themselves. Look around your own congregation. Women are involved in all areas of ministry from serving coffee at funerals and weddings to serving communion, serving on church councils, teaching Sunday School, singing in the choir, visitation, lay assistants, clergy, leading the Bible studies, support groups. The list goes on and on. What Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to do is to support and affirm the women in all of their various ministries, helping them to realize their full potential as people of God and to continue to work toward full participation and partnership in our church. The last two years have been exciting for our organization. Many things have been accomplished, as you have seen in our

report in the pre-assembly book. I just want to highlight briefly a few of them.

1. "Our new leadership program, 'Embracing Self and Others,' was introduced in 1994. By offering this workshop in all 65 synods we will have trained approximately 10,000 women by the end of 1995.
2. "'Witness of Women' is our new Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America evangelism strategy. Introduced also in 1994, it is a three-year study, which is a direct result of the women of the church asking for assistance in evangelism and witness. Approximately 2,500 congregations have been involved in this program at this time. What a difference we can make in our church and in our world as we continue to equip the women in our church with these leadership and evangelism skills.
3. "Our cross-cultural program is moving forward. A consultant is now working with the board, staff, and constituents to develop programs and resources for Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in cross-cultural and racial justice efforts.
4. "'Women and Children in Poverty' will continue to be our emphasis through 1999. We have worked in cooperation with Lutheran Men in Mission, other units and divisions of the church, and ecumenically to address this issue.
5. "Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also continues to support the church financially. Our gift to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America these past two years has totaled over \$2 million, which is about 30 percent of our total budget. This, however, is only a small portion of the financial support given to our church by the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In 1994, local congregational units gave approximately \$6.9 million to their individual congregations. Money is also given through local congregational units and synodical women's organizations to other ministries of our church. This money is given over and above their Sunday morning offerings.
6. "Our Third Triennial Convention of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be held July 11-14, 1996, right here in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul under the theme, 'Proclaim God's Peace.' In 1993, the Second Triennial Convention at Washington, D.C., was the largest gathering of adults in our church, with over 5,300 in attendance. We hope to be able to say that again following the convention next summer. Please consider joining us as we celebrate, worship, learn, explore issues, and conduct the business of our organization. It will be an exciting, life-changing experience.

"In 1 Corinthians 12, we read, 'Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.' My prayer for us as Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and for this church, is that we would recognize and celebrate our diversity and our gifts, but always remember that the commonality, which we share, is our faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ. It is that very faith that motivates us to reach out and do mission and ministry. God's blessings as we continue to serve the Lord together."

Bishop Chilstrom thanked Ms. Peterson for her greetings and asked that she and Ms. Fiechter remain on the dais, in order to receive a gift following the introduction of the chair and president of the Board of Pensions.

Introductions: Board of Pensions

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Mr. Ralph J. Eckert [Rocky Mountain Synod], chair of the board of trustees of the Board of Pension, and Mr. John G. Kapanke, president of the Board of Pensions, and presented gifts to them.

Special Needs Retirement Fund

Bishop Chilstrom then indicated that this would be an appropriate time for the Rev. Geraldine C. King [Western North Dakota Synod] to offer the motion she had earlier sought to introduce regarding the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund. Bishop Chilstrom had noted previously that the motion had been submitted past the deadline for resolutions to be considered by the Committee of Reference and Counsel. He now asked Pastor King to read her resolution, so that the assembly might determine whether to suspend the rules and to entertain the motion.

Pastor King then read her proposed motion:

Moved;

Seconded: Whereas, under section ‘II. Reports’ (A.2.), on page 717 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, the “Clergy Compensation Report . . .” states, “There are 159 retired pastors and pastor’s surviving spouses who need immediate assistance”; and Whereas, in paragraph three on the same page, the report states: “Congregations are encouraged to make an annual gift . . .”; and “Individuals also are encouraged to make contributions immediately”; therefore, be it RESOLVED, that this 1995 Churchwide Assembly gather an offering for the “ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund” during the Service of Holy Communion that follows the conclusion of all sessions today, Monday, August 21, 1995; and, be it further RESOLVED, that this assembly commend the Board of Pensions for its service during the first eight years of existence of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-517; No-142

Carried: To suspend the rules and to consider the resolution offer by the Rev. Geraldine C. King [Western North Dakota Synod].

Pastor King then explained why she had offered the motion. “The first reason is that there are many needs in our church, as we know, and I am not trying to prioritize this, except to say that perhaps this is a new fund, which a lot of people are not aware of yet, including many of our congregations. This might be a way to lift up and get the campaign started, for which, of course, the Board of Pensions is responsible. Secondly, it is a personal concern. My grandfather was a parish pastor in a rural area who often received a salary in the early 1900s of ‘in-kind’ gifts. He died at an early age having 13 children, five of whom were still home with their mother and penniless. When the time came for her health needs to be addressed, there was no help. My grandmother died also at an early age because of no resources, either pension or medical.

Therefore, the five children had to be separated and raised in a way that they could live; that included my mother. Finally, I want also to thank the Board of Pensions and I thought this would be another way of addressing that for their service. I know there have been difficult times with litigation and so forth, and I also hope that this would be an offering of thanksgiving for their services during the past eight years.”

The assembly adopted the motion without further discussion:

Assembly

Action Yes-628; No-86

CA95.6.53 Whereas, under section ‘II. Reports’ (A.2.), on page 717 of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, the “Clergy Compensation Report . . .” states, “There are 159 retired pastors and pastor’s surviving spouses who need immediate assistance”; and

Whereas, in paragraph three on the same page, the report states: “Congregations are encouraged to make an annual gift . . .”; and “Individuals also are encouraged to make contributions immediately”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this 1995 Churchwide Assembly gather an offering for the “ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund” during the Service of Holy Communion that follows the conclusion of all sessions today, Monday, August 21, 1995; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly commend the Board of Pensions for its service during the first eight years of existence of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Announcements

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to make several announcements. As a matter of interest, Secretary Almen identified the page serving at microphone two as Lyle Schwartzkopf. He said, “Lyle was for many years the city manager of the City of Minneapolis and was in charge of the building of this building, among many other duties. So, you have seated at microphone two as a volunteer page the person who has given you the space in which we are meeting.”

Secretary Almen continued, “The person who was the on-site coordinator for all of the quilts that you see around you is Alice Johnson of the Saint Paul Area Synod. She and her husband spent hours upon hours arranging for this and receiving the quilts. In addition, Judy Swanson (Northfield, Minn.) helped arrange the hanging [of the quilts].”

Secretary Almen asked that Mr. Edward Martin, a voting member from the New Jersey Synod, be remembered in prayer. He had left the assembly earlier in the day when he learned of the death of his brother.

Midday Prayer and Bible Study

Bishop Chilstrom called on Ms. Nicole Johnson [Western North Dakota Synod], Ms. Alice Luedke [Southwestern Texas Synod], and the Rev. Gerald J. Hoffman [Minneapolis Area Synod], to lead the Order for Midday Prayer and Bible Study.

Plenary Session Nine recessed at 12:30 p.m.

Plenary Session Ten

Monday, August 21, 1995

2:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called Plenary Session Ten to order at 2:01 p.m. He thanked the some 68 voting members who had made the banners on display on either side of the main aisle of the convention center. He again welcomed those watching on cable television and announced that the first two items on the agenda would be two reports originally scheduled for presentation during the previous session.

Greetings: Churchwide Units

ELCA Foundation

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. Harvey A. Stegemoeller, executive director of the ELCA Foundation. Pastor Stegemoeller commented, “With all of our struggles with day to day, week to week, month to month cash flow, in the midst of all those cash flow struggles most of us still manage to accumulate assets—our pension plans, our retirement plans, our rainy day funds, our emergency funds, our real estate, our homes. The ELCA Foundation takes part in the stewardship life of this church by encouraging people to share their accumulated assets as a part of their stewardship commitment. I am happy to say that during these first eight years, many people in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have made such a commitment. Our deferred gifts program has continued to increase quite well and those people who have included this church in their will or their living trust for a generous bequest has likewise increased.

“The foundation’s commitment is to try to increase the financial resources of any and all of the ministries of this church with the donor being the one who really ‘calls the shots.’ Whenever a donor says to me, ‘I would like to help world mission.’ We say, ‘Wonderful.’ The next one might say, ‘I want to help seminaries,’ we say, ‘Wonderful.’ The next one says ‘my home congregation.’ We say, ‘Wonderful.’ Any and all the ministries of our church are in need of greater strength and stability to do their calling.

“Just imagine, brothers and sisters, from the richest of us to the poorest of us, we will all leave something behind when we board the Lord’s chariot. We will all leave something behind. Just imagine for a moment, if every household in this church would include in their will or their living trust a commitment of some portion of what they leave behind to support and extend the ministries of Christ. Let your imagination run wild for a moment. When you think of your own home congregation, when you think of your friends and relatives, if we would all make such a commitment, it would just be a marvelous thing for our ministry outreach in the years ahead.

“Thank you for the support you have given, thank you for the support that you may still decide to do. We in the foundation have a button that says, ‘Yes, I do.’ People say, ‘You do what?’ I say, ‘Yes, I do have a will and a trust that includes a generous bequest for this church.’ I would like to encourage you to go and do likewise.”

Bishop Chilstrom commented that in his report he had mentioned three pleas: “Let us be the church with confidence, let us use the Bible with care, let us pursue peace with vigor.” He said, “If I could have added a fourth point, it would have been ‘let us give with generosity.’ I told you how my faith came to life as a young man, my baptismal faith, and how that strong word of advice about reading Scripture meant so much to me. Another good word I got from someone was to start tithing now. To me that seemed ridiculous, being part of a poor family, wondering

how I was going to get through college. Why should a 15-year old out of his part-time, after-school-work salary be giving away 10 percent? But, I decided that these people seemed rather wise and courageous, so I began doing it and I have not stopped since. I am so thankful that I met someone a few years later who was practicing the same thing and married her. I just want to say that, if you want to have fun and really enjoy the Christian life, take that leap, if you have not done so already. Do not do it, because the Old Testament prescribes it; do not do it, because someone says you must; but, do it, because it is a good starting point and it is a very joyful thing to do.

“Then, this business about a will—I did not have a will for a few years, but in my late 30s I said to my wife, ‘It sounds like a smart thing to do.’ So, we went to the attorney’s office and we made out our first will. I remember walking out into the street thinking that the first truck was going to run me down. I have revised that will many times since that time and now that we are moving into a new stage of life, Corrine and I just revised it one more time. Again, if you really want to have a deep sense of satisfaction, it is so good to know that the last gift, the largest single gift you will ever give, will make provision for the things you really want for your family and for this church. This church is going to depend on the gifts that folks leave as their last witness. I hope all of you before this week goes by, if you do not have a will, will talk to somebody to help you begin that process. I can hold up the button and say, ‘Yes, I do.’ and I join the foundation staff in encouraging that.”

Greetings: Lutheran Men in Mission

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Mr. Charles Bruning, president, and Mr. Douglas Haugen, director, of Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM). Mr. Bruning brought greetings from the organization and thanked Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom and his spouse, the Rev. E. Corinne Chilstrom, for their support. He also greeted Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson. Mr. Bruning said, “We thank assembly members and those you represent for prayers and concerns for men in ministry. Seven hundred and fifty thousand men in 13 stadiums this summer highlight the demand for men’s ministry to exist. Promise Keepers have touched a raw nerve of concern in our society. We applaud what they have done to highlight the need for men’s ministry. Lutheran Men in Mission wants to take advantage of this phenomenon. Our theme is ‘Building Men for Christ’ with the subthemes of building relationships, building faith, and building mission action. The means to achieve these objectives at the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of this church are through the development of resources, creation of leadership development opportunities, and the sponsorship of regional retreats and churchwide gatherings. To undergird these efforts, we have created the Masterbuilders Development Program.

“In addition, we engage in a number of special projects. Let me highlight one of them, namely, Healing Hurting Families. Violence is a pervasive issue in our society. Together with Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran Youth Organization, the Commission for Women, and three other units within the churchwide office, we are creating a strategy, materials, and a pilot training program to address domestic violence. Men, the predominant perpetrators of domestic violence, need to be in the forefront of the effort to address this issue. The first pieces of material and training programs will deal with male anger and women as victims. Attempting to address this issue within the church is a risk, a fact recognized by the funding agency. However, if support can be generated at the congregational, synodical, and churchwide expressions of this church—and the evaluations from the pilot project suggest

what was developed has significance—we will move forward.

“Recent local newspaper articles headlined this issue when . . . [a football quarterback and a legislator] were identified as perpetrators of domestic violence. I know of the immediate impact of domestic violence. As the oldest child of six, I stood between my mother and my alcoholic father and the butcher knives that were used as threats toward one another. I know, too, how long and difficult it is to shed the insidiousness of domestic violence in one’s life. When Corinne and I got married, I vowed not to become angry with her. Realistic? Not! The following is a partial overstatement, but there is some awful truth in the story. When we were married, I was a closet stamp collector. Seven years after we got married, Corinne saw a plate block of stamps on my desk and tore one of them out of the corner to mail a letter. That is when I blew it, but I found out that reconciliation after angry exchanges can be a positive growth experience. How mixed up one can be because of experiences one has, but does not have time or guidance to reflect on it.

“Lutheran Men in Mission has developed strategies for our vision, Building Men for Christ. We are geared to assist men:

1. To develop faith so strong and pervasive that it will impact what men do on a day-to-day basis.
2. To create a sense of mutuality between men and women and to foster relationships between men and children and with friends that move all involved toward what God created them to be individually and corporately.
3. To recognize the needs of people around them, both close and afar, and respond in an active way so that the recipients and the givers have a joint brush with Christ.

“Just as faith, relationships, and action are a balanced, three-legged stool for what we seek to do, so are grace, master builder, and foundation a three-legged means to achieve what God wants us to do. God grant us the wisdom, courage, and patience that our efforts to build men for Christ will make Christ more known among men of this church and beyond. In this effort, we are grateful for the guidance of Doug Haugen, Mark Moller-Gunderson, and Jim Myers.¹ A word that speaks to us and to you, 1 Corinthians 3:10: ‘According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder, I lay the foundation and someone else must choose with care to build on it.’ Pray for us.”

Gratitude

Bishop Chilstrom thanked all the people who had helped to make this assembly a success [see pages 35-37 of these minutes.], naming specifically the staff of the Department for Communication, expressed special gratitude to Lutheran Brotherhood for its generous gift of media support. He also expressed special thanks to Aid Association for Lutherans, Lutheran Brotherhood, and others for support in many and various ways.

Report of the Secretary

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to present his report to the assembly. The full text of the secretary’s report is printed below. A summary of his spoken comments follows:

Secretary Almen observed that the ELCA Archives building, which is described by some people as a warehouse, is rather a “vault of treasured heritage.” Caring for the archives is one of

the responsibilities of the secretary of this church. Tucked into the shelves of the Archives are precious and unique stories of people in the 10,973 congregations of this church. Of these congregations, he cited the stories of two: Friedens Lutheran Church (300 baptized members) in Gibsonville, N.C., one of the nine ELCA congregations that are celebrating their 250th anniversary this year; and Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn., (12,240 baptized members), which is celebrating its 75th anniversary.

What will be the future be of these and other ELCA congregations? We do not know, he said, but what we do know is that God, through the Holy Spirit, will continue to summon faithful believers to make Christ known in many and marvelous ways.

The “popular” Annual Report Form through which congregations submit statistical data each year reveal some interesting information, Secretary Almen reported. Some 388 congregations report worship services in languages other than English. Twenty-five percent of the congregations report fewer than 175 baptized members; 25 percent report membership between 176-350; 15 percent between 351-500; 12 percent between 501-700; eight percent between 701-950; seven percent between 951-1,500; and four percent report having more than 1,500 members.

Secretary Almen reviewed the constitutional mandates for ministry of the three expressions of this church: congregations, synods, and churchwide organization. He emphasized the interdependent unity of this whole church, whose primary focus is “seeking to make Christ known.”

Report of the Secretary

“First a brief word of explanation. As part of this report, a video from two congregations of this church was collected and edited and in addition, when I cite later some statistics about congregations, those statistics were matched with videos of congregations to try to give us the understanding that when we talk about numbers we are talking about the lively life of each of our congregations. At some point last week prior to Friday, someone ‘lifted’ that tape out of the control truck. The case remained in there, but the tape was gone and there has not been an opportunity for a duplicate to be made prior to our arrival here. However, Rhonda Campbell of the Department for Communication has worked late into the night to reconstruct as much as was possible of what had been intended on the tape. But, you will miss the pictures that we had hoped to bring to you of some of the life of our congregations. I give thanks to Rhonda and others for their diligent efforts to make up for the loss.

“To some, the place may resemble a warehouse. Row after row of steel shelves, floor to ceiling, filled with boxes. To others, the place is an amazing vault of treasured heritage. A place to behold the many and marvelous ways in which we as Lutherans are seeking to make Christ known.

“What place is this? I am talking about the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. On the one hand, for those who see that place as a warehouse, the words of Ambrose Bierce may apply. Bierce, an American author of the last century, was a cynic about history. He called history an account, mostly false, of events, mostly unimportant, brought about by rulers (mostly knaves) and soldiers (mostly fools). Bierce could hardly be accused of having an overly positive view of the records of the past. Clearly, he was not inclined to take up a second career as an archivist. But, on the other hand, those who see the place of archival material as a vault of treasured heritage, for them a comment by Martin Luther may apply. Said Luther, ‘The

remembrance of past events supplies faith with comfort and nourishment.’ With comfort and nourishment for faith. From that perspective, we can recognize this—that the archives indeed may be both a building with row after row of steel shelves, but it is also a vault of treasured heritage.

“As you know, one of the responsibilities of the secretary of this church is to care for the archives. That archives center in Chicago is indeed a place to behold the many and marvelous ways that Lutherans throughout the years have sought to make Christ known. And, tucked into the midst of all of those shelves are stories, precious stories. Many of those stories reflect the lives of our congregations. For after all, the 10,973 congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are at their core lively, vital centers for mission and ministry spread throughout the whole territory of this church.

“Let me offer today two illustrations of such congregations. These two congregations show the importance of good archival records. That is why I selected them. They also show the significance of maintaining the stories of faith, the precious stories out of a congregation’s history. Those two congregations that I cite differ in age and place and size. Yet, in one sense, they are typical in that they are communities of faith, communities that have been created and nourished throughout the years by Word and Sacrament. Yet, they differ in many other ways, just as each of our 10,973 congregations is unique, each is distinctive, each is precious.

“First let me tell you about Friedens Lutheran Church in North Carolina. Friedens Church is not the oldest ELCA congregation. That distinction belongs to First Lutheran Church at Albany, New York. First Church of Albany traces its history to 1649, 346 years ago. The second oldest church is Frederick Lutheran Church on St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. Frederick Church traces its history to 1666, 329 years ago. Those are the two oldest congregations of our church. Today, however, I want you to recall with me some of the history of Friedens Lutheran Church. It can stand as an example of one of our church’s older congregations. Actually, Friedens Church is one of nine congregations of our church that are this year celebrating their 250th anniversary. Now, for historical perspective on what that means, let me remind you that when those congregations were formed, George Washington was 13 years old. That gives us some sense of historical perspective.

“About 300 baptized members now call Friedens Church their congregation, and some of them even trace their family roots to those who initially assembled there to form that congregation. Those early members came as refugees who had fled the Thirty Years War in Europe and the devastation after that war. In some respects, the congregation’s long history is even portrayed in the gravestones in the old cemetery across the road from the church building. Soldiers of the Revolutionary War now lie in that cemetery and so do others from each major conflict that this country has faced since then.

“But, to visit Friedens Church is not only to see the pilgrimage of history as reflected in the cemetery. To visit Friedens Church is to recall the commitment and dedication of members there throughout the years. I think for me one vivid example occurred in the years following the Civil War. Amid that time of great devastation, what did the members of Friedens Church begin to do? They started making bricks to build a new church building. And, so they did.

“Thus, on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the congregation, Friedens congregation prompts us to remember those who have taught diligently in the Sunday School classes there over the years, to remember those who have served in the choirs, and in the committees, and in the councils of that congregation. Remember those pastors who have ministered faithfully there

over the centuries. To remember all of those who have assembled year after year to hear the Word preached and taught, to share the sacraments of grace, to confess their faith. All of them can be remembered with thanksgiving, for they today remind us of the many and marvelous ways in which Lutherans have sought to make Christ known.

“Look with me now at another congregation—this one right here in Minneapolis. Compared with older ELCA congregations, this one is somewhat young but it has the distinction of being the largest of all ELCA congregations. Mt. Olivet Church on Knox Avenue in South Minneapolis is 75 years old. More than 12,000 people are members of that congregation—12,240 to be exact. The congregation this year is celebrating its 75th anniversary. It did so at a festival service at the Target Center [downtown Minneapolis]. Both the size and the grandeur of that service celebrated well the congregation’s distinguished history. But, if we got the impression from such a day of celebration that that day came easily or without the faithful commitment and an untiring sacrifice of members, if that is the impression we got, we would be misled. For while everything about Mt. Olivet now may appear large, the congregation’s history is something far from grandiose or one of simple success, however we define that. The challenges at times must have seemed almost overwhelming.

“On a cold Sunday in the middle of winter, January 11, 1920, 19 adults and 14 children assembled in what was then a farm house just south of downtown Minneapolis. They gathered for the first service of Mt. Olivet Church. Within two years, they needed more space than what that farm house provided, so they assembled in an old abandoned post office in what is now suburban Richfield. The upstairs of that building was rented to a woman who raised chickens, so the services were regularly punctuated with the noise of a flock of chickens on the second floor. Finally, a \$3,000 new church building was constructed in 1923 and gradually that, too, became too small for the congregation, so money was received and plans made to build a new church building. Then, the Great Depression hit and the bank that held the building funds for the congregation closed and the dream for awhile was shattered.

“Various strong and able pastors had served the congregation in its initial years and by 1938 the congregation had grown to 331 members. It was in that year that a young pastor named Reuben Youngdahl was called. He served the congregation for 30 years. During that time, the congregation grew from the 300 members to 10,000 members and even after his untimely death in 1968, the congregation continued to grow. It did so, because he had not shaped the congregation around the personality of the pastor, but rather around the person of Christ. Most of us might wonder, how could anyone feel a part of a congregation that huge? That’s a small city in itself—12,000 people. But, we would not have to talk to many of the members before we would hear abundant stories of their close attachment to Mt. Olivet congregation, for member after member can recount how the congregation has touched their lives.

“For example, one individual recalls that he grew up in that congregation, but, as he became older, he succumbed to many problems. He struggled for years with drug and alcohol abuse, and after treatment, he eventually returned to worship. It was on an Easter Sunday—how appropriate. ‘The church was full,’ he says, ‘but there was an empty seat down there on the aisle near the front,’ and he sat in it. When the service was over, the pastors came down the aisle and when Mt. Olivet’s current senior pastor, Paul Youngdahl, saw him, Pastor Youngdahl stopped. He looked him in the eye and said, ‘Remember this, Jesus Christ died on the cross for you and he arose on Easter.’ The man, now a recovering alcoholic, says that ‘at Mt. Olivet, they really believe that God’s love is unconditional.’

“What a testimony to God’s grace; what a tribute to pastoral ministry; and what a superb example of care for people reflected in the life of a congregation. Worship there remains the number one priority and in contrast to the general, average participation for our congregations of 30 percent, the percentage at Mt. Olivet is closer to 50 percent. Perhaps, the life of that congregation can be characterized as a healthy mixture of some Lutheran pragmatism with a good abiding comfort with Lutheran tradition.

“What will the future bring for Mt. Olivet Church? Or what will the future bring for Friedens Church? We do not know. What will the future bring, for that matter, for any congregation? That we do not know either. But, what we do know is this: We do know that God through the Spirit will continue to summon faithful believers to make Christ known, to make Christ known in many and marvelous ways.

“Friedens Church in North Carolina, Mt. Olivet in Minnesota—different in size, different in age, different in location—they are only two examples of the nearly 11,000 congregations, congregations that have within them really grand histories and genuine diversities that are a part of this church.

“For example, on a Sunday morning, not only do we have throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 124 congregations that worship in Spanish and 52 in German, we also have 15 that worship in Cantonese, 13 in Mandarin, two in Amharic, one in Arabic, two in Navajo, 10 in Hmong, seven in Korean, three in Vietnamese, and two in Cambodian—to name only a few of the languages. In fact, we have 388 congregations that report having worship in languages other than English. How do we know that number? We obtain that from the information that is provided on the annual report form that is filed with the Office of the Secretary. Out of that report form each year comes a statistical summary of each congregation’s life, and through it, we discover cumulatively aspects of the life of this whole church.

“Now, certainly you and I recognize that statistics (numbers on a page) cannot tell the whole story of any congregation. Life lived and faith confessed, all that offers a fuller picture. But, from those statistical forms that I realize many of people dread having to fill out—from those statistical forms, we gain a kind of annual snapshot (a picture) of aspects of our life together.

“For example, we discover the vast variety in size and membership of our congregations. One-fourth of ELCA congregations have 175 or fewer baptized members, and such congregations account for some 300,000 people. About another fourth of ELCA congregations have 176 to 350 baptized members, and within such congregations are 15 percent of the members of this church. Fifteen percent of ELCA congregations report having 351 to 500 members each; within such congregations are nearly 700,000 people—about 13 percent of the membership of this church. In the 12 percent of the congregations with a membership of 501 to 700 persons, we find three-quarters of a million ELCA baptized members. Almost as many are found in the eight percent of congregations with 701 to 950 baptized members. Nearly 20 percent of the total membership of this church are in the seven percent of congregations with 951 to 1,500 baptized members. One-fifth of ELCA members, another 20 percent, are found in the four percent of ELCA congregations with greater than 1,500 baptized members each.

“Diversity in size, diversity in geography, diversity in age, diversity in ethnic heritage, diversity in language, diversity in community setting: rural, small town, urban, suburban. We have congregations in this church that stretch from Redeemer Church in Bangor, Maine, to Chinese Lutheran Church in Honolulu, Hawaii; from Frederiksted Church on St. Croix in the Virgin Islands to Shish-maref Church on the Seward Peninsula in Alaska. Congregations spread

from the Caribbean to the tip of Siberia, congregations spread widely and wonderfully diverse, yet congregations united in Christ, united in the faith we confess, united in the work of this church, united to make Christ known.

“For we understand that each congregation is not an isolated community, an island by itself. Each congregation is intertwined with the life of this church and with all other congregations. Each is church, yes, but it is not exclusively church. For as our church’s constitution describes our life so succinctly, ‘This church shall seek to function as people of God through congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, all of which shall be interdependent. Each part, while fully the church, recognizes that it is not the whole church and therefore lives in a partnership relationship with others.’ And then, the strategic importance of each congregation is underscored in the following constitutional provision: ‘The congregation shall include in its mission a life of worship and nurture for its members, and outreach in witness and service to its community.’

“We go on from there to see the picture of the work of synods as it is described in the governing documents, ‘The synod shall provide for pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, and associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers within its boundaries. It shall develop resources for the life and mission of its people and shall enlarge the ministries and extend the outreach into society on behalf of and in connection with the congregations and the churchwide organization.’

“Then, we see described the third primary expression of this church, namely, the ministries that are carried on through the churchwide organization, and we read, ‘The churchwide organization shall implement the extended mission of the church.’ And further, those responsibilities of the churchwide organization are expressed in this way, ‘The churchwide organization shall be an instrument for accomplishing the purposes of this church,’ and ‘The churchwide organization shall serve on behalf of and in support of this church’s members, congregations, and synods in proclaiming the Gospel, reaching out in witness and service . . . in nurturing the members . . . in the daily life of faith, and in manifesting the unity of this church with the whole Church of Jesus Christ.’

“So, this sense of unity is reflected through the interdependent, interconnected life of our whole church—congregations, synods, churchwide organization—ministering together, working together to make Christ known.

“An anonymous poet once wrote these words,

Hold high the torch; you did not light its glow.
‘Twas given you by other hands, you know.
‘Tis yours to keep it burning bright;
Yours to pass on when you no more need light,
For there are other feet that we must guide.

“So it is as God’s Word is proclaimed faithfully throughout the congregations of this church and in our synodical and churchwide ministries. God’s Spirit will do the work of calling, of gathering, of enlightening, and of keeping the people in the true faith. As God’s Word in the Sacrament of Baptism is proclaimed in the splashing of water, new babes in the faith will be claimed by grace. As God’s Word in the sacramental meal is shared in bread and wine, both sad and weary folk, as well as joyful and expectant pilgrims, of every time and every place will be

nourished at the table of Christ's presence. Ah, yes,

Hold high the torch; you did not light its glow.

'Twas given you by other hands, you know.

"In this time and place then, join hands with others and rejoice in the many and marvelous ways that we together as a church seek to make Christ known."

Lowell G. Almen

Secretary

1994 Congregational Statistics

The 1994 parochial statistics revealed a total baptized membership of 5,199,048 for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The number placed the ELCA as the sixth largest church body in the United States, after the Roman Catholic Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, United Methodist Church, National Baptist Convention, and the Church of God in Christ (Memphis, Tenn.).

The ELCA's 1994 membership remained largely stable, with a slight decrease of 12,752 noted from 5,211,800 in 1993.

At the end of 1994, there were 10,973 ELCA congregations, a decrease of 47 from 11,020 in 1993, primarily as a result of mergers and consolidations.

Confirmed membership in 1994 for ELCA congregations was 3.8 million (3,849,692), down 11,208 from 1993.

Communing and contributing membership, indicators of active participation, was 2.6 million in 1994 (2,563,892), a decrease of 29,689 or one percent (1.14%) from 1993.

Average Number in Worship

The average number of persons at worship on Sundays, which is another indicator of participation by members in the life of congregations, remained the same in 1994 as in 1993. Average attendance at worship for 1994 was 145 persons.

About 1.6 million or 30 percent (30.32%) of all baptized members attend worship each week. Since 1988, average worship attendance has fluctuated slightly between 30 and 31 percent.

The average number of baptized members per congregation was 474, and the average confirmed membership was 351. In 1994, the average number for communing and contributing members per congregation was 234.

For the first time in three years, congregations reported an increase in baptisms of adults 16 years and older (up 113 persons from 7,408 in 1993 to 7,521 in 1994). For the first time in five years, an increase was seen of members coming from non-Lutheran congregations (up 356 from 20,731 in 1993 to 21,087 in 1994).

The number of youth confirmed in 1994 increased one percent over 1993 (up 563 from 53,965 in 1993).

In 1994, congregations of the ELCA reported 13,644 fewer losses (down from 170,125 to 156,481) for reasons other than deaths and transfers.

Congregations of this church continued to report fewer baptisms of children under age 16 (down 2,267 to 80,323 in 1994) and fewer affirmations of faith (down 660 to 55,386). Fewer baptisms reflects the decreasing birth rate.

Communion Participation

An indicator of vitality was seen in an increase in the number of unconfirmed children partaking of the sacrament of Holy Communion. The number of children receiving Holy Communion rose from 221,573 in 1993 to 233,347 in 1994, an increase of five percent.

Losses due to deaths decreased (down 472 from 47,249 in 1993 to 46,777 in 1994).

For 1994, 2.07 percent of ELCA baptized members are African American, Asian, Hispanic or Native American. For 1993, the percent was 2.02. In the year of its birth in 1988, the ELCA counted 98,166 African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American members. By 1994, that number increased to 109,088 persons.

The actual numbers for 1994 were: African American memberships, 49,156, down 47; Asian and Pacific Islander membership, 21,870, up 348; Hispanic membership, 27,661, up 1,912; and Native American membership, 6,685, up 149. Some 3,700 (3,716) members declared their race or ethnic heritage as "other."

More than 9,430 congregations reported having Sunday Schools that involved 909,167 pupils and 143,403 leaders. A total of 7,261 congregations reported holding vacation Bible schools in 1994.

Congregation Income at \$1.7 Billion

Income for the 10,973 ELCA congregations in 1994 exceeded \$1.7 billion (\$1,720,742,578), up \$61 million (\$60,672,311 or 3.65%) from 1993.

Of that total, \$1.2 billion (\$1,236,157,852) was received in regular, unrestricted offerings, which increased by three percent (2.91%).

For 1994, congregations reported the largest increase (3.65%) in total receipts since 1991. The average regular giving per confirmed member increased in 1994 to \$367.55, up more than three percent (3.33%) from \$355.69 in 1993.

At the same time, congregations reported nearly \$900 million (\$888,779,211) in savings, endowment, and memorial funds, up \$30 million (\$29,490,879) from the previous year. Total disbursements by ELCA congregations increased by just over three percent (3.02%), while income growth was more than three and a half percent (3.65%).

Almost eighty-nine cents (88.9 cents) of every dollar was committed by ELCA congregations in 1994 to operating expenses, capital improvements, debt payments, and other expenses.

Amount for Mission Support

Eight and a half cents of every dollar (down from nine cents of every dollar in 1993) was given to regular and designated mission support. Local, synodical, and other benevolences accounted for the remainder.

Regular mission support passed from congregations to the 65 synods and the churchwide organization shrunk less than one-half percent (-0.43%) or about a half million dollars (\$513,274). Total mission support reported by congregations for 1994 was \$118,085,199.

According to the reports of ELCA congregations, contributions to the hunger appeal decreased nearly eight and one-half percent (-8.47%) or \$1,016,060 to just under \$11 million (\$10,974,208). Mission Partner gifts declined only slightly (-0.54%), compared to a five percent (5.3%) decline in 1993. Mission Partner gifts in 1994 totaled \$3,161,444. Missionary sponsorship showed an increase of \$70,496 (up 1.38%) in 1994 for a total of \$5,171,395.

Designated gifts showed a decrease of almost \$360,000 or five percent (-5.18%) in 1994 after an increase of more than 14 percent (14.31%) in 1993. The total designated gifts for 1994 was \$6,568,781. Gifts to ELCA special appeals dropped only one percent from \$473,959 to \$468,812 in 1994.

Benevolence given to synodically related organizations—such as social services, educational institutions, and church camps—showed an increase again in 1994 as in 1993. Such synodically designated benevolences grew nearly four percent (3.89%) or \$409,065 to \$10,918,063.

Money given to local community benevolent causes was down slightly (-0.39%) from \$22,193,785 in 1993 to \$22,106,035 in 1994.

Congregations reported nearly a four percent increase (+3.81%) in other expenses, up \$2 million (\$2,180,398) to \$59 million (\$59,350,179). Sixty-one percent (61%) of ELCA congregations reported that they had no debt in 1994.

Ninety-one percent of ELCA congregations returned completed reports for 1994, according to the report of the Office of the Secretary.

Greetings: Ecumenical Guests Reformed Church in America

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. I. John Hesselink Jr., president of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America (RCA). President Hesselink addressed the assembly, stating, “Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, greetings from the ‘RCA.’ ‘RCA’ does not stand for a corporation, but for a much older institution, the Reformed Church in America, one of the oldest denominations in the United States. Before New York was taken over by the British, I would remind you that it was New Amsterdam. Some of the oldest congregations in New York and New Jersey are of the old Dutch Reformed Church. The oldest seminary with a continuous history is New Brunswick Seminary in the middle of the Rutgers Campus in New Jersey. But, because the church was so Dutch for so long, we did not grow very fast. It was only when a second wave of immigrants came to the Midwest—to Michigan, Chicago, and Wisconsin—that the church had a second resurgence. Today, we are known because of that Dutch heritage, but we are hardly Dutch at all in terms of our outreach and in terms of our ethos. In Holland, Mich., where I live and where I teach at Western Seminary, you will hear on the streets of our city more Spanish and more Vietnamese than you will hear Dutch.

“I must explain immediately that we are separated from a similar group and sometimes confused with it. More than 125 years ago, the Christian Reformed Church separated from our church. We continue to live separate existences and are sometimes confused with each other because of our common Dutch heritage. They are best known by Calvin College and Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids [Michigan], and we by New Brunswick Seminary in New Jersey, by Hope College and Western Seminary in Holland, Michigan, and by Central and Northwestern Colleges in Iowa. We are probably best known by two rather atypical ministers, the late Norman Vincent Peale of the Marble Collegiate Church, and on the other coast, Robert Schuler of the Crystal Cathedral. These two gentlemen notwithstanding, we are a confessional church. We have in addition to the three ecumenical creeds, three Reformation-type standards—the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort. The Canons of Dort are the least known—probably the least appreciated even in our own denomination. Although they magnify the sovereign grace of God, they also teach something like total depravity and double

predestination, and as a result are not the most popular. If you ask where the average Reformed congregation is today, I would submit that it is somewhere between Robert Schuler and the Canons of Dort. . . .

“In 1529, Philip of Hesse, largely for political reasons, wanted to unite the evangelical forces and so he proposed that a colloquy take place in Marburg at the castle. Representatives from the Reformed churches, particularly in Switzerland, and above all Zwingli and Muntzer from Strasbourg along with others, and representatives from the Lutheran churches in Germany, above all Luther himself and Melanchthon, gathered together and discussed 15 points of doctrine. They were able to agree on 14. You know, I suspect, what the fifteenth was that they could not agree on—namely, the Eucharist, or the Lord’s Supper, so that Luther went away muttering, ‘They are of a completely different spirit from us.’ Unfortunately, Calvin at that time was still a student in France. Had he been around, it might have been quite a different story, because 12 years later, he wrote a short treatise on the Lord’s Supper, sent it to his friend Melanchthon who passed it on to Luther. Luther is reported to have responded, ‘If we only had this earlier, we might not have gone our separate ways.’ Now, it may be possible by the grace of God and the leading of the Spirit after almost 500 years to resolve that fifteenth sticking point, which has separated us for too many centuries.

“Finally, a more personal word. When I entered this hall, to borrow a phrase from John Wesley, ‘my heart was strangely warmed’ when I saw the slogan on the wall, ‘Making Christ Known,’ because I happen to belong to the Third Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan, a congregation that has more than 125 years of history and its motto is ‘Knowing Christ and Making Him Known.’ Now, if we concentrate on that, and that is the focus of our respective churches and of all the denominations, then I think God will honor our ministries and our churches and we will indeed be one in the Spirit and one in the Lord.”

United Church of Christ

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. John H. Thomas, assistant to the president for ecumenical concerns of the United Church of Christ. Pastor Thomas brought greetings from President Paul Sherry, stating, “President Sherry asked me very specifically to begin my remarks with a word of appreciation and thanks to Bishop Chilstrom for his ecumenical leadership and for his collegial friendship over the years.” He also extended best wishes to Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson and said, “We look forward to a very warm and collegial relationship as we together seek to make Christ known.” Pastor Thomas also brought greetings to friends among the participants of the assembly from his father-in-law, the Rev. Stewart Herman, a former president of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago who had worked with the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. Pastor Thomas said, “Early this summer, Stewart attended a gathering in Treysa, Germany, a commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of a gathering of German church leaders at the close of the Second World War, which became the inaugurating event for the Evangelical Church of Germany—a vivid reminder among many fiftieth year observances of the way in which God has brought gifts of community and renewed friendship and unity into the midst of the most awesome and devastating brokenness in our world.”

Pastor Thomas indicated that he has served as co-chair, together with Bishop Guy S. Edmiston Jr. [Lower Susquehanna Synod], of the coordinating committee of the Lutheran-Reformed Conversations in North America. He said, “It is our privilege and honor to

work together to help shepherd proposals for full communion between four churches toward votes in 1997; another sign, we believe, of God's gift of community and unity to combat other forms of brokenness in our lives and continuing that same tradition of God's gift of unity to a broken world. We look forward as a coordinating committee to being part of a process of study that leads us, we hope, toward deeper communion in faith, life, and service together.

"Yet, we also are conscious of the fact that there are many challenges and questions that these full-communion proposals present to each of us. The proposals set forth in A Common Calling and also in the document, 'A Formula of Agreement,' challenge us in a sense with two critical questions. The first we might describe as one of permission, that is, 'Can each of our churches with theological and confessional integrity enter into full communion with the other three?' That is the question that three decades of dialogue here in North America, as well as collegial dialogues across the ocean, have sought to address—questions familiar to Lutherans seeking to be faithful to the Augsburg Confession's understanding of the essential bases of unity in the Gospel and in sacramental life.

"The second question is one of imperative, 'Why must we, in light of the Gospel mandate and in light of the mission contexts of our day, enter into this full communion?' These are questions posed to us by the wounds experienced in so many places in our world and they are an imperative directed to us by the prayer of Jesus so important to the ethos of the United Church of Christ—'That they may all be one, that the world might believe.' Over these next two years it will be tempting for various ones among us to become preoccupied with one of these two questions or to give one high prominence over the other. But, I think it will be critical for us to address these as complementary dimensions of our joint discernment process. In that sense, attentiveness to evangelical permission or theological accountability, and responsiveness to evangelical and ecumenical imperative, becomes an early test to each of us of our capacity together to affirm and admonish one another in the manner of A Common Calling itself. We are invited to a process of discernment that honors both that which gives permission for this bold step forward together—permission founded in our common calling, proclaimed in the Word, nourished in the water, encountered at the table—as well as to that which makes such a step imperative, namely our evangelical witness in the missionary context of North America today where we are challenged as never before to make Christ known.

"So, friends, there is much before us in the next two years. But, for today, thank you, Bishop Chilstrom for your hospitality, thanks to Bill Rusch [the Rev. William G. Rusch, director, ELCA Department for Ecumenical Affairs] and to Darlis Swan [Ms. Darlis J. Swan, associate director] and to Dan Martensen [the Rev. Daniel F. Martensen, associate director], my partners in ministry who have been good collegial friends and encouragers to me, and thank you to each of you for this opportunity to join as your partner in faithful mission and ministry."

Roman Catholic Church

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Most Rev. Lawrence Welch, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul, representing the Most Rev. Oscar Lipscomb, archbishop of Mobile and chair of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs, National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Bishop Welch indicated that Archbishop Lipscomb had provided a message, the text of which now would be shared with the assembly:

"A bishop representing the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has been at every

assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. . . . On behalf of our bishops' conference, I want to convey our best wishes along with our appreciation and gratitude to Bishop Chilstrom. You undertook a role that was new in a church that was new and carried it out with grace and fidelity. As the first of your kind, your name has a permanent place in American church history of which you may rightly be proud. I want to repeat here what Cardinal Keeler, our conference president, wrote to you, 'May you look back on the years past with gratification, may you look forward to the years ahead with confidence.'

"To your successor, Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson, for many years co-chair of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in the United States, I also extend the best wishes of our Roman Catholic community. I repeat the pledge made on our behalf by Pope John Paul II, assuring you that the [Roman] Catholic Church has an irrevocable commitment to the cause of Christian unity and I would add that we see Lutheran-Catholic reconciliation as indispensable to the furtherance of that cause.

"There is no doubt on our part that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is no less committed to the unity of Christian peoples. That is plain and clear in the serious proposals for ecumenical action coming before your church in the years immediately ahead. One of these related directly to the field of Lutheran-Catholic relations, namely, the proposal that we declare inapplicable to one another today the condemnations of the 16th century that our predecessors directed at errors concerning the doctrine of justification. As word of this initiative spreads, I imagine the first reaction that many will have is that after four and a half centuries, 'It's about time.' Yet, that reaction should not disguise the fact that this would be a step of momentous proportions for us. It is over this issue above others, namely the teaching of justification, of justification by faith, indeed by faith alone, as the Reformer stated it, that [Roman] Catholics and Lutherans, one might say, [Roman] Catholicism and the Protestant Reformation, parted company. So, it is that no other issue is of more central or fundamental importance to our relationship. According to Cardinal Edward Cassidy, who is president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, for Lutherans and [Roman] Catholics to take this step would be a sign of hope that we have already made great progress on our pilgrimage towards full and visible unity.

"When something of such significance is proposed, it is natural that some of us will approach it with great hope and others of us will contemplate it with caution. As the cardinal remarked, 'Ecumenists must be patient and impatient at the same time,'—an impatience that builds up and which will not and indeed cannot give up. Undergirding this confidence and hope is an appreciation for what has already been achieved. Cardinal Cassidy has pointed in particular to two results, which should not in any way be underestimated: (1) the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue has achieved greater convergence than many ever expected; (2) the discovery that what we have in common is much more than what divides us. . . . Cardinal Cassidy states, 'We must not let ourselves become disheartened when we face obstacles along our pilgrim way.' The text quoted Pope John Paul II from a recent encyclical addressed to all Christians on the ecumenical movement toward Christian unity: 'The call to unity is a call to renewal, to conversion, to continuing reform. These three go hand in hand and no church can exempt itself from this call. It is a call heard in the [Roman] Catholic Church and we pray that we may succeed, with God's grace, in following it.'

"The text also quoted the words of Pope John Paul II from an address to a symposium on Lutheran and [Roman] Catholic relations in March 1995: 'A very fundamental stage of dialogue

was reached when the doctrine of justification became the central issue. We must look forward with confidence to the doctrine and the document on which Lutherans and [Roman] Catholics are now hard at work and which aims at expressing a common understanding of this central theme of our faith. All these developments are a strong indication of the fact that what we have in common is much more than what divides us. And yet, we are all conscious of how difficult it can be in practice to give their just weight to the realities which unite and to put aside deeply rooted habits of emphasizing the points which continue to stand in the way of full, visible unity. In view of the approaching new Christian millennium, I wish to encourage you to redouble your efforts to advance along the path of authentic ecumenical understanding, so we can celebrate the great jubilee, if not completely united, at least much closer to overcoming the divisions of the second millennium.”

Bishop Chilstrom asked Bishop Welch to convey his thanks and appreciation to the Most Rev. John R. Roach, archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, who had been present at the picnic held in honor of the Chilstroms on the prior Sunday evening.

Bishop Chilstrom stated as a summary of the ecumenical greetings brought to the assembly, “Now that we have completed our series of greetings from friends in the Episcopal Church, the three Reformed Churches, and the Roman Catholic Church, I hope that you folks [the voting members of the assembly] carry home with you a very deep commitment to get on with the agenda that has been laid out for you today. Christian unity is not an option for us—it is a mandate and we have some challenging and exciting proposals before us. I ask you bishops, pastors, and laity to do everything you possibly can to move this important challenge forward in the congregations and the synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Ecumenical Matters

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 121-126; continued on Minutes, pages 564-565.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. William G. Rusch, director of the Department for Ecumenical Affairs. Pastor Rusch stated that Associate Director Daniel F. Martensen and Associate Director Darlis J. Swan would be assisting in the presentation. The presentation consisted of oral and video messages about the ecumenical work of the department. He stated, “The message of the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions is clear. God wishes Christ’s people to be one and Lutheran Christians are called to work for and to reflect this oneness. It is this commitment to oneness for the unity of Christ’s people that is at the heart of the ecumenical movement.

“After years of seemingly slow progress, or indeed no progress, our church finds itself in a position whereby it can exhibit greater degrees of unity with three ecumenical partners. Key decisions in all three cases will probably be made at the Churchwide Assembly in 1997. The purpose of this report by the Department for Ecumenical Affairs is to lift up these impending decisions and relationships. Between now and 1997, our church will need to engage in serious study, reflection, and prayer about these proposals. Two decisions could result in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America living in a relationship of full communion with the Episcopal Church and three Reformed churches. The third decision would begin to remove some of the barriers to greater unity with the Roman Catholic Church. These decisions could be among the most momentous choices made by our church in the first ten years of its life.”

Ms. Swan commented, “The Lutheran-Episcopal proposal asks the Evangelical Lutheran

Church in America to enter into full communion with The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. on the basis of agreement in the Gospel and for the sake of our common witness to the world. It asks us, because of the urgency of our mission, making Christ known, to enter into a new relationship. Lutherans would have an opportunity to become better acquainted with the tradition and beliefs of the Episcopal Church and to affirm the common faith we share through the Scriptures. The proposal asks both Lutherans and Episcopalians for the sake of the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, to live in closer relationship with each other, intensifying covenants and other agreements that already exist and embarking on a new understanding of what we can do together to make Christ known. In this relationship we would be asked to be as Lutheran as we can, because, in doing so, we would be witnessing to who we are as Christians, a community of believers led by the crucified and victorious Christ. This is what we would continue to share with Episcopalians and others in a deeper and richer way in full communion.

“Through Christ’s victory, we are free to break those chains of differences that bind us. We can receive the gifts of another part of the Christian community and in turn, offer our special gifts as Lutheran Christians. Full communion could weave us together so that we would feel each other’s pain and share each other’s joys as never before. More importantly, we would embrace each other’s mission to proclaim Christ’s love to the world. Congregations and parishes could bear each other’s burdens and have even more reason to celebrate the sacraments together, seek each other’s counsel, and search for the best possible ways to minister to each other and to the community. If the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America were to enter into full communion with the Episcopal Church in 1997, scenes such as the following might be common place.” A brief video presentation then portrayed cooperation between a Lutheran congregation and an Episcopalian congregation.

Pastor Martensen commented on Lutheran-Reformed relationships, stating, “If this church at its 1997 Churchwide Assembly in Philadelphia takes positive action on the proposal that we enter into full communion with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ, it will happen a quarter of a century after comparable action in Europe. There are at least two reasons why we are coming to this decision rather late. First, for a long time the Lutheran-Reformed Dialogue teams did not clarify all of the controversial issues of the past, particularly those related to the nature of Christ, Christ’s presence in the Lord’s Supper, and the question of predestination or God’s will for each of us. We now have substantial agreement on these issues, issues that have kept us apart all these centuries.

“Second, our Reformed partners here in the United States are less homogeneous and are much more complex than they are in Europe. Since 1988, things have changed and they have changed dramatically. In that year, the international dialogue commission of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, produced a report in which it urged ‘Lutheran and Reformed Churches throughout the world to declare full communion with one another.’ It was in 1988, too, that our fourth round of conversation with the Reformed Churches began here in the United States. In the final report, entitled, *A Common Calling*, released in 1992, the issues of Christology and predestination are clarified. With its recommendations, we have in many respects moved beyond the European dialogue, so the difficult issues of ministry and of the structural, or church polity, aspects of full communion are addressed. The report also says that the differences that remain between us are not just tolerable, but have a positive function, that is, a function of mutual correction and admonition on the one hand, and on the

other hand, mutual affirmation. As a result, full communion would have a very dynamic character. It would be a relationship by which both communions would continue to learn from each other and to grow in faith.”

Pastor Rusch addressed the developments in Lutheran-Roman Catholic relations, stating, “During the Reformation, Lutherans and Roman Catholics in their official writings expressed certain condemnations about the teachings of each other. These extremely serious rejections were stated, because both groups understood that the Gospel itself was at stake in these differences. These rejections or condemnations on several topics became part of the identity of Lutherans and Roman Catholics. They are not just statements authored in the heat of battle centuries ago, they shape present self-understanding and they stand in the way of ecumenical progress. Now, as a result of decades of ecumenical dialogue and specific study of these condemnations, it is possible that Lutherans and Roman Catholics together may be able to declare that the condemnations they expressed against each other in the 16th century on the topic of justification no longer apply to the present-day Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches.

“The Churchwide Assembly of our church in 1997 could make such a declaration, hopefully with other member churches of the Lutheran World Federation. Since the topic of justification was a major issue in causing the Reformation, such a step would be an extremely helpful action to promote greater unity between Lutherans and Roman Catholics in this country and around the world. It would provide a new context for continuing the dialogue about various issues that keep Roman Catholics and Lutherans divided.” A video presentation highlighted some kinds of activities and joint worship currently taking place in the United States between Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

Ms. Swan continued the report, stating, “Through our Churchwide Assembly action in 1997, we have a unique opportunity to share our lives with other Christians as we reach out together in Christ’s name. All three ecumenical proposals offer new and creative ways for us to live together as a Christian community, making our faith visible. As Christians—Lutherans, Episcopalians, Reformed, Roman Catholics, and others—what can we do to make Christ known together? In a world filled with confusion, suffering, and pain, we can heal and bring joy and peace through our faith. The world needs our witness, yours and mine, but more importantly, it needs our witness as Christians together making Christ known to a global community crying for justice and equality. In a relationship of full communion, we could share the sacraments in an official way, preach the Word with even greater power and conviction, and in unity reach out in Christ’s name with love and compassion for all God’s people. More specifically, in full communion, we as congregations, Lutheran and Episcopal, or Lutheran and Reformed, would have a chance to share Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, hear the Gospel preached by clergy and laity from other denominations, minister to the community as full partners, study the Bible together, use common resources for catechetical instruction and Christian education, and make a more dramatic commitment to evangelism and service. Whatever decision is made by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America about the three ecumenical proposals in 1997, making Christ known together is the most powerful witness we can make to the world.”

Pastor Rusch concluded the presentation by drawing attention to a pamphlet, “Together, Making Christ Known; 1997—A Chance to Live Christian Unity,” that had been distributed to each voting member and commended it to them for discussion and study. He stated, “This is only one of a number of interpretative pieces that will be developed in the next couple of years” and drew attention to “The 1997 Ecumenical Proposals: Questions and Answers,” which, he said,

“describes and endeavors to answer a number of questions that have been raised about all three proposals. These documents and others should be a resource to all the people of our church who are called upon to consider prayerfully these proposals.

“This presentation by the Department for Ecumenical Affairs is nothing less than our church living out its confessional commitment as expressed in the Preface of the Augsburg Confession where the Lutheran reformers declared and where we as a Lutheran church claim those words, ‘Nevertheless, we on our part, shall not omit doing anything as far as God and conscience allow that may serve the cause of Christian unity.’”

Discussion of the presentation ensued. Bishop Richard N. Jessen [Nebraska Synod] referred to page 4 of “The 1997 Ecumenical Proposals: Questions and Answers,” and stated, “One of our requirements is to participate in ‘common joint ordination of all future bishops’ and we are to revise the constitution so that, in effect, we will have life-long bishops. One cannot forget that just two years ago in Kansas City, after a six-year study of the doctrine of ministry, we decided against ordaining bishops and against having life-long bishops. I am wondering how we are going to explain ourselves to ourselves and to others in making this change in 1997; how are we going to travel from Kansas City to Philadelphia, so to speak.”

Pastor Rusch responded, “I hope in part we shall travel that journey by revisiting Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession and Article XIV of the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, which make it very clear that ministry is an adiaphoron for Lutherans, but indeed the Lutheran confessions commit Lutherans to consider very seriously the historic ordering of the church. It seems to me the decisions made in regard to the Task Force on Ministry were not intended to preclude future ecumenical advance and we would have to weigh these proposals, I would hope, in the light of the commitments of the Lutheran confessions. In terms of the question of vocabulary—installation, ordination, consecration—I think we must realize that in the history of the Christian church those terms have been in flux, they can be assigned a variety of meanings. That is a very complex question and I would love to engage in some conversation, but I do not think you want me to do that here.”

The Rev. George W. Forell [Southeastern Iowa Synod] stated, “I got the impression that there is some agreement that binds the members of these various churches that are negotiating to certain decisions that you have arrived at about Jesus Christ, about the [Holy] Communion, and so on. In what way are any of these agreements binding on members of a church, namely, the United Church of Christ, which as far as I know has no such binding commitments of any sort either to the Nicene Creed or the Apostles’ Creed or to anything of the sort. So, how can you have a binding relationship to a church that has no confessional basis? Or, have you discovered a confessional basis that is binding upon people within the United Church of Christ?”

Pastor Rusch responded, “Probably what I have discovered or not discovered is not particularly relevant. What I have discovered and would share with you is the text of ‘A Formula of Agreement,’ which has been produced to address precisely issues that were perceived as particularly challenging in terms of progress in Lutheran-Reformed relations. There is a section in that document that addresses binding authority. Our ecumenical partners have told us that that text represents as far as they can go and continue to be faithful to whom they claim they are. We must, as a church, in the next two years seriously weigh that text and what it is saying. The issue of binding authority is an important topic to be discussed, I grant.”

Mission Prayers

Reference: Minutes, Exhibit C, pages 749-757.

Ms. Arlene E. Shannon [Lower Susquehanna Synod] said, "A representative from each synod was asked to prepare a minute prayer for the agenda for this assembly. Have those items been removed from the agenda?" Bishop Chilstrom responded, "They have not. We had hoped to have one set earlier today, but the group was not ready. The problem now is that we are in a very difficult agenda bind. We have guests here today that will only be here today. We will do our best to get as many of those mission witnesses and prayers in as we possibly can."

Ecumenical Matters (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 121-126; continued from Minutes, pages 560-564.

Discussion of the presentation on ecumenical concerns resumed. Bishop Steven L. Ullestad [Northeastern Iowa Synod] drew attention to page 4 of "The 1997 Ecumenical Proposals: Questions and Answers". He inquired, "I noted that there will be a temporary suspension of the 17th century restrictions under the section entitled, 'Requirements for the Episcopal Church' but under the 'Requirements for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America' section (the first bullet) the exemption for ordinands of the Episcopal Church is not a temporary suspension and that there is no provision for newly ordained Episcopal priests to subscribe to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Could you help us to understand why that suspension for the Episcopal Church is temporary, but for us, in terms of our confessional stance and our understanding of apostolic succession, that is not temporary?"

Pastor Rusch responded, "These are two different issues and I am reluctant to draw the parallel between them too closely, because I think they are different. In terms of confessional subscription, I would just quickly point out the following factors: (1) the Augsburg Confession itself does not ask for subscription to it; (2) the Concordat of Agreement, especially in paragraphs two, three, and four, identifies a consensus in the faith where the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism would be seen by official action of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church to be faithful witnesses to the faith of the Church catholic. So, I think this church will have to weigh whether that kind of assurance is close enough to what we have always considered as confessional subscription. We cannot demand confessional subscription of non-Lutherans, because, in the process, we make them Lutherans and ecumenism could become proselytizing."

Bishop Curtis H. Miller [Western Iowa Synod] inquired, "Is there in place any mechanism to deal with issues that may, in the next two years, clearly be defined in our church that need to be addressed prior to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, or are we left to deal with the proposals as they stand without any possible modifications?"

Pastor Rusch responded, "All the proposals have the possibility for mutual emendation, amendment, or correction. I think, in the process between now and 1997, we should anticipate the possibility that there will be changes in the text. That would fall to the responsibility of the respective coordinating committees to work out what those proposed changes would be. If I may, let me just say that, while we did not anticipate this in our report, I heartily welcome it. Between now and 1997, the Department for Ecumenical Affairs sees its role to be to help interpret and promote study of these proposals. The more serious attention they can receive the better off we will all be when we come to Philadelphia. So, I thank you for this."

Elections: First Ballot for
Church Council, Boards, and Committees

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 955-1025; continued from Minutes, pages 289, 297; continued on Minutes, pages 622-623.

Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, drew attention to the committee's report, which previously had been distributed to the voting members, noting that the printed report contained the vote totals. He said, "Under the Rules of Procedure, page 587 of Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, the report that I now present is to be limited to announcing persons who were elected and to announcing the names of nominees qualified to remain on the next ballot. We have 32 tickets that go forward to the second common ballot."

Bishop James E. Sudbrock [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to suspend the reading of the election results, since the printed report had been distributed to voting members.

Moved;

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To suspend the reading of the election results.

Bishop Chilstrom then declared elected those persons whose names were so indicated on the printed report.

Assembly

Action By Acclamation

CA95.6.54 To receive the written report of the Elections Committee on the results of the first ballot for Church Council and churchwide board and committee positions, to dispense with the reading of the results, and to request that the chair hereby declare elected in keeping with this church's bylaws those persons receiving a majority of the votes cast.

Church Council

Rev. Joan A. Mau, Washington Island, Wis. (5I)

Rev. Robert L. Dasher, Columbia, S. C. (9C)

Rev. Susan Engh, Minneapolis, Minn. (3G)

Ms. Carol L. Weiser, Bethlehem, Pa. (7E)

Ms. Sandra G. Gustavson, Lawrenceville, Ga. (9D)

Mr. Donald G. Hayes, Hickory, N. C. (9B)

Mr. J. David Watrous, Richland, Wash. (1D)

Mr. Steven E. Koenig, Elwood, Neb. (4A)

Mr. Dale V. Sandstrom, Bismarck, N. D. (3A)

Division for Congregational Ministries

Ms. Esther Prabhakar, Rochelle, Ill. (5B)

Division for Ministry

Ms. Carolyn J. Riehl, Ann Arbor, Mich. (6A)

Mr. Glenn L. Evavold, Duluth, Minn. (3E)

Division for Outreach

Rev. Ronald K. Johnson, Minneapolis, Minn. (3G)

Ms. Johnice C. Orduna, Fremont, Neb. (4A)

Division for Higher Education and Schools

Rev. Walter E. Pilgrim, Steilacoom, Wash. (1C)
Rev. Elizabeth A. Platz, College Park, Md. (8G)
Rev. John G. Andreasen, Moorhead, Minn. (3B)
Rev. Paul J. Thielo, Fairview Park, Ohio (6E)
Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman, Roseville, Minn. (3H)
Mr. David L. Wee, Northfield, Minn. (3I)

Division for Church in Society

Rev. James M. Childs Jr., Pickerington, Ohio (6B)
Ms. Sue Ellen Spotts, Harrisburg, Pa. (8D)
Ms. Bertina W. Helmers, East Lansing, Mich. (6B)

Division for Global Mission

Ms. Cecil Maureen Johnson, Harcourt, Iowa (5E)
Ms. Charles G. H. Schaefer, Valparaiso, Ind. (6C)
Ms. Philip W. Moeller, Washington, D.C. (8G)
Mr. J. David Ellwanger, Plano, Tex. (4D)

Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rev. Reginald H. Holle, Okemos, Mich. (6B)
Rev. Paul A. Wee, Washington, D.C. (8G)
Ms. Shirley A. Teig, Plymouth, Minn. (3G)
Mr. Richard E. Lodmill, Seattle, Wash. (1B)
Mr. Jonathan C. Messerli, Kutztown, Pa. (7E)

Board of Pensions

Ms. Janet H. Neff, Havertown, Pa. (7F)
Ms. Lisa K. Chalstrom, Des Moines, Iowa (5D)
Ms. Ruth H. Beagles, St. Croix, V.I. (9F)
Mr. Earl L. Mummert, Harrisburg, Pa. (8D)
Mr. John K. Roberts, Gretna, La. (4F)
Mr. Robert Thimjon, Sioux Falls, S.D. (3C)

Nominating Committee

Rev. James E. Braaten, Yakima, Wash. (1D)
Ms. Barbara J. Eaves, Phoenix, Ariz. (2D)
Mr. Fred B. Renwick, New York, N.Y. (7C)

Committee on Appeals

Rev. Charles D. Anderson, Red Wing, Minn. (3F)
Rev. Leslie G. Svendsen, Northfield, Minn. (3I)
Ms. Sandra A. Jennings, Kent, Wash. (1B)
Mr. William E. Diehl, Emmaus, Pa. (7E)

Committee on Discipline

Rev. Melissa Maxwell-Doherty, Grand Forks, N.D. (3B)
Rev. Gerhard I. Knutson, Rice Lake, Wis. (5H)
Rev. Bruce G. Trethaway, Hudson, Ohio (6E)
Rev. Paul J. Joncas, Wayne, N.J. (7A)
Rev. Carol S. Hendrix, Dillsburg, Pa. (8D)
Rev. Harold C. Skillrud, Atlanta, Ga. (9D)

Rev. Edmond Yee, El Cerrito, Calif. (2B)
Ms. Lola Ruff, Moorhead, Minn. (3B)
Ms. Louise P. Shoemaker, Philadelphia, Pa. (7F)
Ms. Charlotte D. Light, St. Louis, Mo. (4B)
Mr. Terry A. Lieb, Mertztown, Pa. (7E)
Mr. C. Gary Fischer, Fargo, N.D. (3B)
Mr. Paul V. Rieke, Seattle, Wash. (1B)
Mr. Charles Matsumoto, Indianapolis, Ind. (6C)

Bishop Chilstrom reiterated that a second ballot would be needed to determine election to various positions. Secretary Almen announced to voting members that the deadline for submission of completed, second, common ballots was 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 21, 1995. He also provided detailed instructions regarding the process for completion of the ballot.

Mr. William E. Diehl [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] questioned why invalid ballots were counted in determining winners and losers. Mr. Hardy responded, "On the first common ballot, illegal ballots are counted in determining the total number of votes for purposes of determining the majority. That is required by churchwide bylaw 19.11.01.b. in Chapter 19 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. On the second common ballot, we deal only with the majority of legal votes. In other words, we are acting in accordance with the bylaws."

Prayers on Behalf of the Lutheran Church of Liberia

Bishop A. Donald Main [Upper Susquehanna Synod] announced, "Yesterday, Christine Grumm in her report for the Lutheran World Federation shared the story of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Monrovia, Liberia. The Lutheran Church in Liberia is the companion church with the Upper Susquehanna Synod. In early July, I was present, along with President Jerry Schmalenberger of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (Berkeley, Calif.) at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monrovia, for the consecration of the new bishop of that church, Bishop Sumaward Harris. The experience of the devastation of war and the church sharing and living the faith of the Gospel in the midst of that war is an experience that continues to have impact on my life and my faith.

"Today, word has been received of a new peace signed yesterday. This is the thirteenth peace accord; the twelve previous have failed. But, there is more hope, because all of the warring factions, the war lords of Liberia, have signed on to this peace accord. Also, I want to share that the professor of English, Wilton Sankarue, a graduate of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, has been named as the neutral chairperson of the Ruling Council of Liberia. Our sisters and brothers in Liberia are very weary of war. One hundred and fifty thousand have died and more than half of them are displaced. Let us add our petitions of prayer and our hopes that this peace will last."

Bishop Chilstrom asked the assembly to join him in prayer. He prayed, "Lord God, our hearts ache for this land where we have had such long and deep association as a Lutheran church. We have grieved over the loss of lives and the pain and suffering. We gather up our prayers and we join them with the people of Liberia and believers everywhere in asking that there might finally be a door through which peace can enter and begin a new life and a new time of rebuilding. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen."

Report of the Study of Theological Education

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 32-66; Volume 2, pages 788-788c; continued from Minutes, pages 330-339.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Joseph M. Wagner, executive director of the Division for Ministry, to continue presentation of the report on the Study of Theological Education. Pastor Wagner called attention to an editorial change in paragraph four of the following recommendation of the Church Council, striking the words, “a distance learning,” and replacing them with “an ELCA telecommunication. . . .” He also noted that some members of the Task Force on the Study of Theological Education, as well as the presidents of the seminaries of this church, were with him on the stage and would assist in answering questions.

Moved;

Seconded: To receive with appreciation and affirm the directions outlined in the final report of the Study of Theological Education, “Faithful Leaders for a Changing World—Theological Education for Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”;

To direct the Division for Ministry to report to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly continuing progress of the ELCA seminaries toward fulfilling the 11 imperatives approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly;

To require, by the fall of 1997, that all newly rostered pastors and lay leaders participate, throughout their first three years of ministry under call, in structured programs of theological education, designed and supervised by their synods, according to churchwide standards;

To request and encourage the Division for Ministry together with the Department for Communication, the seminary clusters, and other interested partners, to develop an ELCA telecommunications consulting service to be a technological, administrative, and faculty development resource for an ELCA theological education distance-learning network;

To direct the Division for Ministry to report to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly continuing progress by the seminary clusters in meeting the time line approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly;

To affirm the decision of the Division for Ministry and the seminaries regarding the expansion of the Study of Theological Education to include programmatic and financial planning for an ELCA system of theological education; and to request that the Division for Ministry prepare by 1997 a case and strategies for this church’s increased financial support of a system of theological education;

To urge congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to support the efforts of the seminary clusters to increase financial support by granting access to seminary representatives and commending the cause of theological education to potential donors;

To encourage seminary clusters to invest significant time and resources for cultivating participation in deferred giving programs that will build endowments for the future; and

To encourage the seminary clusters, with the support of the Division for Ministry and in coordination with other churchwide units, to initiate regular consultations with their supporting synods regarding program and funding.

The Rev. Robert C. Barger [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved to amend the recommendation.

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the motion by inserting between paragraph three and four of the recommendation of the Church Council (page 788 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2), the following:

To direct the Division for Ministry to assess the state and current practices of continuing education among all our rostered persons, and to bring to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly recommendations that serve both this church and rostered persons' needs for ongoing spiritual formation, theological growth, and leadership beyond the first three years under call.

Pastor Barger spoke to the amendment, stating, "I am impressed with the report. I think it would be a great time to go back and be a candidate for seminary and pastoral ministry. A lot of thought has gone into the stewardship of resources and the clustering and the content of theological education and what happens under the first three years of call. But, my motion speaks to the health of the some 20,000 rostered persons that we already have. We have great leaders within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and stewardship of this says that we are going to have people serving thirty, thirty-five, forty years in what Dr. [Martin E.] Marty called a very complex context. On page 56 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, there is a seventh imperative that speaks about life-long learning. We have within this church the Growth of Excellence in Ministry and a recommendation of 25 hours of continuing education per year. There are a variety of post-graduate opportunities that are available, but there is no system to ensure that any pastor or associate in ministry or deacon would ever take advantage of this, although we have many that do. We know that pastors and associates in ministry and deacons are healthier when they are growing in their own faith and theological formation and we know that congregations are healthier when their leaders are healthy. This amendment is not to specify any particular strategy or any formula, it just asks the Division for Ministry to assess and recommend."

Pastor Wagner indicated that the division would consider this to be a friendly amendment.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-799; No-70

Carried: To amend the motion by inserting between paragraph three and four of the recommendation of the Church Council (page 788 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2), the following:

To direct the Division for Ministry to assess the state and current practices of continuing education among all our rostered persons, and to bring to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly recommendations that serve both this church and rostered persons' needs for ongoing spiritual formation, theological growth, and leadership beyond the first three years under call."

Mr. Michael S. Kohn [South Carolina Synod] stated, "This seems like a trend toward a larger, central type of organization, rather than the trend I am noticing elsewhere with a lot more power going back to the local areas. Why does this seem to be moving in opposition to that?"

Pastor Wagner responded, "We would not see this as being a move toward centralization but rather toward regionalization. The system of theological education that is envisioned in the report of the study and that was begun in its report to the last Churchwide Assembly involves clustering of seminaries into three regions. There is a great deal of responsibility that will be

focused in the regions of the church, in those clusters of seminaries, and in the common governance structures that will gradually develop in those clusters between now and [a.d.] 2002. So, we do not see it as a centralizing of the system, but rather as a regionalizing and dispersal of the system. The steps that have taken place so far in the study and in the planning for the future have been done in collaboration with the seminaries, with the synods, with others involved, so I would not typify it as being centralization, but rather a move toward dispersed responsibility in the various seminaries and clusters that are developing.”

Mr. Kohn then inquired of the chair whether “our [ELCA] colleges have enough vision to be engaged in the same process as well?” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “I cannot really answer that question. The Rev. W. Robert Sorensen [executive director of the Division for Higher Education and Schools] would have to answer that, since it is really a different matter, and it would be best for you to seek out Pastor Sorensen and discuss that privately with him.”

The Rev. Gerry F. Rickel [Delaware-Maryland Synod] moved the following amendment:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend paragraph three of the recommendation of the Church Council (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 788) by inserting the words, “To require, by the fall of 1997, that at the discretion of their synod’s Candidacy Committee that newly . . .” (with the remainder of the paragraph unchanged).

Pastor Rickel spoke to the amendment, stating, “The division has laid out issues facing theological education very well, but I believe that we need flexibility in this area. They have called for flexibility and yet recommend in that paragraph a mandate for seminary graduates and associates in ministry for three years of continuing education. We have heard much talk about financial burdens on seminary graduates. Someone mentioned an average of \$10,000 debt when they graduate. We have heard more talk about small congregations, urban congregations, and rural congregations and their financial debt. And yet, we call for them also to pick up more financial work in terms of educating their clergy.”

He also said, “Above all we need to recognize that candidates today are entering the ordained ministry and associates in ministry are entering their ministry with many gifts and talents. I would like to give you two instances. The co-pastor at my congregation entered [ordained ministry] as a second career after many years at Bethlehem Steel with many gifts to offer the church in terms of management and supervision of people. My spouse is applying to be an associate in ministry after serving two and one-half years as a director of Christian education in a large urban church, but before that she taught in a parochial school, in public schools, she started a daycare center in a Lutheran church, and before that she was a vice-principal of a private school. My amendment seeks to provide flexibility to individual candidacy committees as they deal with individual candidates who bring many and varied gifts into our church.”

Bishop E. LeRoy Riley Jr. [New Jersey Synod] commented, “My understanding is that this paragraph relates to newly rostered persons. I believe that would put them beyond the scope of candidacy committees. At that point, when they are already rostered, I believe they would be the responsibility of the synods and the office of the [synodical] bishop.”

Pastor Wagner called upon the Rev. Phyllis B. Anderson, director for theological education in the Division for Ministry, to respond to the proposed amendment. She commented, “I appreciate the question being raised, because it has been a point of debate for the four years that

this proposal has been developed, which we brought in a tentative form to the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. In our continuing rounds of consultation, again and again it has been affirmed to the satisfaction of the Task Force on Theological Education, the Division for Ministry, and now the Church Council that the advantages of having this as a requirement in all synods prevails. We realize there is great diversity among synods and there needs to be flexibility, but in order for there to be reciprocity and a commonality in preparation, we have come to the conclusion that there need to be certain, broad, churchwide standards, which need to be required in all synods, and that there needs to be commonality within these programs in terms of their goals and direction. There is also great provision for flexibility and the cost that the different programs might require.”

Bishop Glenn W. Nycklemoe [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] commented, “I am still hearing that amendment as candidacy. In our synod the rostered people move into [the jurisdiction of the] Board of Rostered Ministry. It seems to me that we need to vote this amendment down, because it places the responsibility in the wrong area of work in a synod.”

Bishop Roger L. Munson [Northeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “I likewise heard what Bishop Nycklemoe just referred to, that it was suggested that this would be under candidacy. Rostered persons in our synod no longer are under the responsibility of the Candidacy Committee.” He requested that the issue be clarified.

Bishop Chilstrom asked Pastor Wagner to clarify the proposal. Pastor Wagner stated, “The Division for Ministry would see two problems with the proposed amendment: (1) that it would be administered by the candidacy committee, which has no authority to deal with persons who already are ordained or rostered; the candidacy committee would not be a committee that would have this responsibility in any synod. (2) The second reservation that we would have is that it obviously undercuts the requirement for first-call theological education to which the Task Force on the Study of Ministry and the Division for Ministry are committed.”

Bishop Guy S. Edmiston Jr. [Lower Susquehanna Synod] called the question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-788; No-77
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-132; No-733
Defeated: To amend paragraph three of the recommendation of the Church Council (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 788) by inserting the words, “To require, by the fall of 1997, that at the discretion of their synod’s Candidacy Committee that newly . . .” (with the remainder of the paragraph unchanged).

The Rev. Hans M. Sacrison [South Dakota Synod] requested information regarding the third paragraph calling for a three-year program of first-call continuing education, stating “What is the anticipated expense of this to the congregation? My concern comes from the point that I am serving a very small congregation. With the first congregation I served, I perceive that this could cause an undue financial hardship on them and I am very much concerned about that.”

Pastor Anderson responded, “The anticipation of the task force was that this program could be offered within the basic \$800 per year, which is the expectation of the cost of continuing

education for rostered leaders shared jointly by the congregation and the rostered leader. We were asked by the last Churchwide Assembly to start pilot projects to encourage synods to do that. In fact, 59 synods have made plans or have actually started events. Their estimated expenses run from between \$35 per student to \$1,000, so there is quite a bit of flexibility. There are also funds available through GEM, PACE, and the Growth Program for those congregations and individuals that are not able to meet the minimum continuing education costs.”

Bishop Mark W. Menees [North Carolina Synod] stated, “I am appreciative of this work and think it is vitally important. I sat in an ecumenical meeting recently where a pastor bragged that he had not read a new book in 15 years and under my breath I muttered, ‘Thank God, I do not have to hear you preach.’ But, in the third paragraph, we begin with the word, ‘to require.’ [I have a] concern about precision for language. That is a directive rubric. I wonder how we expect or anticipate enforcement of requirement language and why you chose that, rather than ‘strongly urge’?”

Pastor Wagner responded, “The ‘required’ language was brought to this assembly because of action taken by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. At that point, the assembly asked the Division for Ministry to pursue the question of requiring this. That is where the language came from. The second question of how it is going to be managed in each synod has to do with, first of all, offering it and expecting it. We believe that there are various ways in which the synods will have to encourage pastors to participate in this. We believe, on the basis of the pilot programs that we have had, that there will be good compliance with this. We have not put in place any penalties in any specific ways to say that, if you do not do this, then such and such will happen. We are simply stating this as a very strong expectation of the church.”

Pastor Anderson added, “One mechanism that has been suggested and that has been used successfully in Region 7 is to include this requirement in the Letter of Call, so that, from the period of time when you are setting up what your call is going to be, this becomes a shared understanding and expectation between congregation, synod, and individual. It has come to our attention again and again that the language of requirement, strong as it is, is very helpful for the individual in getting the support that he or she needs to participate.”

The Rev. John B. Mawhirter [Northwestern Ohio Synod] called the question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-807; No-73
Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action Yes-767; No-108

CA95.6.55 To receive with appreciation and affirm the directions outlined in the final report of the Study of Theological Education, “Faithful Leaders for a Changing World—Theological Education for Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; To direct the Division for Ministry to report to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly continuing progress of the ELCA seminaries toward fulfilling the 11 imperatives approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly;
To require, by the fall of 1997, that all newly rostered pastors and lay leaders participate, throughout their first three years of ministry under call, in structured programs of theological education, designed and supervised by their synods, according to churchwide standards;

To direct the Division for Ministry to assess the state and current practices of continuing education among all our rostered persons, and to bring to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly recommendations that serve both this church and rostered persons' needs for ongoing spiritual formation, theological growth, and leadership beyond the first three years under call;

To request and encourage the Division for Ministry, together with the Department for Communication, the seminary clusters, and other interested partners, to develop an ELCA telecommunications consulting service to be a technological, administrative, and faculty development resource for an ELCA theological education distance-learning network;

To direct the Division for Ministry to report to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly continuing progress by the seminary clusters in meeting the time line approved by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly;

To affirm the decision of the Division for Ministry and the seminaries regarding the expansion of the Study of Theological Education to include programmatic and financial planning for an ELCA system of theological education; and to request that the Division for Ministry prepare by 1997 a case and strategies for this church's increased financial support of a system of theological education;

To urge congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to support the efforts of the seminary clusters to increase financial support by granting access to seminary representatives and commending the cause of theological education to potential donors;

To encourage seminary clusters to invest significant time and resources for cultivating participation in deferred giving programs that will build endowments for the future; and

To encourage the seminary clusters, with the support of the Division for Ministry and in coordination with other churchwide units, to initiate regular consultations with their supporting synods regarding program and funding.

Introductions and Greetings: Ecumenical Guests

Before introducing several guests representing interchurch organizations, Bishop Chilstrom stated, "The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and our predecessor churches, have had a long history of being involved in councils of churches, locally, statewide, nationally, and worldwide." He then introduced the Rev. Peggy Chamberlain [Moravian Church], director of the Minnesota Council of Churches, and asked assembly members to greet her.

World Council of Churches

Bishop Chilstrom then introduced Ms. Jean Stromberg, director of the New York office of the World Council of Churches [WCC]. Ms. Stromberg said, "On behalf of the general secretary of the World Council of Churches, the Rev. Konrad Raiser, I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The theme you have chosen for your Churchwide Assembly, 'Making Christ Known,' would find warm support among the 325 churches around the world that together with your church make up the fellowship of churches that is the World Council of Churches.

"John 17 already has been referred to today. It is impossible to escape the link that our Lord made in that prayer between the oneness of his followers and the coming to belief in the world that Jesus Christ did indeed come from God. How grateful we are for your firm commitment as a church, expressed in so many ways today, and by these words from Bishop Chilstrom that unity is not an option. Thank you for what you have contributed and are contributing to the ecumenical movement and particularly to the World Council of Churches in so many ways; the

gifts that you bring of material aid and resources, the gifts of your excellent theological reflection and tradition, your worship life and liturgical materials and life, and certainly for the people who have given leadership through the years and who now still lead in our Central Committee and our governing bodies, in our program commissions, and on our World Council staff. Thank you for all of this from the other member churches of the World Council of Churches.

“And thank you also for receiving, as a church, last October an international ecumenical team—one of four such teams that came to the United States to visit member churches on the occasion of the midpoint of the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women. They appreciated so much the gracious hospitality that you extended and the life that you shared with them in your discussions and reflections. A report of that visit is available from the U.S. office of the World Council of Churches and we would be glad to share that with you as you continue to reflect, as you have been today, on how you take these vital issues forward in your churches and in your church as a whole.

“As the World Council of Churches approaches its 50th anniversary in the year 1998, the member churches have agreed to reflect together in a process on the common understanding and vision they have for the World Council of Churches as we approach the end of this century. I hope that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is making that a churchwide reflection and that you will share with member churches around the world how it is that you are making your ecumenical commitment integral to the life and witness of your congregations and that you will share your understanding of how we give expression to the unity to which we are called now at the end of this century.

“As you are probably aware, during the last weeks some important steps have been taken in ecumenical cooperation between the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. A new network called ACT, standing for ‘Action by Churches Together,’ will bring together the member churches of these two organizations, as well as other ecumenical organizations, and over 40 international relief agencies to respond more effectively to the crying emergency needs that face us nearly every time we turn on our television screens. We hope that in this cooperative effort we will be able to ACT like the Church and this will be a powerful witness of the unity of God’s people responding to the needs of our world.

“Finally, just a very brief word on the global study process on the Gospel and cultures, which is part of the preparation process for the next World Mission Conference to be held at the end of 1996 in Brazil—but even more important and with more significance for our churches here in the United States, . . . [is reflection] together on this important aspect of the relationship of Gospel and culture. At the heart of the study is the formation of local discussion groups—in Sunday School classes, in neighborhood groups, on weekend retreats—people are gathering to ask each other and to reflect with the Scriptures on what it means to give witness within the particular cultural context in which they live. How is the Gospel enabled by the culture in which we live? How is the Gospel impinged upon by some of the cultural assumptions with which we live and about which we seldom even think? These are vital questions. I hope that you will be interested in getting the brochure that describes this study and the available study materials from the U. S. office [of the World Council of Churches] and see if you can lend your voice and your reflection to this global study. Thank you for your gracious hospitality to us who work ecumenically and may God bless you, individually and corporately, as you seek to bear faithful witness in making Christ known.”

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. Joan B. Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCCUSA). Pastor Campbell addressed the assembly stating, “In the words of the Apostle Paul, who always greeted the early churches when he went to visit them, ‘Grace and peace to you’—words that fit today as much as they did in those very early days. I am extremely glad to be here, in fact honored to be asked to be present and to say a few words on behalf of the National Council of the Churches of Christ.

“If you hear nothing else, I hope you will hear me tell you that this church, this Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is key to the effectiveness and credibility of the ecumenical movement in the United States of America. No, I do not say that to every church and every assembly where I go. By your own definition, you are evangelical, catholic, and ecumenical. This church has a noble ecumenical history and was a pioneer in the ecumenical movement. By your size and your stature, you could provide for us a model of unity. Your bilateral conversations are perhaps the most intense of any of the member churches of the National Council of Churches. You carry in your name a word that has become near and dear to the hearts of Americans, the word, ‘evangelical,’ and you claim it for your life and your witness. As my father used to say to me when I was a very little child—if I came home with a good report card, but it was not as good as it should be, he would say to me as I would say to you with your strength and your size and your history and your stature and your wonderful words that make you who you are, ‘Unto whom much is given, much is required.’

“Let me say today that I want to take just a minute to recognize the leadership of Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom. He was already the bishop of this church when I came to my post of general secretary and we have journeyed together the nearly always difficult, painful, and sometimes even alienating work of national leadership. But, we have also together seen the joy and the power and the promise that national leadership of our churches can offer to a nation very much in need. Bishop Chilstrom, I would say the gifts you have brought to this church and to the ecumenical movement are first and foremost, dignity, stability, honor, and integrity. You have carried the church through the difficult days of merger. I just said to Bill Rusch [the Rev. William G. Rusch, director of the ELCA Department for Ecumenical Affairs,] how very different this feels than the founding assembly of this church where I was privileged to be present. You have lived together now long enough for it to feel like a family. It feels like this is a church and that has been your struggle, and the gift that you will bring, and the place in history that you will have, of having carried the church through its early and not such easy days of merger.

“We also welcome Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson to the ecumenical fellowship—we welcome him to the fellowship that we have come to call the ‘heads of communions.’ He will find out soon enough that the heads of communions meet by conference call around 10 o’clock at night and often it lasts until midnight. But, on those late night calls, the heads of the churches—heads of churches that when you put the combined membership together, there are 49 million Christians in those churches—and there the heads of those churches have wrestled with issues like the Gulf War, Bosnia, affirmative action, and hundreds of other issues. We welcome you to the fellowship of the National Council of the Churches of Christ.

“I want to say just a word so that people here will know that sitting at the table with me are representatives of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Moravian Church, the United Methodist Church, and Metropolitan Theodosius, the head of communion for the Orthodox Church in America. All of these are member churches of the National Council. Just a word

about the National Council, because it is not my task here to educate you, but it is always difficult for me not to do a bit of that. Just for those who are not aware of the broad spectrum of Christians that gather in the National Council, let me remind you that of those 49 million Christians, six (and this November, seven) of our churches are historic African American churches. Nine are Orthodox bodies. There are the mainline churches, the peace churches, and what we sometimes lovingly call, the small churches.

“I am as aware as any of you are that we spend a great deal of our time, at least I do, in the National Council combating the image that has been placed upon us. When I first became general secretary, every time I picked up *The New York Times* and we were mentioned, they would say, ‘the left, liberal National Council of Churches.’ As one who is committed to bringing the National Council into the broad middle of American life, where I think our churches and the people of our churches are, I finally went in despair to the editor of *The New York Times* and said, ‘Why do you put that down every time you write “National Council of Churches”? Is it in your computer?’ He finally allowed that it was. You will notice that *The New York Times* no longer refers to us as ‘the left, liberal National Council of Churches.’ I would like to think it is because of who we are and what we do and that you know what I do, that we are in the broad middle of American church life.

“Bishop-Elect Anderson, you have come now to give leadership at a time when the ecumenical movement is no longer new, no longer filled with the excitement that it once was when we all came to know one another. Now, we know one another, not terribly well, but we move from one congregation to another, we worship in one another’s congregations, and we have serious discussions about full communion. Now, what we need is to reach out and to deepen our understanding and our relationship to one another. A rabbi said it very well, ‘Neighbor is not a geographic term. Neighbor is a moral term.’ I think perhaps nothing else best describes the ecumenical movement.

“When I walked into my hotel room, the television was on and it happened to be on CNN [Cable Network News]. As I walked in, it was at Andrews Air Force Base and a large carrier had just landed. On that air carrier were the bodies of the three diplomats who had died in a car crash in Bosnia. As only the military seemed to know how to do it, the ceremony was solemn, religious, almost pious in a sense. I listened to Secretary [Warren] Christopher [U.S. Secretary of State] as he talked about the struggle in Bosnia and in his words he said, ‘It is a place where faith and history divide and fragment.’ My friends, we need the ecumenical movement now as perhaps we have never needed it before. Every speaker before me has referred to the 17th chapter of John. It is how we make Christ known. We make Christ known through our unity and it is our love of one another that helps people to know that we live the Christian life.

“Let me close with a very brief story. . . . I was privileged to be in Cleveland, Ohio, for one of the Billy Graham crusades. It is quite an unlikely thing, I suppose the most unlikely thing that has happened to me since I became general secretary, to become friends with Billy Graham. He stopped in the middle of his sermon and he said, ‘I would like you to know that my friend, Joan Campbell, is in this giant stadium today.’ He went on to say, ‘She represents the National Council of the Churches of Christ. It is one of our most important and most urgent organizations in these United States today.’ And then, he stopped and asked all gathered in that stadium to pray for the National Council of the Churches of Christ. I would ask you the same, that we might pray, you and me, for ourselves, for our ecumenical witness, and for the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.”

Presentation of Bibles

Bishop Chilstrom introduced the Rev. Marvin L. Roloff, acting president of the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He stated that Pastor Roloff was serving as a member of the NCCCUSA Bible Translation and Utilization Committee. Pastor Roloff presented various editions of the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV] to Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson, Vice President Kathy J. Magnus, Secretary Lowell G. Almen, and Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe. He noted that contributors from this church to the preparation of that publication included Professor Carey A. Moore, Gettysburg College (Gettysburg, Pa.), and the Rev. John H. P. Reumann, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (Pa.). Also acknowledged were contributors to previous editions, the Rev. Victor R. Gold, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (Berkeley, Calif.), and the late Rev. Warren Quanbeck, Luther Theological Seminary (St. Paul, Minn.).

Other Ecumenical Guests

Bishop Chilstrom then acknowledged the presence of several additional ecumenical guests: the Rev. Bruce Robbins, ecumenical officer of the United Methodist Church; Metropolitan Theodosius of the Orthodox Church of America, who was accompanied by Father Thaddeus Wojick, rector of St. Mary's Orthodox Church, Minneapolis, Minn.; and Dr. Kenneth Hill, executive secretary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Elections: Editor of The Lutheran Magazine

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 809.

Bishop Chilstrom stated, "We are thankful to God that we have the largest circulation magazine of this kind of any church body in the United States. According to our governing documents, the Advisory Committee of The Lutheran, in consultation with the bishop of the church and the Church Council, nominates the editor of The Lutheran. As you have read, the Rev. Edgar R. Trexler received the strong endorsement of the Advisory Committee, which was affirmed by me and the Church Council. Thus, it is with pleasure that we recommend to this assembly the action [needed] to elect the Rev. Edgar R. Trexler to another four-year term as the editor of The Lutheran magazine."

Assembly

Action Yes-762; No-67

CA95.6.56 To elect the Rev. Edgar R. Trexler to a four- year term as editor of The Lutheran magazine.

Pastor Trexler thanked the assembly for its vote of confidence and recalled that it was 30 years since he had first joined the staff of The Lutheran in the former Lutheran Church in America. He stated, "I cannot imagine any ministry that I would rather have carried out over those years than through this magazine." Pastor Trexler requested the assistance of assembly members, stating, "The Lutheran's circulation is in trouble. Bishop Chilstrom is correct that indeed The Lutheran remains the largest denominational magazine in this country and it is true that our circulation is 700,000. But, we have lost 500,000 subscriptions since this church began. . . . So I ask your help when you return home that you think about The Lutheran, that you think about keeping your congregation on 'Every-Home Plan' or getting onto it. There is a new sense among us, there is a new sense of coming together, and The Lutheran is the chief link among us

as congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression of this church.” Pastor Trexler recognized his wife, Emily, on this, the occasion of their thirty-fifth wedding anniversary.

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Ms. Mary Ann Bengston [Western Iowa Synod], chair of the Advisory Committee for The Lutheran, and then presented gifts of appreciation to her and to Pastor Trexler.

Mission Prayers

Reference: Minutes, Exhibit C, pages 749-757.

The Rev. Kathleen B. Chartier [South Carolina Synod] sought to move that the mission prayers from the 45 synods that remain to be offered from the assembly floor be collected, printed, and distributed to assembly members, in order to save agenda time.”

Bishop Chilstrom inquired whether the assembly wished to consider the motion.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-611; No-186

Carried: To consider the motion offered by the Rev. Kathleen B. Chartier [South Carolina Synod].

Moved;

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: That the remaining 45 synod representatives who were invited to offer Mission Prayers provide the prayers in a way that they may be collected, printed, and distributed to assembly members, in order to save agenda time.

The text of the prayers is printed as Exhibit C to these Minutes, pages 749-758.

Bishop Chilstrom invited assembly members to rise and to sing the hymn, “Jesus Shall Reign,” accompanied by assembly organist, Mr. Scott Weidler.

Urban Initiative

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 803-804.

Background

At its March 1995 meeting, the board of the Division for Outreach conveyed to the Church Council a report entitled, “Urban Initiative,” which is printed below. That report, which reflects input received from urban pastors, coalitions, and such groups as City Lutherans in Action and the Urban Guild, is part of the ongoing work of the division, which has recently re-ordered its way of providing services to synods and ministries in the urban setting. The creation of an Urban Ministry Staff Team and the plan to develop networks of ministry advisors are examples of that change in operation.

The Church Council voted at its April 1995 meeting to transmit the report to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly and to recommend that the assembly adopt the following resolution:
To receive the “Urban Initiative” prepared by the Division for Outreach; and
To request that the Division for Outreach bring to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly a report on the implementation of this initiative during the 1996-1997 biennium.

Assembly Action

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Malcolm L. Minnick Jr., executive director of the Division for Outreach, to present the recommendation of the Church Council on the proposed “Urban Initiative.”

Pastor Minnick outlined the need for development of a new urban strategy, stating, “Our congregations today are not necessarily where the people are. Forty-five percent of ELCA congregations are in areas that hold only 25 percent of the U.S. population. In 1990, 77.5 percent of the American people lived in metropolitan areas and more than two-thirds of them were in just 44 major population areas. Americans are living in fewer but bigger metropolitan mega complexes. The agenda for the future of our society is being set by what I call ‘the three Ds’—demographics, diversity, and the need for direction. In 1900, 90 percent of Americans lived in rural areas. Today, more than 75 percent live in metropolitan areas. The two biggest years for immigration were 1904 and 1990. In 1904, almost all the immigrants came from Europe. In 1990, most came from Asia, Africa, and Latin America and these folks are settling into the urban areas of America.

“That brings us into the realization of diversity. By the year 2020, more than half of all Americans will be people of color. We are already the second largest African country in the world. Only Spain and Mexico have more people who speak Spanish. Our country is a rich mix of cultural and ethnic diversity and it is becoming even more so. A whole new wave of immigration is changing the face and the culture of our country and of our cities. But, these new people are not finding their way into the Lutheran community of faith. Right now people of color are little more than two percent of this church’s community and membership. Most of the new people are joining the already large group of unchurched, spiritual seekers who are now the great majority of Americans. As we look at the demographics, as we look at the diversity, it is clear that we need a new focus, a new direction, for our ministry in the city. That is the challenge, the opportunity that you and I and our church face today, as we try to shape a faithful ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we cannot successfully minister to an increasingly secular and unchurched society, if we do not make Christ known to all the people of our society, we will not be faithful to God’s commission.”

Pastor Minnick then called upon the Rev. Warren A. Sorteberg, director for urban ministry in the Division for Outreach, who outlined the “Urban Initiative,” designed as a new strategy for urban ministry. Pastor Sorteberg said, “Over the next two years, an urban ministry staff team of the Division for Outreach will be seeking a new direction for urban ministry in this church. The team will take a holistic look across the country on how we do ministry in urban areas and cities. What works? What is not working? What are the resources that we need? The urban team has already begun to hold meetings throughout the country and they will seek to analyze trends and needs and to take a hard look at how we as Lutherans do Word and Sacrament ministry in the context of the multicultures of the city. We know in this church there are many pastors and congregations that have today outstanding ministries in a variety of settings and contexts in urban America. For instance, Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in La Crosse, Wisconsin, has done an outstanding job in bringing the Gospel to that city’s growing Hmong population. The five congregations of the New City Parish in south-central Los Angeles have evolved a cooperative ministry that creatively reaches out to a community of African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Anglos. Together they proclaim the Gospel in culturally sensitive ways that are bringing new people to Christ and into our Lutheran family. Other congregations around the country and

new ministries are reaching out to a growing Russian population and community in Philadelphia.

...

“The urban initiative is a process. In effect, it is not anything new; we have been about it, but we want to be intentional and to let this focus grow so that this church will address the changing demographics in our country, make the best placement of new congregations, and help existing ministries do more effective work. It will help us to embrace that growing diversity in our neighborhoods and to reach out to people around our churches to meet both spiritual and physical needs. This initiative, we hope, will help us find that direction and assist us as a denomination to set goals for outreach ministry in the city in the coming century.

“This initiative is at least a two-year process. In 1997, the Division for Outreach will report to the Churchwide Assembly in Philadelphia a plan, a direction to be acted upon by the assembly and to be implemented . . . in the days and the years ahead. In summary, this urban initiative is an attempt to build partnerships—across our church in a horizontal fashion to deal with the issues and the challenges that face us—with the units of this church, with the synods, with the congregations, with committees in synods, with urban congregations and leaders, with networks of urban specialists, and with other denominations and ecumenical partners. We want to help to build the capacity together of how to serve in the city with diversity, to reach out to not only unchurched, but to non-Christians, to minister more effectively with the poor, to raise the consciousness of the dynamics of urbanization, and to train lay, clergy, and leaders for the work that is ahead of us. We want to help identify and develop resources for urban ministry. That means people and programs and money. The urban initiative is a start and it seeks to broaden the base of those concerned and working in this area and to focus our efforts as a denomination in the work of urban mission.”

Ms. Faith Ashton [North Carolina Synod] moved, because of time constraints, to limit speeches to two minute for the remainder of the assembly.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-751; No-72

Carried: To limit speeches during debate to two minutes for the remainder of this assembly.

The Rev. Byard J. Ebling [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in support of the urban-initiative proposal, stating, “I am very grateful for this initiative. I am very grateful for the recommendation to refer the memorials to the proper people in this church. I just speak to the urgency of the need. I hope in the remaining time, the intervening time, that the budget committee of our ELCA Church Council will find ways to increase the dollar support, because these memorials come from a sense of urgency. I live in Reading, Pa., where for the first time in the history of that community non-whites are the majority. We do not see that as a problem, we see that as an opportunity. We are prepared, as are many areas of this church, to serve the needs of the people who are settling and resettling in our towns and cities. I hope and pray that there will be a way for us to sense the urgency and to meet it in the interim with increased dollars. The body of Christ that is represented by the urban church is important to me and to many. I just hope that it will not become an orphan.”

The Rev. Judith M. Mattison [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke in support of the proposal, stating, “It is important for us to understand that there are things we can do now; we do not have

to wait for the study to be finished. We can have Horizon internships within our synods, we can support our seminaries, encouraging seminarians to understand and to participate in urban ministries. Really, what we want is a level playing field. I have been in stable, city parishes and other kinds of parishes and I know what it is to have enough paper and enough ‘white-out’ and a photocopier and educational resources, and I also know how important it is to have leadership. Our resolutions emphasize leadership. I hope that, as the urban initiative goes forward, we will pay attention to the real investment—the investment in human, trained leadership within our urban churches. I know that the whole church stands with us, because, as one part of the body suffers, we all suffer.”

Mr. Kevin Boatright [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] identified himself as a resident of the city of Madison, Wis., and said, “I attended the hearing in which this initiative was discussed. I can say that as a result of that hearing and the discussions that we have had, I strongly support this proposal, although I do not think it goes far enough. I am confident that when you come to us again in two years, there will be a proposal that we can strongly support and endorse. I was reminded at that hearing that the roots of our Christian church lie in the cities—in Jerusalem, in Antioch, in Corinth, in Ephesus—that is the history and the tradition of our church, that is where our ministry needs to be, in addition to the rural and small town areas of this country and this world. I find that history to be an inspiration as we begin this study and I look forward to hearing more about it between now and 1997.”

The Rev. Luther E. Peterson [Minneapolis Area Synod] affirmed the proposed initiative, stating, “I came to North Minneapolis 14 years ago. We had 21 clergy in a strong coalition and we were excited about urban ministry. Now, we have 13 clergy (and they are fading fast) and no coalition. We need to do some creative work in this area. I would really encourage . . . [the earlier comment regarding seminaries and the training of students for urban-ministry], because we get lots of interns, but they really need some direction and some intentional urban training.”

Ms. Gloria Salazar [West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Require
Seconded; Yes-854; No-15
Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action Yes-878; No-18

CA95.6.57 To receive the “Urban Initiative” prepared by the Division for Outreach; and
To request that the Division for Outreach bring to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly a report on the implementation of this initiative during the 1996-1997 biennium.

Urban Initiative

Division for Outreach

Foreword

This document has been developed over a period of months and years in prayerful consideration and recognition of the history of urban ministries by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the changing context of both church and society today.

We rejoice in celebration of the history of our church and its faithful proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the city, while recognizing that much of the proclamation was directed at an ethnically and culturally homogeneous audience.

Today faithful witness requires that we celebrate the ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity of American society, most particularly among the 80 percent of people who live and work in urban communities.

The proposed process reflects what we have learned from our history and our experience. It is a guide that will prepare this church to enter the 21st century with a commitment to do effective urban ministry as witnesses to the healing power and saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ministry takes place through proclamation, celebration of the Sacraments, witness, service, and advocacy for justice in interrelated partnerships. Ministry in cities is a responsibility of every expression of the ELCA and all of its agencies and institutions.

A Process for ELCA Outreach in Urban Communities

The following is a process of the Division for Outreach intended to shape urban outreach and ministry based on the context and culture of the target community. It is a statement of process, guidelines, and structures aimed at effective urban ministry.

I. The Division for Outreach has refined the organization of its urban ministry program and staff to achieve a more efficient and effective use of resources. This re-organization affects both the structure and design of the division's work with urban ministries.

II. The intent of this change is to strengthen and deepen the commitment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to ministries in the city, to embrace, with all partners in outreach, a shared vision of "Making Christ Known," of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in urban settings throughout the United States and the Caribbean.

The process will include thorough reviews and analysis of:

- opportunities and needs for current urban ministry;
- current funding and histories of ministries supported by the division;
- the appropriateness of area strategies and area ministries;
- expectations for each ministry;
- other resources that address human needs in cities.

This approach is to assist ministry through making the most effective use of resources and to seek clarity about intended results.

III. The Division for Outreach understands the priority for outreach with the Gospel to include both the development of new ministries and the redevelopment of existing congregations in fresh, innovative ways that:

- A. are appropriate to the culture and conditions of the community;
- B. reach people who are not in a faith relationship with Jesus Christ;
- C. help older congregations expand their ministry in the communities in which they are located;
- D. build local partnerships for support of ministries among the poor.

IV. In all development and redevelopment of ministries, there is the inherent understanding that not all city ministries are candidates for re-development nor for funding through Partnership Support. Each ministry must be assessed and ministry strategy developed to use most effectively staff and church resources. Consciousness should be raised among congregations that have not recognized the effect of urbanization on their ministry.

V. The Division for Outreach structure creates an Urban Ministry Staff Team to direct and coordinate services to synods, congregations, and clusters of congregations engaged in urban ministry. The team will do analysis of ministry needs and on that basis establish Division for Outreach goals and action plans for the ELCA that will increase churchwide and synodical capacities for urban outreach.

The team will create local, regional, and national networks of pastors, professional staff, and lay leaders experienced in urban mission who can resource synods and congregations in urban ministry.

These networks will assist synods in the development of ministry and resources for each respective community.

VI. Urban Ministry Staff Team

A. In 1995 the staff team will:

1. Meet with mission directors and urban synod staff persons in 12 cities across the U.S. to determine what resources and models of urban work are currently in place;
2. Work with synods, mission directors, and congregations to assess current challenges, affirm effective ministries and plan future strategies for urban ministry.
3. Develop a network of urban resources (people and programs) in every area of urban ministry, including urban redevelopment, Christian education, building utilization, stewardship, funding, and youth ministry to provide consultation to congregations and synods;
4. Develop a cadre of 50 people who can:
 - a. train others to create and use appropriate models for growing the urban church, and
 - b. serve as volunteer resources and consultants on urban ministry for synods and congregations;
5. Study models of urban work from other denominations as well as models within the ELCA; the team is presently scheduling sessions with ecumenical groups across the country;
6. Over the next two years, the staff team will work with congregations and synods to develop plans for more effective ministry in small, medium, and large cities of the U.S. and the Caribbean. The progress will be reported to the ELCA at its assembly in Philadelphia in 1997;
7. Plan for an urban convocation to identify and train an urban resource network.

B. The Urban Ministry Staff Team was organized and commissioned in February 1995. The team is composed of experienced urban ministry specialists who live in different sections of the country. They are engaged in serving urban mission with synods and congregations.

- The Rev. Jerrett L. Hansen, Team Leader, Baltimore, Md.
- The Rev. Ruben Duran, Metropolitan Chicago Synod (ELCA), Chicago, Ill.

- Mr. James Sims, Oakland, Calif.
- The Rev. Warren Sorteberg, Member and Advisor, Division for Outreach

(ELCA), Chicago, Ill.

Report of the Memorials Committee (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued from Minutes, pages 65-90, 139-157, 250-253, 374-427, 452-463; continued on Minutes, pages 637-644, 660-661.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon the Rev. Donald M. Hallberg and the Rev. Nadine F. Lehr, co-chairs of the Memorials Committee, who presented six memorials from synods related to urban ministry.

Category 6: Urban Ministry

A. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the compassionate Christ urges us on in the midst of urban ministry and this church's Lutheran heritage provides a sound theological basis for ministry in the city; and

Whereas, census data shows that we are in an increasingly urbanized country with projections of an 80 percent urbanized population in the next century; and that we are an increasingly multicultural society with projections of a population of almost 50 percent persons of color by a.d. 2050; and

Whereas, there is a shortage of pastors interested, available and properly trained for urban, ethnic-specific, and multicultural ministries, and an abundance of laity in the city that is enthusiastic about taking on new and challenging leadership roles; and

Whereas, 54 percent of ELCA congregations (6,000) are located in metropolitan areas representing remarkable opportunity for witness, service, and growth through outreach to neighborhood residents; and 700 ELCA congregations in the city are in need of resources for crucial outreach ministry and hundreds more city congregations are declining in membership and resources; and

Whereas, this church affirms its irrevocable commitment to urban and multicultural ministry as essential to our proclamation of the Gospel, recognizing that such commitment now is essential for the ELCA's ministry in the 21st century; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its resources to life-giving ministry in the city; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America implement the following strategies as a practical reflection of its commitment to the city:

1. 50 Urban Internships—50 New City Pastors

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself and its resources, through its seminaries, to place 50 seminarians each year in urban internships. These 50 urban students, recruited to ordained ministry because of their commitment to witness in the city, would upon receiving call and ordination, form the "New City Pastors," a cadre of ministers committed to ministry in the city. These city pastors will increasingly reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the city neighborhoods where they are called to serve. The 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$250,000 annually (including some of the existing Horizon Internship budget of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) to

support urban internship placements in cities throughout the country where individual congregations cannot themselves support an urban intern.

2. Development of New Models of Urban Ministry Education

This church encourages each of its seminaries to develop and celebrate new models of urban ministry education, relying on the experiences currently in place at several seminaries.

3. Lay Leadership Training—2,000 Lay Leaders Trained for Neighborhood-based Ministry Opportunities

This church, recognizing the tremendous talents of its lay leaders and the potential of these lay leaders to further enhance their skills, commits itself and its resources, particularly in partnership with its 65 synods, to facilitate suitable, educationally and culturally sensitive, training opportunities for 2,000 lay persons annually through new and existing training programs. The 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly shall direct the ELCA Church Council to appropriate \$100,000 to support the training of lay leaders. This training shall be administered through the Division for Ministry and the Division for Congregational Ministries.

4. Accountability—Strategic Planning and Implementation for Synods With Urban Constituencies.

This church will foster accountability among all the expressions of this church to ensure that city congregations receive support to carry out effective ministry. Each synod with urban communities of over 50,000 people, therefore, shall commit adequate synod[ical], human and financial resources, in order to complete a strategy for implementation of urban ministry by the year 1998.

B. Central States Synod (4B) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the compassionate Christ urges us on in the midst of urban ministry and all interrelated fields of service; and

Whereas, this church's Lutheran heritage provides a sound theological basis for ministry in the city; a ministry where worship is in the language of the people, where music is culturally relevant is essential, where concern for those in need is of utmost importance, where Word and Sacrament ministry is lived out every time a hungry person receives food, a naked person receives clothes, a lost person hears the Gospel of grace, an outcast is welcomed at the table of the Lord; and

Whereas, census data shows that we are an increasingly urbanized country with projections of an 80 percent urbanized population in the next century; and

Whereas, this church affirms its irrevocable commitment to urban and multicultural ministry as essential to our proclamation of the Gospel, recognizing that such commitment now is essential for the ELCA's ministry in the 21st century; and

Whereas, census data also indicate that we are an increasingly multicultural society with projections of a population of almost 50 percent people of color by 2050; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has committed itself to a diverse and inclusive ministry with goals of 10 percent membership of people of color or whose primary language is other than English; and

Whereas, growing, effective, relevant urban and multicultural congregations will be essential in the 21st century if we are to proclaim the Gospel and grow as a church; and

Whereas, there is a shortage of pastors interested, available and properly trained for urban

and multicultural ministries; and

Whereas, issues of injustice, poverty, racism, classism, sexism, violence, and so on, affect the lives of people in the core city; and

Whereas, children especially in the core city are increasingly living in poverty and with violence; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Central States Synod Assembly memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly to direct the appropriate divisions, commissions, and departments to identify and make known new models for sustainable urban ministry and provide opportunities for these models to be shared among congregations and ministries by the Festival of Reformation 1996; and be it further

RESOLVED, to renew and emphasize a holistic commitment to all children in the cities, particularly children in poverty, children of color or primary language other than English, providing grants, special funds and programs geared specifically toward ministries with children that develop their gifts, nurture self-esteem, and help to provide for all of their needs; and be it further

RESOLVED, to foster cooperation between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the churchwide units and congregations in developing more effective ways to train pastors for urban and multicultural ministries, including more sites and funding for urban and multicultural internships, with attention to the priestly, prophetic, and servant roles in the particularities of different cultural contexts; and be it further

RESOLVED, to foster cooperation among synods, churchwide units, and seminaries so as to provide opportunities for the training and leadership development of indigenous lay leaders in urban and multicultural congregations; and be it further

RESOLVED, to support and help develop partnerships and cooperative ministries in urban congregations, be they with other urban, suburban and/or rural congregations, coalitions, area strategies, congregations or other denominations, community organizations or other service organizations, religious or secular, in our communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, to lift up and tell the stories of urban and multicultural ministries through its written and broadcast media at every level—synodical, churchwide, and in seminaries; and be it further

RESOLVED, to commit itself to redress all issues of injustice that profoundly affect the lives of people in the city—racism, classism, sexism, economic slavery, redlining, violence, feminization of poverty, declining education, and so on, and support those ministries that excel therein; and be it further

RESOLVED, to invite the prophetic voices from people in urban congregations to speak the truth about injustice and oppression to those in power, even when these prophetic voices are spoken to those within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, to identify and make known more effective evangelism programs specifically for urban and multicultural settings that more effectively will announce good news to the unchurched, the under-churched, and the de-churched; and be it further

RESOLVED, to provide Word and Sacrament ministry which facilitates opportunities, programs, or ministries that empower and transform people's lives through such things as job training, tutoring, GED education, counseling, economic development, and so on; and be it further

RESOLVED, to implement this resolution by communicating and assigning responsibilities

for the specific tasks to the appropriate bodies within this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, to bear witness to the compelling power of the compassionate Christ as the basic source of effectiveness and stability in ministry and service.

C. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the compassionate Christ urges us on in the midst of urban ministry and all interrelated fields of service; and this church's Lutheran heritage provides a sound theological basis for ministry in the city—a ministry where worship is in the language of the people, where music that is culturally relevant is essential, where concern for those in need is of utmost importance, where Word and Sacrament ministry is lived out every time a hungry person receives food, a naked person receives clothes, a lost person hears the Gospel of grace, an outcast is welcomed at the table of the Lord; and

Whereas, census data shows that we are in an increasingly urbanized country with projections of an 80 percent urbanized population in the next century; and that we are an increasingly multicultural society with projections of a population of almost 50 percent persons of color by a.d. 2050; and that growing, effective, relevant urban and multicultural congregations will be essential in the 21st century if we are to proclaim the Gospel and grow as a church; and

Whereas, issues of injustice, poverty, racism, classism, sexism, and violence affect the lives of people—especially our children (26 percent of whom grow up in poverty)—in the heart of the city; and

Whereas, there is a shortage of pastors interested, available and properly trained for urban, ethnic-specific, and multicultural ministries, and an abundance of laity in the city that is enthusiastic about taking on new and challenging leadership roles; and

Whereas, 54 percent of ELCA congregations (6,000) are located in metropolitan areas representing remarkable opportunity for witness, service, and growth through outreach to neighborhood residents; and 700 ELCA congregations in the city are in need of resources for crucial outreach ministry and hundreds more city congregations are declining in membership and resources; and

Whereas, the city represents a significant opportunity for a transforming witness to all of God's people through worship, evangelism, outreach, community development, church-based organizing, neighborhood-based programs, and leadership development; and this church affirms its irrevocable commitment to urban and multicultural ministry essential to our proclamation of the Gospel, recognizing that such commitment now is essential for the ELCA's ministry in the 21st century; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its resources to life-giving ministry in the city; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America implement the following strategies as a practical reflection of its commitment to the city:

1. 50 Urban Internships—50 New City Pastors

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself and its resources, through its seminaries, to place 50 seminarians each year in urban internships. These seminarians, recruited to ordained ministry because of their commitment to witness in the city, would upon ordination form the "New City Pastors," a cadre of ministers committed to the city (and who reflect the

cultural and ethnic diversity of the city themselves) who will have received training, urban ministry teaching parish experiences, and urban ministry internships, spiritual formation, and solid theological education for ministry in the city. The “New City Pastors” will receive financial and moral support from this church to network among themselves and receive mentoring support and wisdom from experienced urban ministry practitioners in forming a cadre of ministers committed to rebuilding our cities. In partnership with ELCA seminaries, the Division for Ministry shall be the churchwide unit responsible for implementation of this project. The Office of the Bishop and the Church Council shall be responsible for directing resources to this project and ensuring accountability. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$250,000 annually to support urban internship placements in cities throughout the country where individual congregations cannot themselves support an urban intern.

2. Development of New Models of Urban Ministry Education

This church encourages its seminaries to develop and celebrate new models of urban ministry education, relying on the experiences currently in place at several seminaries.

3. Lay Leadership Training—2,000 Lay Leaders Trained for Neighborhood-based Ministry Opportunities

This church, recognizing the tremendous talents of its lay leaders and the potential of these lay leaders to further enhance their skills, commits itself and its resources, particularly in partnership with its 65 synods, to facilitate suitable and educationally and culturally sensitive training opportunities for 2,000 lay persons annually through new and existing training programs. Training opportunities for lay leadership development would include Lutheran and non-Lutheran organizations with practical implications for neighborhood ministry. Lay leaders would choose from a menu of training opportunities which may be supported by stipends. The Division for Ministry and Division for Congregational Ministries shall be responsible for implementing this strategy. The Church Council and Office of the Bishop shall be responsible for directing resources to this strategy and ensuring accountability. Stipends and organizational grants shall be made available to support the training of lay leaders. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$100,000 to support the training of lay leaders.

4. Accountability—Strategic Planning and Implementation for Synods with Urban Constituencies

This church, recognizing that its ministry in this country is becoming more and more decentralized, will foster accountability among all the expressions of this church to ensure that city congregations receive support to carry effective ministry. Each synod with a significant urban constituency, therefore, shall commit a full complement of resources in order to complete a strategy for implementation of urban ministry by the year 1998. Each synod shall develop an urban ministry strategy with all the expressions of this church (where applicable: congregations, synod offices, Division for Outreach staff, Lutheran institutions, seminaries) which answers the following types of questions:

- How is Word and Sacrament ministry expressed in neighborhoods surrounding congregations?
- What is the plan for expansion of ministry in the city, and is it evangelical and justice-oriented?
- What is the plan for team ministry, shared pastorship, coalition ministry?

- What is the plan for filling vacant congregations, and developing multiple-point parishes?
- How will suburban congregations support urban parishes?
- What kind of anti-racism training ethnic-specific and multicultural ministry is in place?

The development of a synod strategy for the city can take place at annual regional consultations with regions, synods, Division for Outreach staff, and urban ministry practitioners.

5. Partnership Ministries

This church support and help develop partnerships and cooperative ministries in urban congregations with particular assistance from deployed urban specialists from the Division for Outreach, be they with other urban, suburban and/or rural congregations, coalitions, area strategies, congregations of other denominations, community organizations or other service organizations, religious or secular, in our communities. Partnership ministries are, based on the experience of numerous ELCA city congregations, mutually beneficial and based on reciprocity; each partner gains through the relationship.

6. Holistic Commitment to Children

This church renew and emphasize a holistic commitment to all children in the cities, particularly children living in poverty, children living with violence, children of color or primary language other than English, providing grants, special funds and appeals, and programs geared specifically toward ministries with children that develop their gifts, nurture self-esteem, and help to provide for all of their needs.

7. Evangelism Programs

This church identify and make known more effective evangelism programs specifically for urban and multicultural settings that more effectively will announce good news to the unchurched and the under-churched.

8. Investment

This church shall invest through domestic hunger funds in local community development and organizing projects which address the root causes of hunger, disenfranchisement, joblessness, and lack of adequate education and medical services in poverty communities.

9. Implementation

The ELCA Church Council implement this resolution by communicating and assigning responsibilities for the specific tasks to the appropriate bodies within this church, and that process on the implementation of this resolution be measured annually at Church Council meetings.

D. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the compassionate Christ urges us on in the midst of urban ministry and all interrelated fields of service; and this church's Lutheran heritage provides a sound theological basis for ministry in the city; a ministry where worship is in the language of the people, where music that is culturally relevant is essential, where concern for those in need is of utmost importance, where Word and Sacrament ministry is lived out every time a hungry person receives food, a naked person receives clothes, a lost person hears the Gospel of grace, an outcast is welcomed at the table of the Lord; and

Whereas, census data shows that we are an increasingly urbanized country with projections of an 80 percent urbanized population in the next century; and that we are an increasingly multicultural society with projections of a population of almost 50 percent persons of color by a.d. 2050; and that growing effective, relevant urban and multicultural congregations will be essential in the 21st century if we are to proclaim the Gospel and grow as a church; and

Whereas, there is a shortage of pastors interested, available and properly trained for urban, ethnic-specific, and multicultural ministries, and an abundance of laity in the city that is enthusiastic about taking on new and challenging leadership roles; and

Whereas, issues of injustice, poverty, racism, classism, sexism, and violence affect the lives of people—especially our children (26 percent of whom grow up in poverty)—in the heart of the city; and

Whereas, 54 percent of ELCA congregations (6,000) are located in metropolitan areas representing remarkable opportunity for witness, service, and growth through outreach to neighborhood residents; and 700 ELCA congregation in the city are in need of resources for crucial outreach ministry and hundreds more city congregations are declining in membership and resources; and

Whereas, the city represents a significant opportunity for a transforming witness to all of God's people through worship, evangelism, outreach, community development, church-based organizing, neighborhood-based programs, and leadership development; and this church affirms its irrevocable commitment to urban and multicultural ministry as essential to our proclamation of the Gospel, recognizing that such commitment now is essential for the ELCA's ministry in the 21st century; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its resources to life-giving ministry in the city; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America implement the following strategies as a practical reflection of its commitment to the city:

1. 50 Urban Internships—50 New City Pastors

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commit itself and its resources, through its seminaries, to place 50 seminarians each year in urban internships. These seminarians with urban internship experiences, recruited to ordained ministry because of their commitment to witness in the city, would upon ordination form the "New City Pastors," a cadre of ministers committed to the city (and who reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the city themselves) who will have received training, urban ministry teaching parish experiences, and urban ministry internships, spiritual formation, and solid theological education for ministry in the city. The "New City Pastors" will receive financial and moral support from this church to network among themselves and receive mentoring support and wisdom from experienced urban ministry practitioners in forming a cadre of ministers committed to rebuilding our cities. In partnership with ELCA seminaries, the Division for Ministry shall be the churchwide unit responsible for implementation of this project. The Office of the Bishop and the Church Council shall be responsible for directing resources to this project and ensuring accountability. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$250,000 annually to support urban internship placements in cities throughout the country where individual congregations cannot themselves support an urban intern.

2. Development of New Models of Urban Ministry Education

This church encourage its seminaries to develop and celebrate new models of urban ministry education, relying on the experiences currently in place at several seminaries:

- Specialized, urban-ministry, education track (Philadelphia);
- Special, experiential course work in the city (Minneapolis and St. Paul);
- Urban immersion for seminary faculty and administration (Philadelphia and Chicago);
- J-Term courses in the city (Wartburg Seminary in Milwaukee); and
- House of Studies in Washington, D.C. (Gettysburg Theological Seminary).

3. Lay Leadership Training—2,000 Lay Leaders Trained for Neighborhood-Based Ministry Opportunities

This church, recognizing the tremendous talents of its lay leaders and the potential of these lay leaders to further enhance their skills, commits itself and its resources, particularly in partnerships with its 65 synods, to facilitate suitable and educationally and culturally sensitive training opportunities for 2,000 lay persons annually through new and existing training programs. Training opportunities for lay leadership development would include Lutheran and non-Lutheran organizations with practical implication for neighborhood ministry. Lay leaders would choose from a menu of training opportunities which may be supported by stipends. The Division for Ministry and Division for Congregational Ministries shall be responsible for implementing this strategy. The Church Council and Office of the Bishop shall be responsible for directing resources to this strategy and ensuring accountability. Stipends and organizational grants shall be made available to support the training of lay leaders. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$100,000 to support the training of lay leaders.

4. Accountability—Strategic Planning and Implementation for Synods with Urban Constituencies

This church, recognizing that its ministry in this country is becoming more and more decentralized, will foster accountability among all the expressions of this church to ensure that city congregations receive support to carry effective ministry. Each synod with an urban constituency, therefore, shall be resourced in order to complete a strategy for implementation of urban ministry by the year 1998. Each synod shall develop an urban ministry strategy with all the expressions of this church (where applicable: congregations, synod offices, Division for Outreach staff, Lutheran institutions, seminaries) which answers the following types of questions:

- How is Word and Sacrament ministry expressed in neighborhoods surrounding congregations?
- What is the plan for expansion of ministry in the city, and is it evangelical and justice-oriented?
- What is the plan for team ministry, shared pastorship, coalition ministry?
- What is the plan for filling vacant congregations, and developing multiple-point parishes?
- How will suburban congregations support urban parishes?
- What kind of anti-racism training ethnic-specific and multicultural ministry is in place?

The development of a synod strategy for the city can take place at annual regional consultations with regions, synods, Division for Outreach staff, and urban ministry practitioners.

5. Partnership Ministries

This church support and help develop partnerships and cooperative ministries in urban congregations with particular assistance from deployed urban specialists from the Division for Outreach, be they with other urban, suburban and/or rural congregations, coalitions, area strategies, congregations of other denominations, community organizations or other service organizations, religious or secular, in our communities. Partnership ministries are, based on the experience of numerous ELCA city congregations, mutually beneficial and based on reciprocity; each partner gains through the relationship.

6. Holistic Commitment to Children

This church renew and emphasize a holistic commitment to all children in the cities, particularly children living in poverty, children of color or primary language other than English, providing grants, special funds and appeals, and programs geared specifically toward ministries with children that develop their gifts, nurture self-esteem, and help to provide for all of their needs.

7. Evangelism Programs

This church identify and make known more effective evangelism programs specifically for urban and multicultural settings that more effectively will announce good news to the unchurched, the under-churched, and the de-churched.

8. Investment

This church shall invest through domestic hunger funds in local community development and organizing projects which address the root causes of hunger, disenfranchisement, joblessness, and lack of adequate education and medical services in poverty communities.

9. Prophetic Voices in the City

This church invite the prophetic voices from people in urban congregations to speak the truth about injustice and oppression along with voices from rural and suburban areas to those in power, even when these prophetic voices are spoken to those within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

10. Implementation

The ELCA Church Council implement this resolution by communicating and assigning responsibilities for the specific tasks to the appropriate bodies within this church, and that process on the implementation of this resolution be measured annually at Church Council meetings.

11. The Power of Christ

This church bear witness to the compelling power of the compassionate Christ as the basic source of effectiveness and stability in urban ministry and service.

New Jersey Synod (7A) [1995 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 1995 Churchwide Assembly to reaffirm strongly the ELCA's commitment to ministry in the city; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America consider the following strategies as a practical reflection of that commitment:

1. 50 Urban Internships—50 New City Pastors

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commit itself and its resources, through its seminaries, to place 50 seminarians each year in urban internships. These seminarians, recruited to ordained ministry because of their commitment to witness in the city, would upon ordination form the New City Pastors, a cadre of ministers committed to the city (and who reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the city themselves) who will have received training, urban ministry teaching parish experiences, and urban ministry internships, spiritual formation, and solid theological education for ministry in the city. The New City Pastors will receive financial and moral support from this church to network among themselves and receive mentoring support and wisdom from experienced urban ministry practitioners in forming a cadre of ministers committed to rebuilding our cities. In partnership with ELCA seminaries, the Division for Ministry shall be the churchwide unit responsible for implementation of this project. The Office of the Bishop and the Church Council shall be responsible for directing resources to this project and ensuring accountability. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$250,000 annually to support urban internship placements in cities throughout the country where individual congregations cannot themselves support an urban intern.

2. Development of New Models of Urban Ministry Education

This church encourage its seminaries to develop and celebrate new models of urban ministry education, relying on the experiences currently in place at several seminaries:

- Specialized, urban-ministry, education track (Philadelphia);
- Special, experiential course work in the city (Minneapolis and St. Paul);
- Urban immersion for seminary faculty and administration (Philadelphia and Chicago);
- J-Term courses in the city (Wartburg Seminary in Milwaukee); and
- House of Studies in Washington, D.C. (Gettysburg Theological Seminary).

3. Lay Leadership Training—2,000 Lay Leaders Trained for Neighborhood-based Ministry Opportunities

This church, recognizing the tremendous talents of its lay leaders and the potential of these lay leaders to further enhance their skills, commits itself and its resources, particularly in partnerships with its 65 synods, to facilitate suitable and educationally and culturally sensitive training opportunities for 2,000 lay persons annually through new and existing training programs. Training opportunities for lay leadership development would include Lutheran and non-Lutheran organizations with practical implication for neighborhood ministry. Lay leaders would choose from a menu of training opportunities that may be supported by stipends. The Division for Ministry and Division for Congregational Ministries shall be responsible for implementing this strategy. The Church Council and Office of the Bishop shall be responsible for directing resources to this strategy and ensuring accountability. Stipends and organizational grants shall be made available to support the training of lay leaders. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$100,000 to support the training of lay leaders.

4. Accountability—Strategic Planning and Implementation for Synods with Urban Constituencies

This church, recognizing that its ministry in this country is becoming more and more decentralized, will foster accountability among all the expressions of this church to ensure that

city congregations receive support to carry effective ministry. Each synod with an urban constituency, therefore, shall be resourced in order to complete a strategy for implementation of urban ministry by the year 1998. Each synod shall develop an urban ministry strategy with all the expressions of this church (where applicable: congregations, synod offices, Division for Outreach staff, Lutheran institutions, seminaries) which answers the following types of questions:

- How is Word and Sacrament ministry expressed in neighborhoods surrounding congregations?
- What is the plan for expansion of ministry in the city, and is it evangelical and justice-oriented?
- What is the plan for team ministry, shared pastorship, coalition ministry?
- What is the plan for filling vacant congregations, and developing multiple point parishes?
- How will suburban congregations support urban parishes?
- What kind of anti-racism training ethnic-specific and multicultural ministry is in place?

The development of a synod strategy for the city can take place at annual regional consultations with regions, synods, Division for Outreach staff and urban ministry practitioners.

5. Partnership Ministries

This church support and help develop partnerships and cooperative ministries in urban congregations with particular assistance from deployed urban specialists from the Division for Outreach, be they with other urban, suburban and/or rural congregations, coalitions, area strategies, congregations of other denominations, community organizations or other service organizations, religious or secular, in our communities. Partnership ministries are, based on the experience of numerous ELCA city congregations, mutually beneficial and based on reciprocity; each partner gains through the relationship.

6. Holistic Commitment to Children

This church renew and emphasize a holistic commitment to all children in the cities, particularly children living in poverty, children of color or primary language other than English, providing grants, special funds and appeals, and programs geared specifically toward ministries with children that develop their gifts, nurture self-esteem, and help to provide for all of their needs.

7. Evangelism Programs

This church identify and make known more effective evangelism programs specifically for urban and multicultural settings that will more effectively announce good news to the unchurched, the under-churched, and the de-churched.

8. Investment

This church shall invest through domestic hunger funds in local community development and organizing projects which address the root causes of hunger, disenfranchisement, joblessness, and lack of adequate education and medical services in poverty communities.

9. Implementation

The ELCA Church Council implement this resolution by communicating and assigning responsibilities for the specific tasks to the appropriate bodies within this church, and that process on the implementation of this resolution be measured annually at Church Council

meetings.

10. The Power of Christ

This church bear witness to the compelling power of the compassionate Christ as the basic source of effectiveness and stability in urban ministry and service.

F. Northeastern Pennsylvania (7E) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the compassionate Christ urges us on in the midst of urban ministry and all interrelated fields of service; and

Whereas, census data shows that we are in an increasingly urbanized country with projections of an 80 percent urbanized population in the next century; and that we are an increasingly multicultural society with projections of a population of almost 50 percent persons of color by a.d. 2050; and that growing, effective, relevant urban and multicultural congregations will be essential in the 21st century if we are to proclaim the Gospel and grow as a church; and

Whereas, this church's Lutheran heritage provides a sound theological basis for ministry in the city; a ministry where worship is in the language of the people, where music that is culturally relevant is essential, where concern for those in need is of utmost importance, where Word and Sacrament ministry is lived out every time a hungry person receives food, a naked person receives clothes, a lost person hears the Gospel of grace, an outcast is welcomed at the table of the Lord; and

Whereas, there is a shortage of pastors interested, available and properly trained for urban, ethnic-specific, and multicultural ministries, and an abundance of laity in the city that is enthusiastic about taking on new and challenging leadership roles; and

Whereas, 54 percent of ELCA congregations (6,000) are located in metropolitan areas representing remarkable opportunity for witness, service, and growth through outreach to neighborhood residents; and 700 ELCA congregations in the city are in need of resources for crucial outreach ministry and hundreds more city congregations are declining in membership and resources; and

Whereas, the city represents a significant opportunity for a transforming witness to all of God's people through worship, evangelism, outreach, community development, church-based organizing, neighborhood-based programs, and leadership development; and this church affirms its irrevocable commitment to urban and multicultural ministry essential to our proclamation of the Gospel, recognizing that such commitment now is essential for the ELCA's ministry in the 21st century; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its resources to life-giving ministry in the city; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America implement the following strategies as a practical reflection of its commitment to the city:

1. 50 Urban Internships—50 New City Pastors

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself and its resources, through its seminaries, to place 50 seminarians each year in urban internships. These seminarians, recruited to ordained ministry because of their commitment to witness in the city, would upon ordination form the "New City Pastors," a cadre of ministers committed to the city. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$250,000 annually to support urban

internship placements in cities throughout the country where individual congregations cannot themselves support an urban intern.

2. Lay Leadership Training—2,000 Lay Leaders Trained for Neighborhood-based Ministry Opportunities

This church, recognizing the tremendous talents of its lay leaders and the potential of these lay leaders to further enhance their skills, commits itself and its resources, particularly in partnership with its 65 synods, to facilitate suitable and educationally and culturally sensitive training opportunities for 2,000 lay persons annually through new and existing training programs. Training opportunities for lay leadership development would include Lutheran and non-Lutheran organizations with practical implications for neighborhood ministry. The Churchwide Assembly shall direct the Church Council to appropriate \$100,000 to support the training of lay leaders. and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod implement the following strategies as a practical reflection of its commitment to the city:

1. One Synod-Supported Internship

That this synod work in cooperation with the seminaries, churchwide units, and congregations in developing more effective ways to train pastors for urban and multicultural ministries, by providing financial assistance for a least one Horizon Internship site in an urban setting by the academic year 1996-97. The development of a process for the selection of a congregation to fulfill this strategy, and its implementation, shall be the responsibility of the City Ministries Committee.

2. Lay Leadership Training

That this synod provide opportunities for the training and leadership development of lay leaders in the urban congregations of the synod. To this end this assembly shall direct the Synod Council to appropriate up to \$2,000 to support the training of lay leaders. Responsibility for developing a plan for the implementation of this strategy shall be with the City Ministries Committee.

BACKGROUND

Urban Initiative. The 1995 Churchwide Assembly will consider the report about and recommendation for a churchwide Urban Initiative, which will be guided by the Division for Outreach in the 1996-1997 biennium.

Earlier in the 1994-1995 biennium, the board and staff of the Division for Outreach indicated their intent to present an urban resolution to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly. The process for developing such a resolution included work with urban pastors, coalitions, and groups such as City Lutherans in Action and the Urban Guild. As this discussion process went forward, participants questioned the need for an urban resolution at this assembly. In addition, various groups and sections of the country expressed a variety of understandings as to what should be emphasized if such a resolution were developed.

In addition, the division itself has re-ordered its way of providing services to synods and ministries in the urban setting. The creation of an Urban Ministry Staff Team and the plan to develop networks of ministry advisors is only one part of this change in direction.

At its March 1995 meeting, the board of the Division for Outreach affirmed the “Urban

Initiative” found in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 803-804. It requested that this material be reported to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly as an information item. The Church Council, at its April 1995 meeting, received the report and requested that the Division for Outreach submit to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly a report on the implementation of this initiative during the 1996-1997 biennium, which could include recommendations for action.

Current Activities. The Division for Outreach is committed to many of the concerns raised in these synod memorials. Nearly 25 percent of the ELCA’s “new starts” (developing new congregations) are in the city, where the largest number of unchurched people live. Forty-three percent of the ELCA’s new congregations started since 1988 have been among African American, Asian American, Native American or Spanish-speaking people. The division’s goal in 1987 was that 20 percent of its new work would reflect this church’s commitment to inclusivity. That goal has been met—and, in fact, doubled.

In its recent reorganization, the Division for Outreach established leadership development of lay leaders and clergy as one of its three major emphases. It is expanding its training for urban and rural pastors interested in redevelopment of existing congregations. Other initiatives include:

- a religious order among lay persons dedicated to doing ministry among the poor in Hispanic settings in Texas;
- work with the Metropolitan New York Synod in developing their diaconate lay leadership program; and
- a special project for lay leadership in evangelism along the 1500 mile U.S.-Mexico border.

Increasingly, the Division for Outreach is using lay persons to develop ministry and would welcome a churchwide emphasis in this area.

Various means for increasing the number of new ministries are being employed, including the use of “synodically authorized worshiping communities,” which are largely self-supporting and often use lay volunteers and retired clergy. The Division for Outreach also has assisted synods in area strategies with specific mission development plans for each participating congregation. The concept of satellite or cathedral church models that link congregations together and lead some to consolidations and shared leadership reflect a “systems approach” to developing congregations in urban settings and is consistent with the division’s area strategy program.

Requests for Increased Budget Allocations. The synod resolutions on urban ministry request additional budget support for specific churchwide activities, including urban internships and lay leadership training. As the Memorials Committee responded to these and to other memorials that request an increase in budget support for various activities, the committee was guided by the following principle:

The ELCA budget-development process is a series of interrelated decisions, with each appropriate decision affecting resources available to meet other needs. Synodical resolutions and memorials are an important part of the information that guides this process. Memorials should not be used by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to make budget decisions independent of the budget process. Budget appropriations must take into account strategic planning, available resources, and other budget needs.

The request in these memorials for 50 urban internships (with the specific budget request for

\$250,000) shows the complexity of such requests and the impact such action could have on other churchwide programs. The cost of these 50 internships, \$18,000 per intern, would total \$900,000. The Horizon Internship program currently requests \$6,000 per intern from the Division for Outreach; if this pattern were continued to implement these memorials, annual funding from the division would total \$300,000. Each location also receives \$6,000 from its synod, and the local congregation supplies \$6,000 for each year of support.

The Division for Outreach currently has 15 urban and five rural internships in its budget for \$120,000. Using an additional \$180,000 to meet the division's \$300,000 per year share of the funding for such internships would mean that this money would have to be taken from other programs in the division or from other units. For example, if the overall allocation for the Division for Outreach were not raised, support for existing congregations, the majority of which are in urban settings, would likely need to be reduced. The average support for congregations that are redeveloping is \$12,000. The average support for congregations among the poor is \$20,000. If a change in priorities were required within the unit to allocate an additional \$180,000 to urban internships, the division would have to support 15 fewer congregations in redevelopment, or nine fewer congregations that serve the very poor. In addition, synods would need to contribute \$180,000 more for interns, and urban congregations would need to raise an additional \$180,000. If support were completely provided by the division for 50 interns, half of the current work among urban and rural congregations would need to be dropped in favor of the intern program. Similar tradeoffs would be required in the programs of other units, if the \$180,000 were shifted from other churchwide units. In addition, the division reports that there are other concerns that relate to the specifics of the proposal found in the synod memorials.

The Memorials Committee suggests that referral of these memorials to the Division for Outreach would provide the appropriate response of this assembly. Such an action would allow the concerns raised in these memorials to be addressed thoroughly and in a coordinated fashion through the development of an "Urban Initiative" and through the ELCA's budget-development process.

Assembly

Action Voice Vote

CA95.6.58 To refer as information the memorials from the Minneapolis Area, Central States, Metropolitan Chicago, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, and Northeastern Pennsylvania Synods on urban ministry to the Division for Outreach, as it engages in the development of an ELCA Urban Initiative, which will be reported to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly.

Category 5: Social Statements/Human Sexuality

A. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [1995 Memorial]

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 899-904; continued on Minutes, pages 660-663.

Whereas, the recent documents, "The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective," October 1993, and "Human Sexuality," a working draft on a possible social statement, October 1994, have produced widespread divisions, alienation, and contentions within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on all levels of this church's life and ministry; and

Whereas, it is questionable whether a majority vote at a Churchwide Assembly is the best, most appropriate, and only way to ascertain God's will in these matters; and

Whereas, such statements as “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective” and “Human Sexuality” can potentially be used to legislate people and congregations out of the church on the basis of regulations and understandings that go beyond our confessional stance of teaching and practicing in accordance with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions; and

Whereas, there is a need for ongoing study, reflection, discussion, and debate regarding these matters that will take much more time than the few years that has already been spent on these documents; and

Whereas, faithful individuals, pastors, professors, and exegetical scholars honestly disagree about the meaning of Scripture in some of the most controversial aspects of these studies; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod memorialize the next ELCA Churchwide Assembly to receive “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective,” October 1993, and “Human Sexuality,” a working draft on a possible social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, October 1994, as resources rather than social statements, and that they should continue to be used by this church in all areas of its life, thought and action as pastors, people, and congregations wrestle with the difficult issues of sexuality.

B. Western North Dakota Synod (3A) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America accepts “. . . the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm for its proclamation, faith, and life” (ELCA 2.03.); and

Whereas, the historical teaching of the Christian Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its inherited statements from The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America on the issue of sexuality, based on Genesis 2, Matthew 19, 1 Corinthians 6 and 7, and other passages, supports sexual expression within heterosexual marriage and abstinence outside of marriage; and

Whereas, the draft document entitled “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective” produced by the Division for Church in Society obscures, relativizes, and occasionally reverses the plain meaning of the Scripture, and departs from the historic teaching of the Christian Church in matters of human sexuality as stated above; and

Whereas, the Conference of Bishops recognizes that there is no basis in Scripture or tradition for the blessing of a homosexual marriage; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Western North Dakota Synod in assembly instruct its Synod Council to request the ELCA Church Council Executive Committee to require the Division for Church in Society to be accountable to Scripture, tradition, and confessional documents in the second draft of the document, “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the second draft of the document be distributed by the Division for Church in Society to congregations six months prior to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Western North Dakota Synod in assembly adopt the following statement as a summary of teaching on human sexuality: “God created people male and female and provided for them to become one within the context of marriage. Heterosexual marriage; one woman, one man—faithfulness within marriage; abstinence outside of marriage—these constitute the Christian standard. When we fall short we are invited to repent, receive the forgiveness of God, and amend our lives. As members of the body of Christ we are called to

daily repentance for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”;
and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly instruct the Synod Council to request the ELCA Church Council to refuse to submit to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly any statement on human sexuality which does not reflect the aforesaid summary of teaching; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly request the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to reject any statement on human sexuality which does not reflect the aforesaid summary of teaching.

C. Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the October 1994 working draft, “Human Sexuality,” while it contains many statements which are biblically sound, yet contains the false assumption that the Bible does not provide a sufficient basis to make a definite statement that sexual relations between people of the same sex under any and all circumstances are contrary to God’s will, as is evident from the statement in section 60, page 22 of the draft, where it states: “This church rejects the idea that it must at this time make a definite legislative decision concerning its teaching on and practice with gay and lesbian persons”; and

Whereas, the Word of God clearly states in Leviticus 18:22, “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.” And we note that while there is no mention made in Leviticus 18:22 to forbid sexual relations between females (lesbianism), this is clearly a violation of God’s will, for in Genesis 1:27-28 and 2:24-25 we learn that sexual union is intended to take place between a man and woman in marriage; and

Whereas, the prohibition in Leviticus 18:22 against homosexuality is included with other prohibitions against perversions of sexual conduct such as incest (Leviticus 18:6), adultery (Leviticus 18:20), and sexual relations with animals (Leviticus 18:23), thus clearly indicating that the prohibition against homosexuality is intended to be in force as much today as in Old Testament days, just as we consider incest, adultery, and bestiality to be violations of God’s will in our day; and is clearly affirmed where the Word of God states in Leviticus 18:30, “So keep my charge never to practice any of these abominable customs which were practiced before you, and never defile yourselves by them; I am the Lord your God”; and

Whereas, despite overwhelming opposition to the pro-homosexual agenda as evidenced in the first draft by over 65 percent of those responding in the matter indicated in Section 28 on page 37 of the 1994 draft; and

Whereas, the current draft recommends no legislative action be taken at the forthcoming ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 1995 in Minneapolis to formulate the teaching of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America concerning homosexual, genital sexual behavior; and

Whereas, this inaction will leave many concerned members and pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in a state of uncertainty concerning wholehearted support for a church body which chooses to ignore or compromise the clearly revealed teachings of God’s Word; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the voting members of the Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly, at its June 1995 meeting in Devils Lake, vote to urge the voting members from all ELCA synods to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to be held in Minneapolis in August 1995 to vote to reject the 1994 draft in its present form, should a draft come before the voting members at the 1995 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the voting members of the Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly at its

June 1995 meeting vote to urge voting members from all ELCA synods at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis to adopt the alternative statement contained in the background material on page 39 of the current draft, which states: “God created people male and female, and provided for the marriage relationship in which two may become one. A publicly declared, legally binding marriage between one woman and one man remains the one (and only) appropriate place for genital sexual relations. Heterosexual marriage, faithfulness within marriage, abstinence outside of marriage—these constitute the Christian standard. When we fall short, we are invited to repent, receive the forgiveness of God, and (by God’s grace and help through the Holy Spirit) amend our lives.” (Note: the items in parentheses are strongly recommended for insertion by the authors of this resolution); and be it further

RESOLVED, that statements in the current draft which are not in conflict with the alternative statement above be included to provide guidelines for wholesome and God-pleasing behavior and attitudes in matters of sexuality; and

Whereas, it is very possible that discussion or voting on the October 1994 working draft, “Human Sexuality,” will not be permitted at the 1995 Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the entire contents of this memorial, including the “Whereases” and “RESOLVEDs,” be sent by the Eastern North Dakota Synod office before June 30, 1995, to the Department for Research and Evaluation, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631, as this synod’s recommendation to serve as the basic guideline for any future drafts or statements on human sexuality.

D. South Dakota Synod (3C) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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 of faith and life (ELCA 2.03.); and

Whereas, there has been widespread disapproval throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of its first draft of “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective”; and

Whereas, the Task Force on Human Sexuality has invited individual and group responses by June 30, 1994; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Assembly adopt the following as an alternative statement: “God created people male and female, and provided for the marriage relationship in which two may become one. A publicly declared, legally binding marriage between one woman and one man remains the one appropriate place for genital sexual relations. Heterosexual marriage, faithfulness within marriage, abstinence outside of marriage—these constitute the Christian standard. When we fall short, we are invited to repent, receive the forgiveness of God, and amend our lives”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Council communicate its synod assembly’s acceptance of this resolution to the Task Force on Human Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Council communicate our synod assembly’s acceptance of this resolution to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to be held in 1995 in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod affirm the importance of the church’s discussion of this issue internally and in public debate and that we urge people to continue to study, pray,

and reflect on issues of sexuality, and moral teaching, and the church's ethical stand.

E. Central States Synod (4B) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, during the church's recent deliberation on our social statement on human sexuality, some of the responses to the first draft were extreme. Some responses from our members, clergy and lay, included verbal abuse, threats of physical violence, threatening letters to task force members and ELCA employees, and intolerance to divergent views. Such responses were harmful to the body of Christ; and

Whereas, as a result of these harmful reactions the process was marked by changes in personnel, writing teams, and oversight groups. Counseling was required to help our brothers and sisters who are churchwide staff deal with the stress resulting from the disrespectful responses; and

Whereas, Martin Luther's explanation to the commandment against murder states that Christians are not to "believe, betray, slander, nor raise injurious reports against our neighbor" and his explanation to the commandment against bearing false witness states that Christians are to "interpret our neighbor's action in the kindest possible way"; and

Whereas, Paul's letter to the Ephesians, 4:25 ff., provide guidance for all of our conversation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Central States Synod Assembly direct the bishop to express this synod's thanks to the churchwide staff and all the appointed volunteers who have worked on this process, for their faithful service in the midst of this controversy; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Central States Synod Assembly memorialize the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to direct the appropriate divisions, commissions, and departments of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to lead this church in study and dialogue regarding our confession of faith about the Word of God (ELCA 4.02. and 4.03.); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Central States Synod Assembly encourage and exhort all of our leaders, lay and rostered, to practice and teach the biblical and confessional guidance for speaking the truth in love in all matters of faith and life, especially in controversial times; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Central States Assembly encourage and exhort all of the members of this synod to be open to hearing God's Word through voices that could be silenced by fear in the midst of controversy; and be it further

RESOLVED, that 1995 Central States Assembly memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to encourage and exhort the same openness to God's Word for all leaders and members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

F. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, many congregations have benefited from and grown in their understanding of their faith and mission from studying the sexuality study document, "Human Sexuality and the Christian Faith," 1991, and the first draft of a social statement, "The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective," 1993, and a working draft on a possible social statement, "Human Sexuality," 1994, prepared by the Task Force on Human Sexuality; and

Whereas, the writing of a second draft of a possible social statement, "Human Sexuality," 1994, has created confusion about the status of the first draft and its contribution to the further development of a social statement on sexuality; and

Whereas, these are times of pain and confusion and conflict for everyone about issues of

sexuality; and

Whereas, we live in a time of transition and new learning about ourselves as sexual beings, but still with a mandate to discern God's will for us in these times; and

Whereas, the Church needs to respond to the challenges of the times by making responsible decisions even in the midst of transition; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorialize the 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assembly with the following:

1. that the members of the Task Force on Human Sexuality responsible for the sexuality study document, "Human Sexuality and the Christian Faith," 1991, and the first draft of a social statement, "The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective," 1993, and those who drafted a possible working draft be commended for their work; and
2. that the study document, and both first and second drafts of the possible statements be recommended to congregations for further study and that an effort be made to better assess where congregations are in their understandings; and
3. that in any future drafts of social statements on sexuality, the drafting team include people of color, and gay and lesbian persons; and
4. that any future drafts of social statements on sexuality continue to address the issues of single and divorced people, teenagers in relationships, and gay and lesbian persons, as well as other controversial issues such as those relating to sexual pleasure and contraception.

G. Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the Lutheran Confessions uphold the Scriptures as the written Word of God; and

Whereas, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament uphold and teach that sexual intercourse is to be reserved for heterosexual marriage; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the Bethany Conference Spring Assembly, commend the 1994 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly to memorialize the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly at Minneapolis in August 1995; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, uphold and teach that sexual intercourse is to be reserved for heterosexual marriage.

H. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America regards Holy Scriptures "as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life," (ELCA 2.03.), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession "as a true witness to the Gospel," (Chapter 2, Section 2.05.), and "the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord . . . as further valid interpretations of the faith of the church" (Chapter 2, Section 2.05.); and

Whereas, the proposed draft statement on the church and human sexuality is understood by many to be at variance with scriptural and confession teachings (e.g., Genesis 1 and 2, Matthew 19, Romans 1, and Ephesians 5), the Augsburg Confession, Apology to the Augsburg Confession (Article 23), and the Large Catechism, sixth commandment; and

Whereas, the Task Force on Human Sexuality which produced the draft statement is participating in the revision of the draft statement despite the serious theological, scriptural, and confessional reservations expressed by the Conference of Bishops and many other individuals and congregations within the church; and

Whereas, action on such a draft statement at a Churchwide Assembly under the pressures of

time and schedules in such a large assembly cannot fully deliberate and respond carefully to the proposal; and

Whereas, the bishops of this church have the responsibility to “preach, teach, and administer the Sacraments in accord with the faith of this church,” (Indiana-Kentucky Synod constitution †S8.12.b.); and

Whereas, the Conference of Bishops is a more appropriate context wherein more prayerful and less hasty deliberation of such a teaching document may take place; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1994 Indiana-Kentucky Synod Assembly express to the ELCA 1995 Churchwide Assembly its concern over the process that produced the first draft of “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective,” and also petition the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to change the ELCA constitution to require during the developmental process that the Conference of Bishops give advice and consent to all social and teaching statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

I. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, the process for developing a social statement on human sexuality has been marked by strife and polarization within our church; and

Whereas, this strife included widespread verbal abuse directed to members and employees of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both local and churchwide; and

Whereas, we as members of the body of Christ are mutually accountable to each other for our actions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana Kentucky Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to call for mutual repentance and forgiveness of those sinful and abusive responses to “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective.”

J. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [1994 Memorial]

Whereas, the process by which the study document, entitled, “The Church and Human Sexuality: A Lutheran Perspective,” was released reflected an alarming lack of accountability, including the disregard for the counsel of the ELCA’s Conference of Bishops; and

Whereas, the media fiasco surrounding the release of this statement resulted in a woeful distortion and sensationalization; and

Whereas, this hindered the church’s deliberative process by diverting its attention from the substance of the issue; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly that in the future any social statement produced by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be subject to approval for release by the ELCA’s Conference of Bishops prior to its release for further study; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council be directed to memorialize this resolution to the Church Council.

[Note: See also the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod reproduced in Category 21 (pages 416-417 of these minutes), which contains a provision calling for the suspension of the development of all social statements.]

BACKGROUND

Since specific issues related to the content and process for the development of an ELCA statement on human sexuality are intertwined in some of the memorials with the broader issue of the process for the development of all ELCA social statements, related memorials have been grouped together for one response.

1. The following is background information concerning the process for development of a possible social statement on human sexuality.

The 1988-1994 process for developing a social statement on human sexuality is detailed in the Progress Report to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly on the Study of Human Sexuality. (The report was distributed to the assembly following the Church Council's pre-assembly meeting.)

On October 9, 1994, the board of the Division for Church in Society authorized for distribution to this church the paper, "Human Sexuality Working Draft: A Possible Social Statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with Accompanying Documents" (the second draft of a possible social statement). Upon the recommendation of the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, the time line for responses to this working draft was extended to June 30, 1995. The extended time line means that a progress report, rather than a completed draft of a social statement, was submitted to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly.

On March 11, 1995, the board of the Division for Church in Society voted to:

1. Acknowledge the desirability for this church to consider and adopt a social statement on human sexuality.
2. Acknowledge the constraints of scheduling the date for the adoption of such a statement to a Churchwide Assembly at this time.
3. Ask the executive director to construct a timetable listing activities that would lead to the adoption of a social statement, taking into consideration the total responsibilities of this division.
4. Ask the executive director to present to the board's September 1995 meeting a list of activities related to the subject of human sexuality that the division will pursue to facilitate this church in its moral deliberation, its practice of hospitality and advocacy for justice in society in this interim until a statement is presented, such a list to be based on observations that can be made from the responses received to the first draft and the working draft of the social statement and the board's discussion during its session held March 11, 1995.

At its meeting in April 1995, the ELCA Church Council received as information the above action of the board of the Division for Church in Society. The Church Council took further action to:

- express the gratitude of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to those congregations that have undertaken or still plan to undertake a study of and prepare a response, by June 30, 1995, to the current working draft of a possible social statement on human sexuality;
- request the board chair and the executive director of the Division for Church in Society to convene by telephone the members of the consulting panel to provide advice to the division and the Church Council on subsequent steps that would be necessary for the development of a possible social statement on human sexuality for consideration by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly or a later assembly; and
- direct the Executive Committee of the Church Council to review in late July or early August

1995 the report prepared by the Division for Church in Society for submission to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly on responses to the working draft and to make recommendations regarding the report to the Church Council at the council's August 15, 1995, meeting in connection with transmittal of the report to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly.

At its pre-assembly meeting in August 1995, the Church Council received the report and recommendations of the Division for Church in Society concerning possible next steps in the process for the development of an ELCA statement on human sexuality. That report took into account the responses of congregations to the second draft of the possible statement received through June 1995; that information was reported to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, together with any related actions of the Church Council.

2. The following information is provided concerning the development of social statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The process currently followed is set forth in "Social Statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," a policies and procedures document adopted by the 1989 Churchwide Assembly.

At the fall 1994 board meeting of the Division for Church in Society the board acted to:

Authorize the Division for Church in Society to assemble a committee to review the basis, purpose, procedures, and authority of social statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

A. That this social statement review committee be composed of two members appointed by the Division for Church in Society board, two members appointed by the Church Council, two members appointed by the Conference of Bishops, two theologians/ethicists appointed by the Division for Church in Society in consultation with seminary presidents, two Division for Church in Society staff persons, and one staff person from the Office of the Bishop. Included in (or in addition to) the above should be persons with in-depth knowledge and experience in current and predecessor church traditions and practices regarding social policy development, and those who have experience in teaching and using social statements in congregational settings.

B. That this committee give attention to the following:

1. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has committed itself to develop social statements as one of the ways through which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America carries out its mission in society. Considering what has been done already, should this commitment be reconsidered? On what basis?

2. Are the current assumptions, understandings, and multiple purposes of social statements still tenable? (For example, they have theological, teaching, ethical reflection, deliberative, and policy-establishing purposes.)

3. What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the current procedures, processes, and uses of social statements (for example, the respective roles of task forces, the Division for Church in Society board, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, theological faculties, congregational deliberation and response)?

4. What recommendations should be proposed for changes in the policy and practices regarding social statements (i.e., for changes in the procedural document, "Social Statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America")?

C. This committee is charged to bring a report to the board of the Division for Church in Society and the Church Council no later than the fall of 1996.

It is anticipated that a recommendation from the Division for Church in Society board and ELCA Church Council based on the report of the Social Statement Review Committee will be transmitted to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly.

Assembly Action

Bishop Chilstrom commented, "In my report, I shared some reflections that arose out of our church's efforts to study the issue of human sexuality and to develop a social statement on this major topic. We touched on it earlier today and have heard opinions expressed on the floor." He then called upon the Rev. Charles S. Miller Jr., executive director of the Division for Church in Society, and asked that he comment on the progress report. He also requested that Vice President Kathy J. Magnus report on the Church Council's action on this matter. He asked the co-chairs of both the Committee of Reference and Counsel and the co-chairs of the Memorials Committee to be prepared to deal with related memorials and resolutions.

Pastor Miller presented the progress report and stated, "I trust that you have had an opportunity to read the progress report on this church's study of human sexuality. My brief comments at this juncture are intended, first, to elaborate on the final section of the report that pertains to future steps in this church's study of sexuality, and second, to connect our progress report to the action of the Church Council taken at its pre-assembly meeting.

"One of the early responses to the first draft of 'A Social Statement on Human Sexuality,' was from a professor of pastoral theology at one of our seminaries. In a paragraph in that professor's response there is what I believe to be a very perceptive summary of this church's experience in this process. The professor writes, 'The variety of responses to the sexuality study uncovers profound differences in perspective about the nature of reality. It is a little frightening to add that differences about the very heart of Christian faith have been uncovered also. It is frightening to face these differences, because they are tied to convictions and points of view for which we fight to the death because they integrate our senses of personhood and community. So, it is difficult to step back from them, in order to see why they are so strong in us and how they developed. Furthermore, everyone's own sexual attitudes and sense of sexual identity are among the deepest aspects of our fundamental life perspective. Anyone who observes human behavior cannot avoid acknowledging the power and touchiness with which people react to most things sexual.'

"I believe the professor wisely describes for us the nature of our struggle with the subject of sexuality and reminds us that the struggle is not new. For those of you who attended one of the hearings on the study of human sexuality at this assembly, or listened to the conversation this morning in this assembly hall, will be able to resonate with this professor's words, because we in these experiences have lived in those brief moments by our very testimony to one another, the very struggle described by this professor.

"A more recent response received from a professor of religion in one of our colleges used a football metaphor to make a particular argument. I was not particularly as interested in the argument as in the metaphor. How unfortunately accurate a football metaphor is for our culture's struggle with human sexuality. Sides are taken. The sides have coaches. Most of the plays are predictable with a few surprises along the way. Many people are on the sidelines watching the conflict. Protective gear is worn and it is a win, lose, or tie contest. That metaphor is just a

metaphor for the cultural wars that abound in our time. While thankfully the metaphor does not match our whole experience in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America these past six years, at times we have been there.

“The challenges from these two vignettes for the future are these: We must respect the fact that this church’s brief study of human sexuality belongs to Christianity’s long, long struggle with the subject and, therefore, not be disappointed, disheartened, or deterred if little concrete progress on some of the most difficult of the issues is made in such a brief time. Second, we must acknowledge that the experience of the study of sexuality is by its very nature extraordinarily difficult. Third, we in the church must resolve to develop together processes of study and discovery that do not operate on a win, lose, or tie continuum. Therefore, it is the resolve of the Division for Church in Society to continue to assist this church in exploring issues related to human sexuality.

“The Church Council action makes it clear that this work should proceed quite intentionally, yet uncoupled from the development of a social statement for a specific future Churchwide Assembly. On that basis, it seems to me that the interests and commitments of the Church Council, the consulting panel, and the Division for Church in Society converge at three very important places. First, that an ongoing period of study—its length unknown—is called for in which this church addresses how Lutherans approach ethical questions and addresses meanwhile biblical, theological, and pastoral issues related to human sexuality. Most surely this study will require our drawing mightily upon teachers in this church to help us in this journey.

“Second, this church is called to strive with all its heart to listen and provide mutual support during this study journey. In an essay entitled, ‘Style,’ the late Robert Oppenheimer writes, ‘Style is the deference that action pays to uncertainty. When we are in the midst of uncertainty and when we are without any absolutes or norms for behavior, then the way in which we act is called style.’ I propose to you that we are called to a style of compassionate listening and mutual support as we continue this difficult journey.

“Third, this church is called to provide a strong, public, ethical witness in those areas where there is clarity and wide agreement, because this church knows there are compelling issues of justice and hospitality that require this church’s prophetic stance.

“As we embark on this next stage of our journey, words of deep appreciation are due those who have been in the center of the process thus far. Most surely this includes our sisters and brothers in Christ who served so faithfully on the original Task Force on Human Sexuality; the writing team, project director, consultants, and editor who worked so very hard and faithfully on the working draft; my colleagues on the Division for Church in Society staff and in the churchwide organization who have contributed so mightily and generously to the process; the members of the consulting panel; the Division for Church in Society board; the Conference of Bishops; and the Church Council who like the others in this process have spent countless hours with care, insight, and compassion on this daunting task. Finally, thank you to the members of this church who have participated in this study process begun in 1989 with commitment, faithfulness, civility, and love. May the Holy Spirit guide us in our continued endeavors.”

Vice President Kathy J. Magnus stated, “During this biennium, the Church Council has struggled and debated and discussed the study of human sexuality. We have been profoundly disappointed in the tone of the discussion across this church. We have listened carefully to the advice of the Conference of Bishops, to the board of the Division for Church in Society, the responses from the church, and the consulting panel, which we put in place in December 1993.

In our opinion, we do not believe that we have enough consensus to move ahead with a statement for 1997 and took action at our pre-assembly meeting.” She referred the assembly to the action of the Church Council reported on page 810-A of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3.

The Rev. Nadine F. Lehr, co-chair of the Memorials Committee, presented the committee’s recommendation related to this matter.

Moved;

Seconded: 1. To affirm the call of the synods:

a. for commendation of all of those who participated in the development and who commented on the draft statements on human sexuality;

b. for our leaders and members to practice and teach biblical and confessional guidance for speaking the truth in love in matters of faith and life, as this church continues to discuss matters of human sexuality;

c. for mutual repentance and forgiveness for those instances in which our actions in our debate on human sexuality may have harmed members of the body of Christ;

2. a. To convey to the Sierra Pacific, Western North Dakota, Eastern North Dakota, South Dakota, Central States, Metropolitan Chicago, Northeastern Iowa, Indiana-Kentucky, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods the August 1995 report of the Division for Church in Society and the Church Council on the process for the development of a possible social statement on human sexuality as a response to their memorials;

b. To refer the memorials of these synods to the Division for Church in Society as it continues its work related to human sexuality and to the review and possible revision of the ELCA’s process for the development of all social statements;

c. To affirm the existing deliberative process for a continuing discussion of human sexuality and thus to decline to consider Churchwide Assembly action on the specific language proposed for statements, which is contained in the memorials from various synods; and

3. To affirm the existing plan approved by the Church Council to review the process for the development of social statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, including the issues of the future development of any social statements and the appropriate roles of task forces, boards, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, theological faculties, and congregations in this process.

Ms. Katharyn L. Wilson [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] moved to amend the recommendation:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the recommendation by renumbering item “3.” as “3.a.,” and by adding a new item 3.b. as follows:

To call on members of the Church Council and the Division for Church in Society to re-evaluate the composition of the task force and the consulting panel, and restructure each to add positions for youth, people of color, and gay and lesbian persons.

Ms. Wilson spoke to the motion, stating, “It is necessary to re-evaluate the composition of the task force and consulting panel for possible future drafts of social statements on sexuality. In order to understand accurately the problems involving sexuality, which are found in all aspects of

our society, we need representatives from the different walks of life. Youth, people of color, and gay and lesbian persons need to be involved in the decisions of the possible future statements because: (a) without walking in the footsteps of these different representatives of our church, we do not know the struggles or temptations they deal with on a day-to-day basis; and (b) they are Christians who need their thoughts represented—we are all people of God who face sexual temptations and evils; we, however, cannot deal with those evils without direct connection to the people experiencing them. Though their voices may be heard, it is quite a different thing to have representation for these groups involved in the decision-making process. We are a diverse church whose diversity is not being properly represented at the present time in the construction of a possible churchwide statement. Distinct positions must be made for these persons.”

Pastor Miller said, “The appeal for diversity in representation on any group that would plan future work in this study process is welcome and I know that the board of the Division for Church in Society would be receptive to that. In regard to speaking specifically to the task force composition, at least the tenor of the division board’s discussion thus far has been that it will dismiss the task force with thanks and proceed likely in developing ad hoc groups for various aspects of the study process in the future. Consulting with Vice President Magnus, I understand that it also has been the discussion of the Church Council that it would be dismissing the consulting panel likewise with thanks for its great work.”

Bishop Chilstrom then ruled that the proposed amendment was not in order, because neither the task force nor the consulting panel would continue to exist.

The Rev. Derek J. Engfelt [South Dakota Synod] presented a substitute motion for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Moved: To adopt an alternative statement as found in the memorial from the South Dakota Synod, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, on page 901 for material found on page 39 of the current draft on human sexuality. The alternative statement would read:

God created people male and female, and provided for the marriage relationship in which two may become one. A publicly declared, legally binding marriage between one woman and one man remains the one appropriate place for genital sexual relations. Heterosexual marriage, faithfulness within marriage, abstinence outside of marriage—these constitute the Christian standard. When we fall short, we are invited to repent, receive the forgiveness of God, and amend our lives.

Bishop Chilstrom ruled the proposed substitute motion to be out of order at the present time, because “this does not address the memorials that have come in. You could try it as a separate action, but not as a substitute for what has been presented by the Memorials Committee.”

Mr. Kevin Anderson [Southwestern Texas Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, “especially to statement 2.c. Before we as a church can speak on the issue of sexuality and particularly on the issue of homosexuality, we must be committed to following a process with discernment and discussion that is uniquely Lutheran. First, we must be committed to growth in our knowledge and understanding of Scripture. We must be concerned with how we read and how we study. Second, we must be committed to interpret and use Scripture according to Lutheran tradition as Bishop Chilstrom stated in his bishop’s report. It is vitally important that we discuss sexuality from a Lutheran understanding of the use of the Bible.

Third, we must listen to the theological leaders of our church, to Bishop-Elect Anderson and the other bishops, and to our seminary professors. They speak with a vast amount of knowledge of Scripture and understand it from a uniquely Lutheran perspective. Finally, we must approach our discussion of sexuality from a pastoral perspective. This means that people of all sexual orientations must respect each other as persons equally loved by God. Then, we must agree to disagree and when our decision is over, we must be reconciled in Christ.

“We cannot speak about sexuality as a church unless we can first speak openly about sexuality to one another. In order for homosexual and bisexual people to speak openly about their sexuality to heterosexuals, our congregations must become safe sanctuaries where all of us can openly worship together, openly study the Bible together, and openly fellowship together. Our congregations must create an environment where all people can be open about their sexual orientation, if open dialogue about sexuality is to occur. Before we can speak to the issue of homosexuality, we must first get to know one another.”

Mr. Joseph McMahon [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] inquired of the chair, “Bishop Chilstrom, I wonder, if you would be willing to leave the podium and share with us some of your own thoughts on this issue as you did in your opening bishop’s remarks.” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “I think that was sufficient at that point and I would choose not to [comment further] at this point.”

Bishop Jon S. Enslin [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] stated that he supported the recommendation of the Memorials Committee, “because I believe at this time this is all we can do. I will express, however, my personal sadness that the very broad issue of human sexuality has narrowed down to one portion of that issue and in a culture that so desperately needs some leadership from our church on issues of sexuality other than homosexuality at this time. I would hope that we could find some way to at least make sure those areas of strong consensus can be lifted up and confirmed in the context of the culture that we face.”

Mr. William Wood [Greater Milwaukee Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-853; No-90
Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action Yes-869; No-66

CA95.6.59 1. To affirm the call of the synods:

a. for commendation of all of those who participated in the development and who commented on the draft statements on human sexuality;

b. for our leaders and members to practice and teach biblical and confessional guidance for speaking the truth in love in matters of faith and life, as this church continues to discuss matters of human sexuality;

c. for mutual repentance and forgiveness for those instances in which our actions in our debate on human sexuality may have harmed members of the body of Christ;

2. a. To convey to the Sierra Pacific, Western North Dakota, Eastern North Dakota, South Dakota, Central States, Metropolitan Chicago, Northeastern Iowa, Indiana-Kentucky, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods the August 1995 report of the Division for Church in Society and the Church Council on the process for the development of a

possible social statement on human sexuality as a response to their memorials;

b. To refer the memorials of these synods to the Division for Church in Society as it continues its work related to human sexuality and to the review and possible revision of the ELCA's process for the development of all social statements;

c. To affirm the existing deliberative process for a continuing discussion of human sexuality and thus to decline to consider Churchwide Assembly action on the specific language proposed for statements, which is contained in the memorials from various synods; and

3. To affirm the existing plan approved by the Church Council to review the process for the development of social statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, including the issues of the future development of any social statements and the appropriate roles of task forces, boards, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, theological faculties, and congregations in this process.

The Rev. Mark N. Gravdal [Northeastern Iowa Synod] inquired, "I keep hearing that we have not spoken on sexuality, but are not the binding documents—the original, predecessor-church documents—[in effect] until the time that we change or amend them?"

Pastor Miller responded, "That is correct. If you look in the progress report on page 810-F of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, there is a paragraph that speaks to that matter, the paragraph in the middle of the left column: 'Until closure is brought to this process and a new social statement is adopted by a future Churchwide Assembly, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America relies on the social statements of the predecessor church bodies.' An explanation follows about both the constituting convention and the Commission for Church in Society's actions that clarify that matter."

Bishop Steven L. Ullestad [Northeastern Iowa Synod] added for additional information, "Our 'Social Statement on Abortion' also includes the line that marriage is the appropriate context for sexual intercourse and this continues to be the position of this church. This is also a binding social statement of this church."

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] moved to extend this plenary session until 6:45 p.m. at the discretion of the chair.

Moved;

Seconded: To extend this session to 6:45 p.m. at the discretion of the chair.

Par Christian faith. Please, let us not have any thought that this church is able to stop Schaper spoke to the motion, stating that, while he acknowledged that it had been a lengthy day of deliberation, he believed the assembly "would be more refreshed and ready for tomorrow, if we push through another 45 minutes now, rather than come back again this evening for a session."

Several voting members expressed concern regarding the need for some people to eat meals on a regular schedule, the schedule for the evening Eucharist, and the action taken previously in the day not to extend the session or to meet in an evening session.

An unidentified voting member requested clarification regarding the possibility of holding an evening session from 8:00 until 9:30 p.m. Bishop Chilstrom responded, "That was the optional plan, if necessary, so our assumption is that we will not unless the assembly calls for it."

The Rev. Frank E. Lay [Rocky Mountain Synod] stated, "We already voted down going until 7:00 p.m. [Continuing until] 6:45 p.m. does not make much difference to those of us who must eat on some form of schedule."

An unidentified voting member asked, "If the time is extended, when would the Eucharist be offered?" Bishop Chilstrom responded, "Fifteen minutes after recess."

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-420; No-510

Defeated: To extend the session until 6:45 p.m.

The Rev. Franklin D. Fry [New Jersey Synod] stated, "I am very much concerned about the use of the term, 'binding,' either about the social statements of the predecessor church bodies or in this church's statement on abortion. We do not have binding social statements. I think one of the difficulties we have had in the whole debate throughout this church on human sexuality is that we have had many people assume that they had a direct, uncluttered, unmixed word from God on specific sexual questions that was somehow equal even to absolution and the Gospel. I really believe that we need to come clean that the only absolute we know is the absolution, and everything else is a relative, best guess. Thereby, we are all relativized into a community of moral deliberation as we discuss how we apply and live out or bind the conscience of its people by a social statement."

Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

Motion F: Study of Human Sexuality

Reference: Continued on Minutes, pages 645-660, 661-695.

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Lorraine G. Bergquist, co-chair of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, to introduce resolutions related to the study of human sexuality. Ms. Bergquist stated, "There are three motions relating to the topic of human sexuality. The first is Motion F, which was distributed to voting members yesterday." It was then determined that distribution had not been made to one section of the assembly.

Bishop Harold S. Weiss [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] asked whether the assembly might move on to one of the other motions regarding this issue. Ms. Bergquist responded that all three motions had been distributed together.

Ms. Robin Kieffer [Saint Paul Area Synod] said, "Since quite a few of us have not seen this yet, I do not think any of us would be prepared to vote on anything."

The Rev. Carl A. Jensen [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] commented, "My cursory reading of the recommendation in Motion F is that it directly contradicts the memorial that we just adopted. If that is indeed true, then it should be out of order."

Bishop Chilstrom responded, "Even if I were to rule that way, the voting members need to see Motion F, in order to know whether or not they want to test the . . . [chair's decision to rule the motion out of order]. It appears to me that it is not going to be available that quickly and we are simply going to have to delay this, since we are down near the hour [for recess]. It might be best, if we see to it that you have this first thing in the morning and we will have to pick it up at some later time."

Pastor Jensen served notice that he would rise to his point of order at that appropriate time.

The Rev. Glenn W. Lundahl [Sierra Pacific Synod] indicated that he wished to amend the agenda for Tuesday morning, August 22. He asked "that we move up the work of the Reference and Counsel Committee so that report would be the first item of business in the morning and that [other business] be delayed until later in the morning." Bishop Chilstrom responded, "We will

look at that very carefully over night and I will advise you in the morning of how we recommend dealing with the morning's agenda. Then, you can respond to that."

Bishop J. Philip Wahl [Southeast Michigan Synod] said, "I would like to get some clarification to a question. This resolution was submitted and we were told that it would be placed at this point in the agenda. Therefore, [the Committee of] Reference and Counsel has placed it here, that is, Motion F, which is being challenged." Bishop Chilstrom responded that, while he understood the concern, ". . . a couple of hundred people have not seen it yet and in my judgment it is not fair to deal with it until tomorrow."

Ms. Gloria Marshall [Greater Milwaukee Synod] moved that, in view of all the business that had yet to be completed, the assembly reconvene at 8:00 a.m. the following day:

Moved;

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To reconvene at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 22, 1995.

The Rev. Barbara K. Lundblad [Metropolitan New York Synod] requested that the documentation related to Motions F, G, and H, "if possible, be made available this evening to those of us who do not have them, rather than in the morning, especially now that we are starting earlier." An unidentified voting member reported that copies of the document in question were available on the tables at the rear of the assembly hall. Bishop Chilstrom thanked the voting member for the announcement and asked that the pages and members of the Reference and Counsel Committee distribute the document as voting members exited the assembly following recess. "We will do everything we can to get this in your hands by tomorrow morning at the latest, and hopefully right now," he said.

An unidentified voting member moved to extend the session:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-373; No-504

Defeated: To extend this session to 6:15 p.m.

Announcements

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to make several announcements. Evaluation forms were to be returned to the registration desk prior to departure, he said. Copies of the hymnal supplement, *With One Voice*, were now available to voting members who did not receive one earlier during this assembly.

Recess

Bishop Reginald H. Holle [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] offered the closing prayer. Plenary Session Ten recessed at 5:59 p.m.

Plenary Session Eleven
Tuesday, August 22, 1995
8:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom called the eleventh and final plenary session of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to order at 8:01 a.m.

Opening Prayer and Hymn

Opening Prayer was led by the Rev. David G. Gabel [North/West Lower Michigan Synod], a member of the Church Council who was completing his term of office. Mr. Scott Weidler served as organist.

Bishop Chilstrom thanked assembly participants for beginning the session earlier than originally scheduled, in order that the business before the assembly might be completed. He welcomed the cable-television audience and invited viewers who were not members of a church to visit a nearby ELCA congregation where, he said, they would find a warm welcome. Bishop Chilstrom then outlined the morning's agenda.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 567-579, 581-583, 589; continued from Minutes, pages 11-12, 35, 41, 91, 105, 159-160, 253, 257; Minutes Exhibit A, pages 697-712.

Secretary Lowell G. Almen, reporting on behalf of the Credentials Committee, presented the committee's final report as of 7:51 a.m., Tuesday, August 22, 1995:

Voting Members			
Ordained Members	Female	93	
		Male	317
		Total	410
Lay Members	Female	331	
		Male	306
		Total	637
Total			1,047
ELCA Officers			4
Total Voting Membership			1,051

Of the 1,051 registered voting members, 98 were persons of color or persons whose primary language was other than English. Secretary Almen stated, "That [number of 1,051] confirms the total that was provided in the audit by synodical bishops. Where there were any missing registration cards, those have been certified as well."

Announcements

Secretary Almen commented, “For the preparation of an event such as this, when you look at the total number of volunteers in advance preparation, as well as staff, and when you consider the number of volunteers on site during the course of the assembly, as well as staff, we find that for each one of us who happens to sit here as a voting member, there is someone who has been and is working behind the scenes to help us in the operation of the assembly. The ‘supreme allied commander’ for all of those forces is Ms. Mary Beth Nowak, director for meeting management in the ELCA Office of the Secretary. I wanted you to have a chance to greet her.” The members of the assembly greeted and thanked Ms. Nowak with applause. Secretary Almen then indicated that he wished to introduce one additional member of his staff, namely, the supervisor for rosters. “Beginning this coming month, she will observe her 39th anniversary of working for churchwide offices. Ms. Alpha Ekstrom is one of those dedicated servants of this church upon whom we depend greatly,” he said. Secretary Almen invited Ms. Ekstrom to stand and to be acknowledged by the members of the assembly.

Secretary Almen noted that assembly members thus far had consumed 1,434 gallons of coffee. He asked voting members to return their plastic name-badge holders, so that they might be reused, and he also encouraged the recycling of paper that had been distributed during the course of the assembly and which might be discarded at the end of the assembly.

In response to a request of Mr. Paul Jansak [Southern Ohio Synod], the assembly sang “Happy Birthday” to Bishop Kenneth H. Sauer [Southern Ohio Synod], who would celebrate his birthday on Wednesday, August 23.

The Rev. Glenn W. Lundahl [Sierra Pacific Synod] sought to move that the agenda be modified, “because I understand we have a number (20 or more) of resolutions for the assembly to consider from [the Committee of] Reference and Counsel and that we make that the first order of business this morning and make that a priority ahead of the greetings. It is important that we talk to one another.” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “These are very brief greetings. We are talking two or three minutes at the most and certainly we will put the greetings in sometime during the day. If you want to put them later, that is up to [the assembly]. Are you moving that we dispense with the greetings or move them to a later time?” Pastor Lundahl answered, “I just want to make a point that we need to allow enough time and not be rushed in our consideration of the resolutions.” Bishop Chilstrom said, “If we get on with the greetings that will help. Let us do that right now.”

Greetings:

Lutheran Laity Movement for Stewardship

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Mr. Clinton P. Schroeder, executive director, and Mr. Darrell Zenk, president of Lutheran Laity Movement for Stewardship (LLM). Mr. Zenk brought greetings and addressed the assembly, stating, “LLM’s mission is to provide stewardship education resources to ELCA congregations and others. Lutheran Laity Movement for Stewardship was founded 88 years ago. We remain resolute in our determination to be a strong voice for responsible stewardship within this church. Our members, concerned about the stewardship of all of life, seek to impart this same spirit to others, in order that individual lives may be enriched and the stewardship response of members of this church may be enhanced.”

He mentioned the variety of programs, services, and publications offered by the organization and drew particular attention to the publication, “Faith in Action.” Mr. Zenk stated, “Our

fund-raising and counseling service has served more than 3,500 congregations, providing them with professional, scripturally-based, campaign direction. This service has helped these congregations to raise well over \$400 million for capital improvement purposes. . . . Lutheran Laity Movement for Stewardship is a self-supporting organization related to the Division for Congregational Ministries. We are committed to providing a stewardship ministry that supplements, as well as complements, the stewardship services provided by the Division for Congregational Ministries.”

Greetings: Military Chaplains

Bishop Chilstrom introduced Rear Admiral A. Byron Holderby Jr., deputy chief of chaplains, U.S. Navy, and an ELCA ordained minister, and the Rev. Lloyd W. Lyngdal, assistant to the bishop and assistant for federal chaplaincies in the ELCA Department for Synodical Relations. Chaplain Holderby addressed the assembly, stating, “I bring greetings from chaplains, Protestant, [Roman] Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim, from the Army, Navy, and Air Force—and happily, a word of recognition, too, of the 25 years of ordained service by the women of our church. Coincidentally, we celebrate those same 25 years of ministry of women in the armed forces and working side by side with them has been a privilege.”

Admiral Holderby thanked voting members and indeed this whole church for the “support of the young men and women in the services. They are young and they are filled with hope; they are anxious to serve their country, as well as to learn some skills and to improve themselves through their service. I know you are proud of their courage and their willingness to endure whatever it takes to get the job done.

“Institutions, including the armed forces, have had to confront such issues as sexual harassment, spouse and family abuse, violence, and the difficulties inherent in single parenthood. Your chaplains have played a key role in addressing these problems, bringing God’s healing word to people who are seeking to find hope, looking for assurance that someone out there cares, and seeking a sense of community.”

Noting that 82 percent of those serving in the military are age 35 or younger, many of whom are away from home for the first time, Admiral Holderby commented on their need for the Church’s presence. “The task is made even more challenging,” he said, “by the fact that 57 percent of the recruits coming [into the military] are coming from dysfunctional homes, and 15 to 20 percent have experienced violence and abuse.” He then described two chaplain-corp programs presently in place designed to attempt to meet these problems.

The Chaplains’ Religious Enrichment Development Operation (CREDO) “is a retreat ministry, and it has as its core a 72-hour event called a ‘Personal Growth Retreat.’ The retreat is designed to help people find the hope that they seek, to discover that there are those who care, and that community is not just a dream. We have six CREDO centers around the world (three overseas and three in this country), and last year they reached more than 5,000 people.”

Admiral Holderby then noted that the second program is a neighborhood program in San Diego, Calif., “in a run-down area where drugs and violence are very much in evidence. The chaplains there have begun a program designed to reach the community through the children.” The program is patterned after one in the Bronx, N.Y., he said. Admiral Holderby commented that he wanted assembly members to get even a small “flavor for the ways that through chaplains, the church is reaching lives in diverse and far-flung places.” He requested the support and prayers of assembly members.

Elections: Report of the Second Common Ballot for
Vacancies on Churchwide Boards and Committees

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 955-1025; continued from Minutes,
pages 289, 297, 565-567.

Mr. David J. Hardy, chair of the Elections Committee, stated that the printed report of the second common ballot for filling vacancies on churchwide boards and committees had been distributed to voting members. There being no objections to omitting the reading of the names of those elected, Bishop Chilstrom declared the persons listed on the printed report were elected to the positions and terms indicated.

Assembly

Action By Acclamation

CA95.7.60 To receive the written report of the elections committee on the results of the second ballot for Church Council and churchwide board and committee positions, to dispense with the reading of the results, and to request that the chair hereby declare elected in keeping with this church's bylaws those persons receiving a majority of the votes cast.

Church Council

The Rev. Larry V. Smoose, Langhorne, Pa. (7F)

Ms. Beverly A. Peterson, Billings, Mont. (1F)

Division for Congregational Ministries

Rev. Susan R. Carloss, Alta, Iowa (5E)

Rev. John B. Mawhirter, Sandusky, Ohio (6D)

Rev. Gary J. Benedict, Lakeville, Minn. (3H)

Ms. Ann Seitz-Brown, Ephrata, Pa. (8D)

Mr. Ronald C. Bruggeman, Omaha, Neb. (4A)

Mr. Larry Thiele, Tokio, N.D. (3B)

Division for Ministry

Rev. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe, Redwood Falls, Minn. (3F)

Rev. Robert L. Quam, Billings, Mont. (1F)

Ms. Josefina Nieves-Lebron, Bayamon, P.R. (9F)

Ms. Allison L. Carlson, Lancaster, Pa. (8D)

Division for Outreach

Rev. Catherine K. Mode, Oshkosh, Wis. (5I)

Ms. Judy Engebretson, Crystal Lake, Ill. (5B)

Mr. Daniel L. Free, Glendale, Ariz. (2D)

Mr. Norman E. Briggs, Chicago, Ill. (5A)

Division for Higher Education and Schools

Ms. Patricia A. Schibler, Van Wert, Ohio (6D)

Division for Church in Society

Rev. Gladys G. Moore, Newark, N.J. (7A)

Ms. Mary L. Bergstrom, Elwood, Neb. (4A)

Mr. Charles J. Lusch, Wyomissing, Pa. (7E)

Division for Global Mission

Rev. Martha L. McCracken, San Juan, P.R. (9F)

Rev. James A. Scherer, Chicago, Ill. (5A)

Ms. Shai Celeste, Newtown, Pa. (7F)

Publishing House

Ms. Julie K. Ageson, Moorhead, Minn. (3D)

Board of Pensions

Mr. Willis I. Else, Hudson, Ohio (6E)

Nominating Committee

Rev. Robert L. Vogel, Waverly, Iowa (5F)

Mr. Keith P. Brown, Roanoke, Va. (9A)

Committee on Discipline (Term to 1997)

Ms. Marybeth A. Peterson, Omaha, Neb. (4A)

Amendments to ELCA

Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 851-875, continued from Minutes, pages 13, 277-279, 297-321; continued on Minutes, pages 637, 644-645.

Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions;

Constitution for Synods

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 859-860.

Secretary Lowell G. Almen noted that proposed amendments to the governing documents of this church, which previously were removed from the motion for en bloc disposition of such amendments for individual consideration, and which have common elements were provisions 10.31.a.9), †S6.03.a.4), and †S8.12.d., 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 859-860. He then recommended that those three items be considered as a group, but seriatim. Bishop Chilstrom asked for rationale for the procedure, which he interpreted as discussing them one by one, but acting on them together. Secretary Almen answered, "In my reading of them, they provide comparable provisions between the churchwide governing documents and the synodical governing documents in instances where there would need to be consistency."

Moved;

Seconded: To adopt en bloc the following amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

10.31.a.9) Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry; to commission approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as an associate in ministry; to consecrate approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a deaconess; and to consecrate approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a diaconal minister; and shall install (or provide for the installation of): . . .

†S6.03.a.4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the consecration of deaconesses, and the consecration of diaconal ministers of this church; and

†S8.12. d. Commission (or provide for the commissioning of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call

for service as associates in ministry; consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as deaconesses; and consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as diaconal ministers of this church.

The Rev. Olaf Roynesdal [South Dakota Synod] requested that the chair rule that “these amendments are out of order, in that they introduce a second ordination into the church.” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “I think you are opening up a question about an entire issue that we have been debating for many months on this and I would rule it out of order at this point.” Pastor Roynesdal appealed the decision of the chair.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-685; No-173

Carried: To uphold the ruling of the chair.

The Rev. John H. P. Reumann [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] addressed a question to the staff of the Division for Ministry. He asked, “Is there a definition of the term, ‘consecrate,’ as used in these [provisions] and does it relate to the laying on of hands?”

The Rev. Joseph M. Wagner, executive director of the Division for Ministry, responded, “The definition of ‘consecrate’ is contained in a paper that the Rev. Paul R. Nelson [director for the Study of Ministry] has written. I believe also Mr. Nelvin L. Vos, [a member of the] board of the Division for Ministry, is prepared to respond to this question. ‘Consecrate’ is understood to be a rite of entry, which involves the stating of prayers and the assigning of tasks to persons to do official ministries on behalf of this church. The specific entry rite for consecration has not yet been developed by the Division for Congregational Ministries, nor has the entry rite been developed yet for the commissioning for associates in ministry. In my judgment, the laying on of hands is not a requirement for consecration and, if this were an issue to be determined by the assembly, the entry rite could be fashioned in such a way as to follow the guidance of the assembly on this matter. Otherwise, and I think this would be better, it should be left to the persons who are responsible for the development of such rites in this church in the Division for Congregational Ministries.”

Mr. Vos commented, “I would urge the assembly to keep the language of consecration for the rite that is being discussed for at least three reasons: (1) ecumenical [because of] the way in which other bodies, including the United Methodist Church, and other churches throughout the world have used and associated consecration with the diaconate. (2) Our own tradition, both in Europe and the United States, including our own deaconess community, has used ‘setting apart’ or consecrational language for its rite. (3) Consecration, rather than commissioning, is appropriate, if that is a lifelong commitment. Commissioning implies sending forth. Consecration, as I have worked with this term, implies the sense that the persons who have committed themselves to this ministry have set themselves apart and, therefore, this is appropriate. I had the privilege of being on the staff of Gettysburg Seminary for an educational event this summer. While meeting these candidates, it was very clear that the interweaving of the diaconate and consecration is something that this church should commit itself to. Therefore, rather than delaying this new ministry, I strongly urge the assembly to support the language of consecration.”

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke against the motion.

He said, “As I read the history of the development of this issue, the Conference of Bishops had recommended that the language of commissioning be used in place of the language of consecration, and it was overruled by the Church Council. I would like to hear the reasoning of the [members of the] Conference of Bishops, if one or more of them would care to speak to the issue.” Secretary Lowell G. Almen drew the attention of assembly members to “pages 875A and 875B that provide on page 875B the rationale of the Division for Ministry for the recommendation that was submitted to the Church Council and upon which the council acted. On page 875B, you have the background information related to the discussion of this matter in the Conference of Bishops at its October 1994 meeting.” Bishop Chilstrom invited members of the Conference of Bishops to respond to the question, if any so wished.

Bishop Peter Rogness [Greater Milwaukee Synod] commented, “As indicated in the background materials, the discussion among the Conference of Bishops was indeed far-ranging, and the Conference of Bishops was by no means of one mind, but a majority did vote in favor of commissioning. The predominant rationale was respecting the broad discussion and final decision of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, coming out of the Study of Ministry, when the church in assembly spoke strongly against the ordination of diaconal ministers and for the understanding of the office of diaconal ministry as being a lay office. There was considerable feeling that by using ‘consecration’ we were ‘fudging’ that distinction somewhat, and that this church had expressed its mind in 1993 that this was to be considered a lay office. I think it is worth pointing out that, in that discussion, the vote did not simply fall along the lines of those who had previously favored or opposed ordination [for diaconal ministers] but, in fact, several bishops who had favored ordination of the diaconal ministry office spoke in favor of commissioning, recognizing that is where this church was at this point and still holding out hope that at some point in the future this church would make a decision to ordain the diaconal ministry office. But, this church had not chosen to do that in 1993. So, to be consistent with what we had said at that time, it was cleaner that all of those offices that are now considered lay offices be uniformly entered by a rite of commissioning.”

Bishop James E. Sudbrock [Metropolitan New York Synod] concurred with Bishop Rogness’ observations. He said, “I happen to be one of those who believes strongly in the ordination of diaconal ministers, but it seems to me that we need to maintain the tension of saying that at this point this church still says they are lay people. I think the term, ‘commissioning,’ is a much clearer term and hopefully one that will continue to cause us pain, so that some day we will do the real thing and ordain them and not consecrate them.”

Pastor Wagner commented on the rationale of the Division for Ministry in recommending the use of the term, “consecration.” He said, “It is important for the assembly to understand how the Division for Ministry has dealt with this issue since the last assembly. When the assembly voted to establish diaconal ministry in this church . . . there was long debate at that assembly about the entry rite. In fact, there was such long debate that it almost moved away from the mission purpose of this group [diaconal ministers] into a sort of hierarchical or status argument. The Division for Ministry does not want that. We clearly understand diaconal ministers to be a rostered lay office; there is no ‘fudging’ of the line: This is a lay office in this church.

“However, the historical precedent for diaconal ministers and deaconesses has always been consecration as the entry rite. This is the case with [the ELCA] deaconess community; this is the case in the United Methodist Church; this is the case in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, which just voted on diaconal ministers’ entry rites this summer and voted for

consecration. This is not an aberration in the ecumenical circles of this church, nor is it a movement toward any kind of clergy status. It is simply the historic rite that has belonged to diaconal service in the Christian church for hundreds of years. This church, in fact, would be aberrant, if it commissioned such persons, because no denomination of which we are aware uses the entry rite of commissioning for this group of ministers.

“A further point is that this issue, which is before the assembly, if it is not voted on and moved forward at this point, will leave the group of diaconal ministers with no entry rite for another two years, and we have people waiting. We strongly encourage the assembly to support the recommendation of the board of the Division for Ministry, which has responsibility for working with such matters, and the recommendation of the Church Council.”

The Rev. Frank D. Janzow [Greater Milwaukee Synod] stated, “I speak strongly in favor of this language and recommendation. One of the great blessings of this church has been its affirmation of diversity in many places in many ways and there is room for variety in our public ministries as well. These initiation rites are a way to lift up that variety and celebrate them as a gift in ministry.”

Bishop Chilstrom asked Pastor Reumann, if he wished to comment, having heard the response to his question. Pastor Reumann said, “The problem with the term, ‘consecrate,’ (and I am not encouraged with Pastor Paul R. Nelson’s definition of it) is that when you combine with it the laying on of hands (and, if you turn to page 724 [of 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2], you will see that is in the picture), you are approaching a quasi-ordination. The difficulty with the term, ‘consecrate,’ is its ambiguity. The RSV [Revised Standard Version of the Bible] once tried to use, ‘consecrate,’ instead of ‘sanctify’ in its translation. It is sanctification language, and the trouble with it is that, if it means ‘take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee,’ it applies to every Christian. If it means something transmitted by the laying on of hands, it approaches ordination. Furthermore, we are in the danger of providing gradations [of lay ministry], if we commission one group, set apart another group, and consecrate still others.

“Finally, the ecumenical reasons: If we go the route of several-fold ministries and ordain such persons, I would like it to be consonant with what Roman Catholics, Anglicans, or others do and not provide some sort of second rate ordination. I, therefore, speak in favor of the term, ‘commission,’ which has had strong support, as a number of speakers have indicated, for practical, ecumenical, and consistency reasons with what the assembly decided in [1993].”

Bishop Stanley N. Olson [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke against the proposed amendments “on a different basis. Whether we use the term, ‘consecrate’ or ‘commission,’ I propose that our rostered lay offices ought to be treated the same. Pastor Wagner has insisted that the deaconesses and diaconal ministers are understood as rostered lay persons, as are the associates in ministry. Most of those people also have made a life-long commitment to this church—they have been prepared and certified. Whatever term we use, it ought to be the same for all of our rostered lay ministries.”

The Rev. William L. Hurst Jr. [Metropolitan New York Synod] commented that he spoke as “a formerly consecrated deacon of the AELC [The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches] and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America until 1992.” He stated, “I speak in favor of the Division for Ministry’s ‘consecration’ language. Interestingly, yesterday we had a Bible study on Acts 6, and it reminds me that the stories of Stephen and the other deacons, at least that is what Martin Luther thought they were, are fuzzy. They are fuzzy in the text. It seems to me that the crisis of the injustice of feeding the widows was a justice issue, and one to

which the apostles responded. But, the fact is that it was an emergency issue and they did not take ten years or so to study it, or, I suppose, the widows would have starved. Instead, they sought out people of good character who were fit and then they did an amazing thing. Instead of just saying, ‘Well, you just do it until the widows are full,’ they sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They prayed and they laid on hands. They did not seem to see a problem with the fuzziness of emergency, evangelically free action and good order. I do not think the reformers saw the problem either. I think the reason we need ‘consecrate’ is because of a further interesting paradox—that the Spirit used those deacons to spread the Gospel, but not in the way the apostles imagined. Stephen could not just do justice and shut up—he had to proclaim the Gospel until he was killed. Philip could not just feed the widows—he had to become a catechist, an out-reacher to the non-Judaic community. That is why we need consecrated deacons, for the fuzziness, not in spite of it.”

The Rev. George W. Forell [Southeastern Iowa Synod] expressed fear that “the discussion leads us to believe that the ministry of all baptized believers is sort of a second-rate ministry and then there is a super-ministry of baptized believers for which we have this consecration term. I would much rather see that we emphasize the ministry of all baptized believers and reduce the number of ‘super-lay-people’ and have all lay people see their full responsibility in various assignments or commissions in this church. If you want to go to a three-fold ministry of ordained people, you should do that clearly. At this point, this would add only confusion and I hope that we will vote this [use of the term, consecration,] down.”

Speaking in favor of the recommendation, the Rev. James G. Cobb, a member of the Church Council, reflected on the council’s rationale in supporting the use of the term, consecration. He said, “One . . . [reason] was simply a sense in calling this church to its own language. Just as this church made a move some years ago to move from presidents to bishops, the title of bishop is understood in this world for what it means. When we take the word, commissioning, we have boards of commissioners who serve politically. In our Navy town of Norfolk, Va., we know what commissioning is—it has to do with rank and installation into an office and service. But, this church’s own language is the language that historically has used the word, consecration—the setting apart. So, there is that language clarity that we would hope would come forth.

“Another reason emerged in listening to those lay persons across this church who fill the office. ‘Associate in ministry’ now is much more defined in terms of congregational and local arrangements to serve this church. The diaconal ministries and the deaconess community do invest in their sense of call a life-long commitment. We [the Church Council] heard from those communities and the language hoped for was the language of consecration. It simply means ‘set apart for a special calling,’ and that is what this term means.”

The Rev. John B. Mawhirter [Northwestern Ohio Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-839; No-110
Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly Two-Thirds Vote Required
Action: Yes-641; No-297
CA95.7.61 To adopt en bloc the following amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

10.31.a.9) Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry; to commission approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as an associate in ministry; to consecrate approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a deaconess; and to consecrate approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as a diaconal minister; and shall install (or provide for the installation of): . . .

†S6.03.a.4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the consecration of deaconesses, and the consecration of diaconal ministers of this church; and

†S8.12.d. Commission (or provide for the commissioning of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as associates in ministry; consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as deaconesses; and consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as diaconal ministers of this church.

Model Constitution for Congregations: C13.04.

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 872; continued on Minutes, pages 637, 644-647.

Secretary Lowell G. Almen indicated that the final item that previously was removed from the motion for en bloc disposition of amendments to the governing documents of this church for individual consideration was provision C13.04. in the Model Constitution for Congregations.

The Rev. George E. Keck [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] indicated that he desired to move to amend the provision by deleting the final sentence, but that he had experienced procedural difficulties in submitting the motion to the Committee of Reference and Counsel. He requested personal privilege, in order to explain and to resolve the dilemma. Pastor Keck stated, “. . . It puts me in a dilemma as to how I am to be assisted in facilitating a very minor matter, but a very important matter for me in my work in promoting mutual ministry committees. I do not quite understand how this could come before us.”

Secretary Almen requested clarification of the issue that Pastor Keck wished to address. Pastor Keck responded, “To make it possible for congregations to select the best . . . person to serve on a mutual ministry committee. We do not have such a restriction in the constitution for the mutual ministry committee of our presiding bishop, nor do we have such a limiting sentence related to the mutual ministry committee for a synodical bishop. I fail to understand why we would not want to select the best persons regardless of what office or role they play for our parish rostered persons.”

General Counsel David J. Hardy offered the following suggestion to the chair, “As I understand the voting member, his concern relates to the last sentence in C13.04. That sentence is not proposed for amendment by the Church Council, and, therefore, in terms of the removal [of

the amendment] from en bloc, we would be voting only on the Church Council proposal, which is the shaded and the underlined language [deleting “Staff Support” and substituting “Mutual Ministry” in two places in the first sentence of the provision]. An amendment with 15 names would be in order with respect to [a newly introduced amendment of] the last sentence, but for the fact that the deadline in the Rules of Procedure for the assembly has passed. The assembly can waive that deadline in the rules by a motion to suspend, provided that in the next 30 minutes or whenever the chair would call the matter, the voting member could provide the additional 13 names, since 15 names is a bylaw requirement. This would bring it before the assembly and the assembly could make the modest change in the final sentence of this bylaw, if the assembly so wished.”

Bishop Chilstrom reiterated, “The requirement is 15 names?” Mr. Hardy responded, “Fifteen names is a bylaw requirement. That cannot be waived, but I should think there would be 15 people who would volunteer their names to facilitate the resolution of the matter.”

Mr. Hardy was referring to ELCA churchwide bylaw 9.53.02., which states:

A Model Constitution for Congregations shall be provided by this church. Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in Chapter 22 for amendments of the bylaws of this church.

The provision referred to in Chapter 22 is constitutional provision 22.21., which states:

Bylaws not in conflict with this constitution may be adopted or amended at any regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly when presented in writing by the Church Council or by at least 15 members of the assembly. An amendment proposed by members of the assembly shall immediately be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation. . .

Mr. Nelvin L. Vos [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod], speaking as a member of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, noted that the committee had considered the resolution submitted by Pastor Keck and had determined to recommend the matter be referred to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council. He said, “This will come under Motion K from the Reference and Counsel Committee and that might be a simpler way of dealing with it, because, if the party wishes to recommend a different resolution than referral, it could be done at that point.”

Since there were now two suggestions for resolution of the matter, Bishop Chilstrom recommended that Pastor Keck confer with General Counsel Hardy and indicated that the assembly would attempt to address the matter further before it adjourned later in the day.

Resolution on Violence Against Women (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 805-806; continued from Minutes, pages 475-481.

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that consideration of the Church Council’s recommendation regarding violence against women now would resume. He called upon Ms. Joanne Chadwick, executive director of the Commission for Women, to assist with the discussion.

The Rev. Connie S. Miller [Delaware-Maryland Synod] requested that she be permitted to withdraw the amendment she had proposed during Plenary Session Nine and to move a new

amendment at this time. Bishop Chilstrom asked for objection to the request. Hearing none, he invited Pastor Miller to proceed.

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the recommendation of the Church Council by inserting after the first section an additional item:

2. denounce the exploitation in visual print and electronic media of violence against women that simultaneously portrays, assumes, and re-enforces the apathetic response of our society toward such violence;

and

To renumber subsequent sections accordingly.

Pastor Miller spoke to the amendment, stating, “We wanted to get at three things in this and do it in a brief way: (1) that the media has some responsibility in the way in which we see and receive and experience violence; (2) that it is the violence itself that we are opposed to, but also (3) that the media portrays a particular response to that violence which we pick up and we ourselves then respond in similar ways. We hope that this statement will strengthen this document and call the media, via this body, to some responsibility.”

Mr. David C. Brady [Lower Susquehanna Synod] stated, “My sin is that I am a member of the mass media. I am a broadcaster. I would like to bring your attention to [the item] which ‘encourages all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make their homes, schools, and places of employment safe places where all may be free from physical abuse and those elements of the mass media that extol violence and the exploitation of women.’ I believe that this provision places responsibility on us to take bold action, to take charge of what our children are exposed to. If we see something, a display or billboard, or we hear something on the radio or TV, bring it to their attention and to the attention of others. We have the power to turn it off, to change it. Do not buy it, and encourage others to do the same. I think the finger pointing toward the mass media as the devil for all of us is improper for this body. We need to take more proactive action and turn it off ourselves.”

The Rev. George W. Forell [Southeastern Iowa Synod] stated, “I support very strongly this amendment, because the notion that parents have absolute power to turn this [electronic media] off is simply an illusion. The kids can go next door and watch it. It seems to me that there is a certain environment that is created. I cannot climb up and tear that billboard down. There have to be some directions given to the media and they should come from groups like this—that we are really sick and tired of being constantly bombarded with ads and propaganda that seems to support violence.”

Ms. Darie Kidwell [Southeastern Synod] spoke against the amendment, stating, “I think [the matter] is covered in the third section, and also I realize this is a reality, but I think it is really kind of sad. We as intelligent adults are letting this media influence us so much. . . . We need to take responsibility for our actions.”

Ms. Susan Rodine [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] spoke in favor of amendment, stating, “The point is well taken that we have individual responsibility for controlling the media that is turned on to our children in our homes, but I think that we need to rise above this culture of individualism, which places the responsibility for what shapes our communal being to

individuals in their homes, and we need to begin as a collective to create the kind of community ethos that we want our children to grow up in. This amendment, speaking to our communal responsibilities, is not redundant with the later item that speaks to our individual responsibilities.”

Mr. Gary Nelson [Northern Illinois Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-865; No-46

Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-781; No-153;

Carried: To amend the recommendation of the Church Council by inserting, on page 805, second column, after the first section an additional item:,

2. denounce the exploitation in visual print and electronic media of violence against women that simultaneously portrays, assumes, and re-enforces the apathetic response of our society toward such violence;

and

To renumber subsequent sections accordingly.

The Rev. Philip L. Thorsen [Upper Susquehanna Synod] expressed concern “that this might include literature, and, if that is the case, would such books as *The Color Purple* be understood in such a way that it should not be read in public school or as part of library resources?”

The Rev. Randall L. Ouimette [Southern California (West) Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the item that states, “encourage all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make their homes, schools, and places of employment safe places where all may be free from physical abuse and those elements of the mass media that extol violence and the exploitation of women;” by inserting the words, “emotional, and verbal,” after the word, “physical,” and before the word, “abuse.”

Pastor Ouimette spoke to the motion stating, “In my ministry, I find often the violence that women suffer comes at the expense of words that are innocuously spoken and other emotional aspects of violence. This [amendment] is appropriate in the spirit of this concern.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-818; No-80

Carried: To amend the item that states, “encourage all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make their homes, schools, and places of employment safe places where all may be free from physical abuse and those elements of the mass media that extol violence and the exploitation of women;” by inserting the words, “emotional, and verbal,” after the word, “physical,” and before the word, “abuse.”

Mr. Richard Shiles [Delaware-Maryland Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To delete the section, “encourage the U.S. government to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and encourage church leaders and members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and church-related agencies and institutions to advocate for the ratification of this important agreement;”.

Mr. Shiles spoke to the motion, stating, “I have not read the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. I have no idea or understanding of what it says, what it may commit our nation to, or what it may commit our church to. Without the ability to have read this document and to understand what it commits us to, I strongly encourage that we delete this portion from the recommendation.”

Ms. Joanne Chadwick commented, “I would be disappointed if we did that, because it addresses some very basic discrimination issues. I really do understand the frustration of not having the document [in hand]. . . . It has some basic things, such as, under marriage and family law, the right to enter freely into marriage and choose a spouse. We are talking about some very global kinds of things, not the more sophisticated things that we in this country are involved in. The Commission for Women and our [Lutheran] Office for Governmental Affairs have been involved in the shaping of this, so we have had opportunity to be part of that. I would hope that we would know that we would not enter our church into something that would be difficult for us in regard to this particular issue. We are dealing with some very basic issues.”

The Rev. Bruce H. Davidson [New Jersey Synod] spoke in opposition to the amendment, stating, “There are many things that we have discussed and voted on in this assembly that have had all kinds of background information, which has come to us through various commissions and agencies of this church. We are not all able to read everything, but we are willing to trust those who have taken the time to study these things intensely. This resolution came to us through the Commission for Women and the Church Council. I believe that they would look this over very carefully and would not ask us to commit ourselves to anything that would be detrimental to our interests either as a church or as a nation. I think we are called to trust those bodies as we vote on this particular resolution.”

Mr. Trevis Butcher [Montana Synod] spoke in favor of the motion to delete. He said, “I believe that the document, which we have before us currently, specifically lays out what we support as a church. There is not any question about that. . . . [The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)] a document that we have not seen, which we have no control over how it is used and where it is used.”

Ms. Jonelle Collins [Northern Great Lakes Synod] spoke in favor of the motion to delete, stating, “It has concerned me right from the beginning [that] even though we will have representation at this conference, we do not know what they will decide and we do not know what will be in the document.”

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] called the question on all matters before the house.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-866; No-50

Carried: To move the previous question on all matters pending.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-297; No-618

Defeated: To delete the section, “encourage the U.S. government to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and encourage church leaders and members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and church-related agencies and institutions to advocate for the ratification of this important agreement;”.

Ms. Barbara Bernstengel [New Jersey Synod] inquired, “I support the recommendation of the Church Council and, if this is passed, where does the area of responsibility lie for implementing these resolutions? I can infer my own responsibilities to be an advocate and to communicate with my congressional leaders. But, for example, item number five calls for the development of resources and programs and I assume that has budget implications, and items six and seven call for this church to communicate with congressional leaders. If this is passed, will this be referred back to the Church Council?”

It was noted that resolutions having budget implications are referred accustomedly to the Church Council.

Assembly

Action Yes-858; No-64

CA95.7.62 Whereas, violence against women is a tragic reality that pervades societies worldwide, expressing itself in not only extreme forms (such as beating, sexual abuse, rape, torture, and killing), but also cultural practices (such as discrimination, female infanticide, genital mutilation, dowry, and widow deaths); and

Whereas, Jesus Christ calls each Christian and the whole Church into a mission of love and compassion toward all peoples, and the Holy Scriptures repeatedly call the people of God to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, participating in God’s mission, commits itself in its constitution to “lift its voice in concord and work with forces for good, to serve humanity, cooperating with church and other groups participating in activities that promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged” (churchwide constitutional provision ELCA 4.03.g.); and

Whereas, the Lutheran World Federation Council at its meeting in Kristiansand, Norway, in June 1993, asked the member churches to provide educational programs on the different forms of violence against women, to offer social support and practical aid for women, and to advocate for social policies and laws that protect women; and

Whereas, by action of the Church Council in April 1988, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America joined with other Christian churches in the “Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women,” the focus of which is on:

- “the full participation of women in both Church and society,”
- “the commitment to justice and peace for all,” and
- “theology and spirituality which flow out of women’s faith and life experience”

(Church Council minutes, CC88.4.53); and

Whereas, widespread discrimination against women continues to permit the rationalization of violence against women and may result in a violation of their human rights; and

Whereas, the report from the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, held in June

1993 in Vienna, Austria, calls for action by governments and non-governmental organizations to prevent violence against women, e.g., domestic violence, abuse, rape, and killing of women during civil wars and at refugee camps, and considers these abhorrent acts as violations of the human rights of women; and

Whereas, 130 nations have ratified the International Convention against the Discrimination of Women, but the United States is among the minority that have not; and

Whereas, the United Nations has drafted a Declaration against Violence against Women and the U.N. Commission on Human Rights has appointed a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women; and

Whereas, the international relief and development agencies with whom the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America cooperates have identified the suffering of women as a major concern and have called upon churches and global institutions to respond; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America:

1. denounce and combat the beating, sexual abuse, raping, and killing that threaten the life and safety of women everywhere;

2. denounce the exploitation in visual print and electronic media of violence against women that simultaneously portrays, assumes, and reinforces the apathetic response of our society toward such violence;

3. encourage greater awareness among members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America about all forms of violence that threaten the life and safety of all women;

4. encourage all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make their homes, schools, and places of employment safe places where all may be free from physical, emotional, and verbal abuse and those elements of the mass media that extol violence and the exploitation of women;

5. support the efforts of all members and congregations of this church, synods, churchwide units, and church-related agencies and institutions that seek to provide both justice and security for women in Church and society through law, policy, care, service, and support within the Body of Christ;

6. encourage the development of culture-specific resources and programs that advise and educate women who may experience violence in their lives;

7. express appreciation to the United States Senate for the ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination on June 24, 1994;

8. encourage the U.S. government to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and encourage church leaders and members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and church-related agencies and institutions to advocate for the ratification of this important agreement; and

9. affirm the call made by the Lutheran World Federation to combat violence against women.

Ms. Chadwick responded to the affirmative vote, stating, “This resolution has gone through almost every board of this church, so we are ready for it to come back and for the implementation to happen. . . . This now gives us permission to continue to do our work and you will be hearing more about this work as we move along. I just want quickly to mention, because we got so much

into media with this resolution, that we have been part of the National Council of Churches and have spoken out on violence in electronic media and film.”

Constitutional Amendments (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 872; continued from Minutes, pages 13, 277-279, 297-321, 624-630; continued on Minutes, pages 644-647.

Model Constitution for Congregations: C13.04.

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 872; continued from Minutes, pages 629-630; continued on Minutes, pages 644-647.

Mr. Larry W. Nelson [Saint Paul Area Synod] inquired about the status of the disposition of the proposed amendment to provision C13.04. in the Model Constitution for Congregations.

Secretary Almen responded, “The matter of C13.04. does need to come back to us. What we would have before us would be the recommendation of the Church Council that the name of the committee to which reference is made in that provision be changed. We also have the matter, which was brought up [by the Rev. George E. Keck], that involves a proposed amendment of that provision through the Reference and Counsel Committee or initiation on the floor. We end up with two factors to address there. The first is the straightforward recommendation of the Church Council. The second in the case of the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee. There will be a recommendation coming to you as to how to address the second part of the question. In essence, we are dealing with the first couple of lines where the Church Council has proposed some changes and then the voting member wishing to propose a change on the last couple of lines.”

Report of the Memorials Committee (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued from Minutes, pages 65-90, 139-157, 250-253, 374-427, 452-463, 586-616; continued on Minutes, pages 660-661.

Category 6: Urban Ministry

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 905-914.

The Rev. Keith L. Forni [Northern Illinois Synod] moved reconsideration of the assembly’s disposition of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee on Category 6: Urban Ministry. He stated that he voted on the prevailing side, which was a voice vote. Pastor Forni stated, “Yesterday, we received the Urban Initiative from the Division for Outreach and then rather briskly followed that with the adoption of the recommendation of the Memorials Committee on Category 6. I believe there were five memorials submitted by various synods pertinent to urban ministry. My concern is that we reconsider Memorial A on page 905 [of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3] in an amended fashion, which would relieve that memorial of its budgetary implications but continue to lift up and affirm particular needs of the urban church and formally link that with our Urban Initiative.”

Bishop Chilstrom noted that this motion was not debatable and required a majority vote for adoption.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-258; No-577

Defeated: To reconsider the assembly’s previous action related to Category 6 (Urban Ministry) of the Report of the Memorials Committee.

Category 15: Advocacy with the U.S.

Government—Part 2, Aid to Cuba

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 943-945.

A. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [1995 Memorial]

Whereas, our faith calls us to love our neighbor and to work for justice, peace, and reconciliation among all peoples; and

Whereas, the economic embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba is causing great suffering, especially for children and the elderly; and

Whereas, the ELCA's "A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns" states as goals: (1) to oppose the politicization of humanitarian assistance in the region and advocate its unrestricted delivery [1.4.]; (2) to advocate the normalization of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and other nations in the region where this is not the case [1.6.]; (3) to listen and respond to the voices from the churches in the region [2.1.]; (4) to promote and develop a mutually supportive relationship between the Lutheran churches in the region and those in the U.S. and promote, between churches in the region and other partners in the region, self-sufficient, interdependent efforts and relationships among the churches and peoples [2.4.]; and

Whereas, the representatives of the Council of Churches of Canada, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the Caribbean Council of Churches, the Latin American Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the Ecumenical Council of Cuba in their meeting in Havana in December 1991 called for the lifting of the U.S. blockade against Cuba, the provision of humanitarian help (especially food and medicine), and promotion of dialogue and exchanges of people and information between the churches in Cuba and in our country; and

Whereas, the ELCA Church Council, in response to a motion from the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, voted in its April 1994 meeting to encourage support and aid to the church in Cuba and to request that the relevant entities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America "petition the U.S. government to seek further reconciliation and normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba"; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Lutheran Confession in Cuba, together with its brothers and sisters of the Cuban Ecumenical Council, is urgently calling for a lifting of the U.S. embargo which continues to cause much pain among the people; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod (MCS) request the following:

1. that MCS congregations recognize and be encouraged to support the Lutheran congregations in Cuba through prayer, information sharing and material support, in cooperation with the ELCA Division for Global Mission;
2. that MCS congregations be urged to participate in current humanitarian appeals to send shipments of medical and food supplies to Cuba by the Church World Service of the National Council of Churches, Pastors for Peace, and other similar efforts;
3. that the MCS urge congregations to become familiar with the ELCA's "A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns" and the goals stated therein; and
4. that the MCS urge its members to work through their congressional representatives to encourage the lifting of the embargo and to seek to achieve steps towards the normalization of relations with Cuba;

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorialize the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the following:

1. that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America work actively toward the goal of ending the U.S. embargo against Cuba as part of its ongoing efforts to seek further reconciliation and the establishment of normal relations between the United States and Cuba through all appropriate channels; and
2. that in any follow-up required as a result of the action taken by this Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council or other designated persons would confer with the appropriate staff representatives of the Division for Global Mission, Lutheran Office for World Community, and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs who deal with Cuba regularly and, most especially with the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Cuba, when appropriate action regarding Cuba is being considered.

BACKGROUND

This memorial is very similar to a resolution passed by the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) in 1994, which was referred to the Division for Church in Society (see 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 381-382).

Furthermore, memorials from the 1993 Churchwide Assembly regarding Cuba previously had been referred to the Division for Church in Society (see 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, page 294) The text of the response of that division and a summary of the discussion in the Church Council on this matter are printed in Volume 1, pages 294-296. A recommendation from the board of the Division for Church in Society was forwarded to the April 1994 meeting of the Church Council. This recommendation included the following provision:

To urge all members of the synod, through letters to congressional and delegate offices, to encourage the lifting of the embargo for humanitarian purposes and to encourage steps, to whatever degree possible toward normalization of the relationships of the United States and Cuba.

The Church Council chose not to include language about advocacy to lift the embargo in its resolution. It did take the following action:

To request that relevant entities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

- 1) Support Lutheran congregations in Cuba through prayer, information sharing, and material support, in cooperation with the ELCA Division for Global Mission and the Lutheran Coalition on Latin America;
- 2) Participate in sending humanitarian aid to people aided by the churches of Cuba through such organizations as Lutheran World Relief, Church World Service, and Pastors for Peace; and
- 3) Petition the U.S. government to seek further reconciliation and normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba (CC94.4.37).

(See the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 308-309, for further information and for the full text of the Church Council's resolution on Cuba.)

The memorial from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod would call on the Churchwide Assembly to take the step that the ELCA Church Council, after lengthy debate, did not take, that of “working actively toward the goal of ending the U.S. embargo against Cuba as part of its ongoing efforts to seek further reconciliation and the establishment of normal relations between the United States and Cuba through all appropriate channels.” As indicated above, the board of the Division for Church in Society does support the lifting of the embargo for humanitarian purposes and steps toward normalization of the relationships of the United States and Cuba.

aSSEMBLY aCTION

The Rev. Donald M. Hallberg, co-chair of the Memorials Committee, introduced the committee’s recommendation. He said, “The voting members know, because they have read the material, that there was considerable debate within the Division for Church in Society on the memorial [from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod] and that was sent to the Church Council where there also was considerable debate. The Memorials Committee recommendation is to convey the action of the Church Council and not recreate that debate all over again, but to adopt the recommendation of the Church Council as a response to this memorial.”

MOVED;

SECONDED: To convey the April 1994 action of the Church Council on aid to Cuba (CC94.4.37, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, pages 308-309) to the Metropolitan Chicago Synod as the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the memorial of the synod on this subject.

Mr. Joel Mugge [Minneapolis Area Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the memorial of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod [Memorial A] (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 943-944) on aid to Cuba for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee.

Mr. Mugge spoke to the motion, stating, “In April of 1994, the Church Council approved a resolution calling for this church to advocate for normalization of relationships with Cuba but specifically excluding language about advocacy to lift the embargo. The recommendation of the Memorials Committee would have us accept that as our final word on the issue. The memorial from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, on the other hand, calls specifically for this church to work for lifting of the embargo against Cuba as a part of advocating for normalization and reminds us to listen carefully to the voices of our brothers and sisters in Cuba when any decision about Cuba is taken by this body.

“There are several issues that should be addressed here. First, our current position on normalization is intrinsically contradictory. It asks this church to work for normalization while specifically excluding working out the most important issue or barrier to normalization, namely, the embargo. Furthermore, it effectively ties the hands of our staff in the Division for Church in Society in carrying out its work. It tells them to advocate for normalization and then deprives them of a very important tool in doing that. More important, the memorial of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod calls us to listen to the voices of our brothers and sisters in Cuba. Lutherans in

Cuba represent the widest possible diversity of opinions about the political situation in Cuba, but they are almost unanimous in calling for lifting of the embargo because of the suffering it is causing in Cuba. This is a question of our appropriate humanitarian response to the people of Cuba. I would ask the assembly to respond to the calls of our brother and sister Cubans and to empower those who are called to advocate on our behalf and not tie their hands.”

Mr. Dale V. Sandstrom, a member of the Church Council, commented on the discussion of the Church Council and the concerns that led to the compromise resolution adopted by the Church Council. He said, “This church has consistently called for economic sanctions to help bring about just governments around the world. There is no doubt that sanctions, such as those against South Africa, also had an intermediate effect on the people of South Africa. The Castro regime has been in existence now for nearly a third of a century. The people’s rights in Cuba have been violated; tens of thousands of people have been executed. Many of you remember the images in the early part of the ‘60s when people were being lined up in the football stadiums of Cuba and executed. The Church Council, in its deliberations, sought to separate aid to the people of Cuba and support for the Castro regime. For that third of a century, the Castro regime was supported heavily by the former Soviet Union. Now, with the decline of Communism in Eastern Europe and the fall of the Soviet Union, the Castro government needs additional aid. Many of us believe that the cause of human freedom is best served by the end of the Castro regime and hopefully the establishment of democracy. For that reason, I would urge that you reject this substitute resolution. Public opinion polls among the refugees have consistently shown support for the end of the Castro regime and for a continuation of the economic embargoes that effect directly the Castro government until the cause of human freedom is established in Cuba.”

Bishop James E. Sudbrock [Metropolitan New York Synod] spoke in support of the substitute, stating, “It is just about 38 years ago that I got on my first airplane and spent 13 months of a seminary internship in Cuba—before Castro. I will not claim that I am an expert on it, but I have at least paid close attention to what has been happening. It seems to me that at a time when we have, since that, been able to get together with Vietnam, and with Red China (where the Seattle folks are selling all kinds of airplanes to them right now), I find it anachronistic that we continue to embargo things like basic health-related items, etc. It was exciting to me to see the rebirth of the Lutheran Church in Cuba, something that I labored on many years ago. They are asking us to lift this embargo. I think we should listen to the brothers and sisters in Cuba about their needs.”

Bishop Juan Cobrda [Slovak Zion Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment and said, “The politics of embargo has been used in the last 30 years in different ways, but it has proved that it did not work really as it was intended. Embargo is working against the people who are suffering and have tribulations. Look what is going on in Iran, in Yugoslavia, and other countries.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-470; No-328

Carried: To substitute the memorial of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod (1995

Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 943-944) on aid to Cuba for the recommendation of the Memorials Committee.

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorial was now before the assembly for consideration.

The Rev. Daniel M. Schaefer Sr. [Northeastern Ohio Synod] spoke against the motion,

stating, "Having lived in a Communist dictatorship, such as Cuba, as a missionary, we have seen that, when humanitarian aid comes into these countries, the government takes everything and the people get nothing. I think we should denounce Communism and this totalitarian dictatorship until it agrees to become a democracy and then the government will be working for the people instead of for its own gains."

Mr. John G. Satter [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] requested clarification. He asked, "Is it not correct that what is actually before us is only the language on page 944 beginning at about the middle of the first column [the second Resolved section]?" Bishop Chilstrom responded, "The entire matter is now alive on the floor, beginning with the first Whereas. The difference is that it now belongs to [the assembly,] not the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. [The assembly] must now decide, if this is what it chooses to endorse."

Assembly

Action Yes-553; No-262

CA95.7.63 Whereas, our faith calls us to love our neighbor and to work for justice, peace, and reconciliation among all peoples; and

Whereas, the economic embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba is causing great suffering, especially for children and the elderly; and

Whereas, the ELCA's "A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns" states as goals: (1) to oppose the politicization of humanitarian assistance in the region and advocate its unrestricted delivery [1.4.]; (2) to advocate the normalization of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and other nations in the region where this is not the case [1.6.]; (3) to listen and respond to the voices from the churches in the region [2.1.]; and (4) to promote and develop mutually supportive relationships between the Lutheran churches in the region and those in the U.S., and promote, between churches in the region and other partners in the region, self-sufficient, interdependent efforts and relationships among the churches and peoples [2.4.]; and

Whereas, the representatives of the Council of Churches of Canada, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the Caribbean Council of Churches, the Latin American Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the Ecumenical Council of Cuba in their meeting in Havana in December 1991 called for the lifting of the U.S. blockade against Cuba, the provision of humanitarian help (especially food and medicine), and promotion of dialogue and exchanges of people and information between the churches in Cuba and in our country; and

Whereas, the ELCA Church Council, in response to a motion from the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, voted at its April 1994 meeting to encourage support and aid to the church in Cuba and to request that the relevant entities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America "petition the U.S. government to seek further reconciliation and normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba"; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Lutheran Confession in Cuba, together with its brothers and sisters of the Cuban Ecumenical Council, is urgently calling for a lifting of the U.S. embargo, which continues to cause much pain among the people; therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request:

1. that ELCA congregations be urged to recognize and support the Lutheran congregations in Cuba through prayer, information sharing, and material support in cooperation

with the ELCA Division for Global Mission;

2. that ELCA congregations be urged to participate in current humanitarian appeals to send shipments of medical and food supplies to Cuba by Church World Service of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Pastors for Peace, and other similar efforts;

3. that ELCA congregations be urged to become familiar with the ELCA's "A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns" and the goals stated therein; and

4. that the members of this church be urged to work through their congressional representatives to encourage the lifting of the embargo and to seek to achieve steps towards the normalization of relations with Cuba;

and be it further

RESOLVED, that 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request:

1. that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America work actively toward the goal of ending the U.S. embargo against Cuba as part of its ongoing efforts to seek further reconciliation and the establishment of normal relations between the United States and Cuba through all appropriate channels; and

2. that in any follow-up required as a result of the action taken by this Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council or other designated persons confer with the appropriate staff representatives of the Division for Global Mission, Lutheran Office for World Community, and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs who deal with Cuba regularly and, most especially with the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Cuba, when appropriate action regarding Cuba is being considered.

Pastor Hallberg indicated that the disposition of synodical memorials now was complete. He thanked voting members "for their patience, for their diligence in doing their homework, for the honest and frank conversation that we have had in expediting these matters that have come from our various synods." On behalf of his co-chair, the Rev. Nadine F. Lehr, and members of the Memorials Committee, he expressed appreciation to the members of the "staff of the Office of the Bishop who had input in preparing for these memorials, especially Ms. Lita Brusick Johnson and Ms. Patricia A. Hoyt.

Constitutional Amendments (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 872; continued from Minutes, pages 13, 277-279, 297-321, 623-630; 637.

Model Constitution for Congregations: C13.04. (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 872; continued from Minutes, pages 629-631, 637.

Secretary Almen directed the attention of the assembly to line 88-97 on page 872 of the 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2. He said, "What you have in the first three lines is the recommendation of the Church Council for amendment. That is now before us and requires a two-thirds vote for adoption. The question raised earlier on the floor in this regard we will deal with following action on the Church Council's recommendation."

Assembly

Action: Yes-754; No-38

CA95.7.64 To amend C13.04. in the Model Constitution for Congregations as follows:

C13.04. A Staff Support Mutual Ministry Committee (in the absence of a staff support mutual ministry committee, their duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term.

Consideration then resumed of the motion previously offered by the Rev. George E. Keck [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod]. Secretary Almen offered the following introductory comments, stating, "As a matter of information to the assembly, Pastor Keck's amendment to C13.04. was presented before the deadline for such amendments on Friday, August 18, and was referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel. At that time its only defect was the lack of 15 signatures. Two persons have certified, including our general counsel, Mr. David J. Hardy, that the required 15 signatures are now present and are available for the record of this assembly. When the Reference and Counsel Committee reports on this matter, there will be a recommendation. This background is germane to what is before us."

Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

Motion K: Amendment to Model Constitution for Congregations, Provision C13.04.

Reference: Continued from Minutes, pages 616-617; continued on Minutes, pages 660-695.

Ms. Lorraine G. Bergquist, co-chair of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, introduced the committee's recommendation with respect to Motion K, submitted by the Rev. George E. Keck [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod]. She reported that the committee recommended the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer the following, Motion K, to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council for review and consideration:

Whereas, the change in title to "Mutual Ministry" brings C13.04. into parallel wording with S11.04., so both synodical bishop and rostered persons in congregations have the same committees for mutual conversation and consolation; and

Whereas, the Mutual Ministry Committee for a synodical bishop does not have the limitation or confusing sentence stating that committee members can "hold no other office . . . during their term;" and

Whereas, there has been considerable confusion regarding what the words, "no other office," mean (Does it mean council president, treasurer, WELCA president, WELCA treasurer, church school superintendent?); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that C13.04. be amended by deleting the final sentence, "Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term."

Pastor Keck then moved:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the Resolved paragraph in Motion K, "that C13.04. be amended by

deleting the final sentence, ‘Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term,’” for the recommendation to refer.

Pastor Keck spoke to his motion stating, “As I shared with the assembly, it is quite inconsistent to have such a sentence limiting congregations, rather than allowing them to select those most qualified persons. I would urge the adoption of this substitution.”

Bishop Jon S. Enslin [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke against the substitute. He said, “It is the strong recommendation within our synod that people who are on the Staff Support or Mutual Ministry Committee not be people who have positions of great responsibility, because in the context of that, they may be the very people that the rostered people have some difficulties with. You need to have someone who is not in that area of responsibility to whom you can speak. If the person is the president of the congregation—where do you go if you have problems with the president of the congregation? The fact is, it is essential for this committee, if it does its proper function, to have people who are not in responsible positions in the congregation.”

The Rev. Peter A. Pettit [Pacifica Synod] spoke against the substitution and for referral for further study and said, “It seems to me that there is considerable confusion. The previous speaker just indicated one possible interpretation of this sentence in the Model Constitution of Congregations. There are other possible interpretations. Before we make a decision as to how to change that, it is appropriate for us to have clarity about what it is that the sentence was first intended to give us in this church and then come to clear wording about how to provide for that.”

The Rev. Larry V. Smoose [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in favor of the substitution. He said, “First of all, by deleting that sentence, it does not mean that you must have officers that will then be a part of [the Mutual Ministry Committee]. I also would point out that the Model Constitution for Congregations provision already has a redundancy. It says, ‘(in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, their duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee),’ which are all officers of the congregation. I see an inconsistency there.”

The Rev. Eric C. Kutzli [Western Iowa Synod] concurred with the previous speaker, stating, “It is not forbidding the possibility that committee members would have to be officers, it is allowing them to choose the people who are best suited for the job. I think some of these things can be left to the discretion of the people in our congregations who may be able to make decisions on their own behalf.”

Ms. Barbara Bernstengel [New Jersey Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute, stating, “As a member of a rather small congregation, I really think this substitute would be helpful. We do not even have very formal committees in our congregation—everything is rather on an ad hoc basis and we need to just call upon our leaders in our congregation to perform certain duties.”

An unidentified voting member called the question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Voice Vote
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-599; No-240
Carried: To substitute the Resolved paragraph in Motion K, “that C13.04. be amended by deleting the final sentence, ‘Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation

during their term,” for the recommendation to refer.

Assembly

Action Yes-693; No-167

CA95.7.65 To amend provision C13.04. by deleting the final sentence, “Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term.”

Bishop Chilstrom observed that the previous action completed all matters related to the amendment of the governing documents of this church.

Mr. Carlos Peña, co-chair of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, then stated that he and co-chair, Ms. Lorraine G. Bergquist would like to thank the committee, the members of which were listed in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 580 [See also page 711 of these minutes.]. He clarified that when the committee “moved to refer a resolution to a particular unit of the churchwide organization, it was so that the idea mentioned in the resolution can be thoroughly researched by the appropriate unit and then brought back for possible action at a future assembly.” He also indicated that, because of the limited time remaining prior to adjournment, only the “Resolved” paragraphs of the remaining motions submitted by assembly members and the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel would be read.

Prior to presentation of the next motion, Mr. Douglas Reeves [Rocky Mountain Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To consider en bloc the following motions to refer: D, E, N, O, P, and R; and the following motions to approve: A, I, L, and Q.

Bishop Chilstrom stated that the motion was appropriate, but cautioned assembly members that by voting to act upon the motions in question en bloc, the motions subsequently could not be debated.

An unidentified voting member asked why Motion B was not included in the author’s motion, since approval of Motion B also was recommended by the Committee of Reference and Counsel. Bishop Chilstrom confirmed that not all motions recommended for referral or approval had been included in the motion now before the assembly.

Ms. Christine Davis [New England Synod] spoke against the motion, stating, “These items contain too many diverse issues, things that we really need to talk about, things we started talking about, and we really need the time to consider them individually.”

Mr. John Crofts [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] concurred, stating, “I speak against the motion for the same reasons.”

The Rev. Carol A. Jensen [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] commented, “I also speak against the motion and particularly related to Motion N.”

Mr. Terry Speese [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] spoke against the motion, “because of the diversity of each of these recommendations.”

An unidentified voting member said, “I also take exception, because of Motion I.”

The Rev. Amandus J. Derr [New Jersey Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded: Yes-262; No-603

Defeated: To consider en bloc the following motions to refer, D, E, N, O, P, and R; and the following motions to approve, A, I, L, and Q.

Motion A: African Development Foundation and Development Fund for Africa

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Bergquist to continue the report of the committee. She then introduced Motion A submitted by the Rev. Gail A. Brodersen-Heins [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] and the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Moved;

Seconded: Whereas, the old economic order of apartheid, colonialism, and slavery helped devastate Africa, leaving it the poorest of all continents of the world; and

Whereas, the United States Congress created the African Development Foundation and the Development Fund for Africa as a way to protect necessary development aid to Africa where one-eighth of the world's people live; and

Whereas, the United States Senate, through a rescission bill, reduced 1995 funding for the African Development Foundation from \$17 million to \$10 million and the Development Fund for Africa from \$802 million to \$780 million; and

Whereas, the United States Senate proposes 1996 funding for the Development Fund for Africa be reduced to \$528 million out of a total of \$12.1 billion for the entire Foreign Aid Bill; and
Whereas, African countries critically need U.S. development assistance to build schools and roads, purify drinking water, pay for immunization medicine, and fight childhood diseases; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be encouraged to contact their United States senators and urge restoration of the 1995 funding level of \$17 million for the African Development Foundation and \$802 million for the Development Fund for Africa and continuance of that development aid amount for 1996.

REFERENCE AND COUNSEL RECOMMENDATION

The committee notes the urgency required on legislation currently before the U.S. Senate and the present advocacy on behalf of African development funding by the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs. Further noted is the possible necessity of ongoing advocacy on similar legislation related to African development. The committee recommends approval and encourages immediate action by voting members, if possible, during this assembly.

Ms. Bergquist explained, "At the point that the Reference and Counsel Committee handled this recommendation, the Service and Justice 'wedge' in the 'Display Hall' had electronic equipment, . . . [permitting voting members to send] a message either to the president or to their senator. That is the reason for the final wording of our recommendation."

The Rev. Gail Brodersen-Heins [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin], author of the motion,

spoke to it, stating, "I did not write this. It was written by the Southern Africa Committee of my synod. I thank the [Reference and Counsel] Committee for the urgent response to it and whether it is passed or not, I urge all voting members and others to not forget our brothers and sisters in Africa. As we know, many of the peoples of Africa are living in terrible crises. I thank all voting members for voting in favor of the peace statement and for Bishop Chilstrom's commendation of the peace statement and our working for peace. This is a concrete way in which we can do that. I hope that you will go home and write letters or call your legislator on this urgent issue."

Mr. John Crofts [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] spoke against the motion. He said, "I applaud the intent of the motion. In fact, I lived for 11 years in Central Africa and I understand very well the distress of that continent. I have serious reservations about the mechanism proposed. This assembly has heard some vivid personal testimony on the failure of government-to-government funding to achieve its objectives. This is the first issue I have."

"But, the main issue is again, one more time, raiding Uncle Sam's pockets. I would submit there is nothing left in Uncle Sam's pockets but a massive debt now approaching five trillions of dollars, which no one seems to know how we are ever going to pay back, except leave it for our children and grandchildren. I find the proposal irresponsible in this regard. What kind of people are we that will save 10 cents on a plastic card holder but at a touch of a button or stroke of a pen, we are happy to add hundreds of millions of dollars to a debt that we do not know how to pay back. If we approve this proposal, I believe it will make some of us feel good for a moment. It will put all of us that much deeper into debt, most of the funds will end up in Swiss bank accounts, and very little will go to our brothers and sisters in Africa who desperately need it."

The Rev. Bruce E. A. Booher [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] inquired whether other business items remained in addition to the recommendations of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. Bishop Chilstrom indicated that only the matters presented by Reference and Counsel Committee remained on the assembly's agenda.

Ms. Betty Olson [Nebraska Synod] spoke in favor of the motion, stating, "The intent of this resolution is to emphasize aid that goes toward humanitarian relief, and much of this is directed to non-governmental organizations. At the same time, if you are talking about tax dollars, the humanitarian aid has decreased each year, while military support has increased. The military support contributes to the crises we are trying to take care of with humanitarian aid. This is one area that Bread for the World has worked very hard on this year. Remember that the emphasis here is humanitarian relief, and that it does not always go through the governmental agencies of the country that receives it."

Mr. Terry Speese [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] spoke against the recommendation, stating, "In the amount of time I have spent at this assembly, I have heard words used, like 'resources' and 'programs,' but I have also heard, 'How will we pay for this?' As is true for this church, it is easy to say to the government, 'We will just let them pay for it; we can print more money and we can send it,' but . . . we need to be realistic now, and we need to understand that we are no longer an untapped resource."

"One of the problems that I have with this is the fact that I am not sure that the Reference and Counsel Committee can assure us that this money is going where it is needed. We know we send aid continually that does not go where it is supposed to go. We are talking about building roads and schools, and I do not know if this is unique to Michigan or not, but you should come and travel on some of our roads, because they are in disrepair. Asked why they cannot be fixed, [we are told] it is because there is no funding for that. We talk about building schools, but we

also have inner-city schools, we have rural schools that cannot provide the technical education that we need in this technical age, because they simply do not have the funding. I am not against helping others, whether it be here in the United States or in foreign countries, but I think that, as good stewards, we need to hold those people accountable. I would recommend that . . . instead of . . . [sending] more money, what we should do is encourage each of us to contact our representatives and make them accountable. We need to hold them accountable. I wanted to end this by stating that ‘the well is running dry.’ But, that is incorrect: ‘The well is dry; the well is getting drier.’ We need to be aware that we can no longer just continue to print and send money wherever it is needed.”

The Rev. Amandus J. Derr [New Jersey Synod] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action Yes-514; No-322

CA95.7.66 Whereas, the old economic order of apartheid, colonialism, and slavery helped devastate Africa, leaving it the poorest of all continents of the world; and

Whereas, the United States Congress created the African Development Foundation and the Development Fund for Africa as a way to protect necessary development aid to Africa where one-eighth of the world’s people live; and

Whereas, the United States Senate, through a rescission bill, reduced 1995 funding for the African Development Foundation from \$17 million to \$10 million and the Development Fund for Africa from \$802 million to \$780 million; and

Whereas, the United States Senate proposes 1996 funding for the Development Fund for Africa be reduced to \$528 million out of a total of \$12.1 billion for the entire Foreign Aid Bill; and

Whereas, African countries critically need U.S. development assistance to build schools and roads, purify drinking water, pay for immunization medicine, and fight childhood diseases; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be encouraged to contact their United States senators and urge restoration of the 1995 funding level of \$17 million for the African Development Foundation and \$802 million for the Development Fund for Africa and continuance of that development aid amount for 1996.

The Rev. Mark W. Holmerud [Sierra Pacific Synod] moved to limit debate:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-637; No-195

Carried: To suspend the rules and to limit debate on each of the items to come before the assembly for the remainder of this plenary session to a total of eight minutes.

Motion B: U.S. Election Campaign Finance Reform

Co-Chair Peña presented Motion B, submitted by Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod], and the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Moved;

Seconded: To refer the following motion, submitted by Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod], to the Division for Church in Society:

Whereas, successful election campaigns in our society are almost totally dependent upon the expenditure of large sums of money for various forms of political advertising and other campaign expenses; and

Whereas, the vast majority of our citizens do not have access to the large sums of money required to conduct a successful election campaign; and

Whereas, elected officials become primarily responsive to those who financially support their elections; and

Whereas, in most instances, less wealthy citizens are not able to be elected to public office, or even to elect candidates who will be responsive to their needs for dignity and justice; and

Whereas, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states that, the Church shall “serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, . . . advocating dignity and justice for all people, . . . and standing with the poor and the powerless, and committing itself to their needs” (4.02.c.); and

Whereas, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs provides direct advocacy on public policy issues that may affect the members of our church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs to advocate for the enactment of campaign finance reform legislation at the local, state, and national levels, so that an equal opportunity may be provided for all candidates for elected office, regardless of their personal wealth or the wealth of their supporters.

Reference and Counsel Recommendation

In consultation with the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, the committee determines that the resolution as proposed is too vague to establish policy and give direction for advocacy. Accordingly, the committee recommends referral to the Division for Church in Society.

Ms. Barbara L. Bauer [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] identified herself as a county treasurer, tax collector, and administrator. She moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To delete the following from Motion B:

Whereas, elected officials become primarily responsive to those who financially support their elections; and.

Bishop Chilstrom, after discussion with the parliamentarian, said, “We do not have that before us at the present time. What we have is the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee to refer.” He advised that the voting member could move to substitute the entire proposal, in order to bring it onto the floor, in which case the motion could be amended.

Ms. Bauer then moved substitution of the resolution, submitted by Mr. Brasgalla, without the “Whereas” paragraph previously cited.

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the following for the recommendation of the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

Whereas, successful election campaigns in our society are almost totally dependent upon the expenditure of large sums of money for various forms of political advertising and other campaign expenses; and

Whereas, the vast majority of our citizens do not have access to the large sums of money required to conduct a successful election campaign; and

Whereas, in most instances, less wealthy citizens are not able to be elected to public office, or even to elect candidates who will be responsive to their needs for dignity and justice; and

Whereas, the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states that, the Church shall “serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, . . . advocating dignity and justice for all people, . . . and standing with the poor and the powerless, and committing itself to their needs” (4.02.c.); and

Whereas, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs provides direct advocacy on public policy issues that may affect the members of our church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs to advocate for the enactment of campaign finance reform legislation at the local, state, and national levels, so that an equal opportunity may be provided for all candidates for elected office, regardless of their personal wealth or the wealth of their supporters.

Ms. Bauer spoke to the motion, stating, “As a local governmental and elected official and an honest Lutheran Christian who tries to serve all members of my growing community, I find this sweeping, judgmental sentence unfair, untrue, and offensive. Romans 13:4 reminds us that elected officials and government employees, like all others, are God’s servants subject to his authority. Despite popular stereotypes, as those exhibited in the language I seek to delete, I did not abandon my faith, principles, or honesty when I took my oath of office. I support the goal of campaign-spending reform and the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee, but I ask you to accept this substitute and in addition to encourage Lutherans, especially our youth, to consider careers in public service and politics, so that, in the words of Romans 13:6, ‘our authorities are God’s servants who give their full time to governing.’”

Bishop Chilstrom advised the assembly that there were now two motions on the floor: the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee and the motion to substitute.

The Rev. Amandus J. Derr [New Jersey Synod] moved the question on this and all matters before the assembly.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-664; No-133

Carried: To call the question on all matters before the house.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-664; No-133

Carried: To substitute the following for the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Whereas, successful election campaigns in our society are almost totally dependent upon the

expenditure of large sums of money for various forms of political advertising and other campaign expenses; and

Whereas, the vast majority of our citizens do not have access to the large sums of money required to conduct a successful election campaign; and

Whereas, in most instances, less wealthy citizens are not able to be elected to public office, or even to elect candidates who will be responsive to their needs for dignity and justice; and

Whereas, the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states that, the Church shall “serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, . . . advocating dignity and justice for all people, . . . and standing with the poor and the powerless, and committing itself to their needs” (4.02.c.); and

Whereas, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs provides direct advocacy on public policy issues that may affect the members of our church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs to advocate for the enactment of campaign finance reform legislation at the local, state, and national levels, so that an equal opportunity may be provided for all candidates for elected office, regardless of their personal wealth or the wealth of their supporters.

Assembly

Action Yes-625; No-190

CA95.7.67 Whereas, successful election campaigns in our society are almost totally dependent upon the expenditure of large sums of money for various forms of political advertising and other campaign expenses; and

Whereas, the vast majority of our citizens do not have access to the large sums of money required to conduct a successful election campaign; and

Whereas, in most instances, less wealthy citizens are not able to be elected to public office, or even to elect candidates who will be responsive to their needs for dignity and justice; and

Whereas, the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states that, the Church shall “serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, . . . advocating dignity and justice for all people, . . . and standing with the poor and the powerless, and committing itself to their needs (4.02.c.); and

Whereas, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs provides direct advocacy on public policy issues that may affect the members of our church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs to advocate for the enactment of campaign finance reform legislation at the local, state, and national levels, so that an equal opportunity may be provided for all candidates for elected office, regardless of their personal wealth or the wealth of their supporters.

The Rev. Robert T. Voss [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved the following in the interest of time:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-756; No-69

Carried: To limit each speaker to one minute.

Mr. Dart Westphal [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to waive the reading of the motions, recognizing that the texts had been distributed to voting members in print:

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-538; No-286

Carried: To dispense with the reading of the “resolved” paragraphs of each motion.

Bishop George P. Mocko [Delaware/Maryland Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded; Voice Vote

Defeated: To refer to the Church Council all remaining resolutions to be presented by the Reference and Counsel Committee.

Motion C: Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

Reference: Continued on Minutes, page 765.

Mr. Peña presented the following recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel with respect to Motion C on ELCA participation in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, submitted by Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod]:

Moved;

Seconded: To not adopt the following motion:

Whereas, in 1991 the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted by a more than two-thirds majority vote a “Social Statement on Abortion,” which “recognizes that there can be sound reasons for ending a pregnancy through induced abortion” (Section 4-b); and

Whereas, “The position of this church is that government has a legitimate role in regulating abortion”; however, “this church opposes legislation that would outlaw abortion in all circumstances, prevent access to safe and affordable services for morally justified abortions, or are primarily intended to harass those contemplating or deciding for an abortion” (Section 5-c); and

Whereas, in January 1993, ELCA Lord of Love Lutheran Church, Omaha, Neb., suffered acts of large-scale civil disobedience by Operation Rescue solely because one of its members performs abortions at an Omaha clinic, and whose spouse was development director of Planned Parenthood of Omaha-Council Bluffs; and

Whereas, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of 37 mainline Christian, Jewish, and other religious organizations that works to create a public climate that is conducive to policy-making that affirms women as moral decision-makers in regard to abortion; and

Whereas, “Christians as citizens and this church as an institution should join with others to advocate for and support just laws and to work to change those which are unjust” (Section 5-Introduction); and

Whereas, laws passed to restrict abortion would impose a religious view held by some citizens and, in effect, prevent all other citizens from freely practicing their own religions. This would include members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America choosing to make moral decisions as outlined in the “Social Statement on Abortion”; and

Whereas, the Southeast Michigan Synod and the Commission for Church in Society of the Southern California (West) Synod have joined other faith groups as members of local affiliates of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, to advocate for and support just laws and to work to change those which are unjust; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America become a member organization in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, to uplift the ELCA's "Social Statement on Abortion," and to advocate for and support just laws regarding abortion, and to work to change those which are unjust; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be encouraged to become member organizations in local affiliates of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, to uplift the ELCA's "A Social Statement on Abortion," on the local level, and to advocate for and support just laws regarding abortion, and to work to change those which are unjust; and be it further

RESOLVED, that whenever appropriate the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs join with the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, on both the national and local level, to uplift the ELCA's "Social Statement on Abortion," and to advocate for and support just laws regarding abortion, and to work to change those which are unjust.

Reference and Counsel

Recommendation

Following review of the ELCA "Social Statement on Abortion" adopted by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly and the mission statement of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, in consultation with the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, the committee determined that the organization's exclusively "pro-choice" objectives are not congruent with the position of this church. The committee noted that while the ELCA statement allows for individual participation in such a coalition, it would be inappropriate for this assembly to direct an official agency of this church to become a member. Accordingly, the committee recommended disapproval of the resolution.

Ms. Oliane Sharp-Anderson [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. She said, "Having looked at this recommendation, I find that this is not something that I personally could accept. Being told by my church that I must support a particular pro-choice agenda is not acceptable. I am not adamant pro-life, but I am not adamant pro-choice either. I find that there are many issues here that I must deal with in my own conscience and I could not readily accept an approval of [the resolution as presented by Mr. Brasgalla]. It is recommending far too much that we look at a pro-choice agenda and approve of it. I cannot do that in all good conscience dealing also with the pro-life issues. I speak as someone who has not been closely associated with either particular movement."

Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod] spoke against the recommendation to disapprove, stating, "As the writer of this resolution, I wish to share that the Religious Coalition [for Reproductive Choice] currently has the Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), and United Church of Christ as member organizations. As we know, we are currently in dialogue with these churches to move towards full communion. Their statements on abortion are very similar to ours, but at the same time a social statement is not gospel—we have discussed that often before. The main point of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice is an

ecumenical organization to uplift the religious view on abortion that is opposite to those held by the religious right. It is also the only ecumenical organization that works to protect our churches, synagogues, and worship spaces and services from acts of civil disobedience like those that were experienced at Lord of Love Lutheran Church in Omaha.”

Bishop Donald J. McCoid [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] commented, “Our ELCA ‘Social Statement on Abortion’ is a good statement. It is carefully developed and strongly affirmed. The concern I have seen develop is a misreading or mis-stating of the basic position and policy of this church. For example, the statement about exceptions for abortions in limited situations has become the rule on some quotes from the abortion statement by pulling issues out of context and advocating a much broader support of abortion than our statement intends. This is what we have in this instance. I support the ELCA abortion statement and the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee.”

An unidentified voting member said, “I would concur with the last speaker. We must be very careful how we allow our names to be used when we give this kind of endorsement with such groups. We find our names publically used and attached to all kinds of things that we do not really support.”

The Rev. Daniel M. Schaefer Sr. [Northeastern Ohio Synod] requested clarification, “It says in [the resolution submitted by Mr. Brasgalla] that there are just and unjust laws regarding abortion. I wonder if there could be an example of those?” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “I do not think we have anyone on the platform now who is prepared to respond to your question. Perhaps you could seek out persons from the Division for Church in Society.”

The Rev. Jerald L. Folk [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] spoke in favor of the motion, saying, “I support the conclusion to which [the Reference and Counsel Committee] came, that the action requested in this resolution would be inconsistent with the abortion statement that was adopted in 1991.”

Bishop Harold S. Weiss [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] called question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action Yes-778; No-101

CA95.7.68 To not adopt the following motion:

Whereas, in 1991 the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted by a more than two-thirds majority vote a “Social Statement on Abortion,” which “recognizes that there can be sound reasons for ending a pregnancy through induced abortion” (Section 4-b); and

Whereas, “The position of this church is that government has a legitimate role in regulating abortion”; however, “this church opposes legislation that would outlaw abortion in all circumstances, prevent access to safe and affordable services for morally justified abortions, or are primarily intended to harass those contemplating or deciding for an abortion” (Section 5-c); and

Whereas, in January 1993, ELCA Lord of Love Lutheran Church, Omaha, Neb., suffered acts of large-scale civil disobedience by Operation Rescue solely because one of its members performs abortions at an Omaha clinic, and whose spouse was development director of Planned

Parenthood of Omaha-Council Bluffs; and

Whereas, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of 37 mainline Christian, Jewish, and other religious organizations that works to create a public climate that is conducive to policy-making that affirms women as moral decision-makers in regard to abortion; and

Whereas, “Christians as citizens and this church as an institution should join with others to advocate for and support just laws and to work to change those which are unjust” (Section 5-Introduction); and

Whereas, laws passed to restrict abortion would impose a religious view held by some citizens and, in effect, prevent all other citizens from freely practicing their own religions. This would include members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America choosing to make moral decisions as outlined in the “Social Statement on Abortion”; and

Whereas, the Southeast Michigan Synod and the Commission for Church in Society of the Southern California (West) Synod have joined other faith groups as members of local affiliates of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, to advocate for and support just laws and to work to change those which are unjust; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America become a member organization in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, to uplift the ELCA’s “Social Statement on Abortion,” and to advocate for and support just laws regarding abortion, and to work to change those which are unjust; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be encouraged to become member organizations in local affiliates of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, to uplift the ELCA’s “Social Statement on Abortion,” on the local level, and to advocate for and support just laws regarding abortion, and to work to change those which are unjust; and be it further

RESOLVED, that whenever appropriate the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs join with the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, on both the national and local level, to uplift the ELCA’s “Social Statement on Abortion,” and to advocate for and support just laws regarding abortion, and to work to change those which are unjust.

Report of the Memorials Committee (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 881-954; continued from Minutes, pages 65-90, 139-157, 250-251, 374-427, 452-463, 586-616, 637-644.

Category 5: Social Statement on Human Sexuality (continued)

Reference: 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, pages 899-904; continued from Minutes, pages 600-616.

Ms. Katharyn L. Wilson [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] moved reconsideration of the assembly’s previous action in adopting the Memorials Committee’s recommendation for disposition of memorials presented in Category 5: Social Statement on Human Sexuality (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 904). She sought to amend the recommendation as follows:

To renumber item 3. as item 3.a.; and to add the following as a new paragraph, to be numbered 3.b.:

3.b. “To call on members of the Church Council and the Division for Church in Society to

evaluate the composition of future task forces, ad hoc groups, and consulting panels, and structure each with positions for youth, people of color, and gay and lesbian persons.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-178; No-687

Defeated: To reconsider the previous action (CA95.6.36) of this Churchwide Assembly with respect to the synodical memorials on the development of social statements and a possible social statement on human sexuality.

Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

(continued)

Reference: Continued from Minutes, pages 616-617, 645-660.

Motions D–W

The presentation of the report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel resumed. The Rev. John B. Mawhirter [Northwestern Ohio Synod] moved to refer the remaining motions contained in the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee to the Church Council:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer en bloc Motions D through W in the report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel to the Church Council for consideration.

Pastor Mawhirter spoke to the motion, stating, “One of the things that this assembly has taken very seriously is the debate. As we move along today, we lose our numbers and we also lose our patience. I would like to move these very important motions for the consideration of the Church Council, so that they are prayerfully, patiently considered instead of rushing through a motion that could make a big change in our church.”

Bishop Harold S. Weiss [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] spoke in opposition to the motion, stating, “We have a program that calls for us to be in plenary session until about 11:30 a.m., [and] we have a rule now that there is eight minutes for each of these, which I believe is sufficient. We may need to come to a motion at some point to refer other matters to the Church Council, but I think that is premature.”

Ms. Christine Davis [New England Synod] agreed with the previous speaker and observed, “We have too many diverse issues to move them en bloc.”

Ms. Meredith Lovell [Delaware-Maryland Synod] spoke against the motion and said, “I am prepared to debate some of these issues and I think they are very important.”

The Rev. Amandus J. Derr [New Jersey Synod] called the question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-133; No-780

Defeated: To refer en bloc Motions D through W in the report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel to the Church Council for consideration.

Motion D: Use of Inclusive Geographical Maps

Mr. Peña introduced Motion D, submitted by Ms. Jamie L. Berge [Alaska Synod], and presented the following recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer the following motion D, submitted by Ms. Jamie L. Berge [Alaska Synod] to the ELCA Cabinet of Executives.

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, when using geographical maps for visual presentations, place synods (or parts of synods) that are not in the contiguous United States, in their general location in relation to that map.

Ms. Berge commented, "I am the author of this resolution and I have several reasons for proposing this. The first is as a geography lesson. I am referring to a map included in our materials indicating new mission starts in 1995. I caution that, if you take these home, please use them with adult supervision and let your children know that, in fact, Alaska and Hawaii are not neighbors to Texas or located in the Gulf of Mexico. Second, I would like to affirm Bishop Chilstrom's statement earlier in the assembly that Christ truly is the web that weaves us together. However, being on the geographical fringe of this church and also being human, sometimes we feel out-of-place or, as in the example of a map used previously in a video presentation, completely left out. This is a symbolic resolution asking for awareness."

An anonymous voting member moved the previous question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action Voice Vote

CA95.7.69 To refer the following motion D, submitted by Ms. Jamie L. Berge [Alaska Synod] to the ELCA Cabinet of Executives.

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, when using geographical maps for visual presentations, place synods (or parts of synods) that are not in the contiguous United States, in their general location in relation to that map.

Motion E: Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage

Ms. Bergquist introduced Motion E, submitted by Ms. Carol LaHurd [Minneapolis Area Synod] and the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. Ms. Bergquist noted that the following "Whereas" paragraph, which inadvertently had been omitted from the motion as printed in the report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, should follow the second "Whereas."

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is working to end growing prejudice, racism, and hostility towards Arab/Middle Eastern persons in this country; and"

Ms. Bergquist then presented the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and

Counsel:

Reference and Counsel

Recommendation

The committee notes in the report of the Commission for Multicultural Ministries to this assembly that in fulfillment of the multicultural mission strategy adopted by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly, the commission is already working with the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 1, page 108). The committee recommends referral to the Commission for Multicultural Ministries.

Moved;

Seconded: To refer the following Motion E, submitted by Ms. Carol LaHurd [Minneapolis Area Synod], to the Commission for Multicultural Ministries:

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continues to be active in mission and ministry in the Middle East; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its Division for Outreach is developing new ministries among a growing and culturally rich Arab Middle Eastern population of approximately nine million in the United States; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is working to end growing prejudice, racism, and hostility towards Arab/Middle Eastern persons in this country; and

Whereas, the Association of Lutherans of Arab Middle Eastern Heritage (ALAMEH) was organized for the purposes of outreach among Arab Middle Eastern persons; for enhancing and supporting the contributions of Arab Middle Eastern persons in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and for assisting the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in developing its Arab Middle Eastern ministries; and

Whereas, the Association of Lutherans of Arab Middle Eastern Heritage now seeks to be a related organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage be related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and that an appropriate relationship be negotiated and maintained by the commission.

Ms. LaHurd spoke to the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, stating, "As the original submitter of this resolution, I support the referral to the Commission for Multicultural Ministries."

The Rev. John K. Stendahl [New England Synod] inquired, "Is it our procedure that it is the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee that is on the floor and we are voting on?" Bishop Chilstrom responded, "That is correct."

Mr. Mark Helmke [Southwestern Texas Synod] raised a parliamentary inquiry, stating, "Under the rules of the assembly as I understand them (I am referring to page 593), in the instance where the Committee [of Reference and Counsel] reports disapproval of a motion, the rules read that the memorial or resolution recommended for rejection shall be the main motion. In those instances, it would seem to me that it would be the original [resolution] that would be before the assembly." After consultation with the parliamentarian, Bishop Chilstrom agreed that Mr. Helmke's advice was correct. The recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel regarding Motion E was to refer; therefore, according to the Rules of Organization

Procedure, the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel was the main motion.

An anonymous voting member called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Assembly

Action Yes-894; No-14

CA95.7.70 To refer the following Motion E, submitted by Ms. Carol LaHurd [Minneapolis Area Synod], to the Commission for Multicultural Ministries:

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continues to be active in mission and ministry in the Middle East; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its Division for Outreach is developing new ministries among a growing and culturally rich Arab Middle Eastern population of approximately nine million in the United States; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is working to end growing prejudice, racism, and hostility towards Arab/Middle Eastern persons in this country; and

Whereas, the Association of Lutherans of Arab Middle Eastern Heritage (ALAMEH) was organized for the purposes of outreach among Arab Middle Eastern persons; for enhancing and supporting the contributions of Arab Middle Eastern persons in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and for assisting the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in developing its Arab Middle Eastern ministries; and

Whereas, the Association of Lutherans of Arab Middle Eastern Heritage now seeks to be a related organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the Association of Lutheran of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage be related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and that an appropriate relationship be negotiated and maintained by the commission.

Motion F: Study of Human Sexuality (continued)

Reference: Continued from Minutes, pages 616-617).

Co-Chair Bergquist introduced Motion F, submitted by Bishop J. Philip Wahl [Southeast Michigan Synod] and the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. Since the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee was for disapproval, the resolution as submitted became the main motion before the assembly, as provided in the Rules of Organization and Procedure (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 593), and the recommendation of the committee was received as information.

MOVED;

SECONDED: Whereas, this church has been engaged for a number of years in a study leading to a proposed social statement on human sexuality; and

Whereas, the Church Council at its meeting immediately preceding the 1995 Churchwide Assembly decided to postpone indefinitely the further development of any proposed social statement on human sexuality; and

Whereas, it is unlikely that this church will continue the process of moral deliberation without the process being tied to the development of a social statement on human sexuality; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly direct the Church Council, through the Division for Church in Society, to continue the process of developing a social statement on human sexuality to be presented at the 1997 Churchwide Assembly.

Reference and Counsel

Recommendation

In view of the plans for ongoing moral deliberation and the positive strategies for study and pastoral care outlined in the Church Council's report on the Study on Human Sexuality, including advice of the consulting panel (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 810A-810G),¹ the committee recommends disapproval of this resolution.

1 The following resolution was adopted by the Church Council at its meeting immediately prior to this assembly (August 15-16, 1995) and was presented by the council to the Churchwide Assembly as information:

To receive as information the progress report of the Division for Church in Society on the Study of Human Sexuality;

To acknowledge that, while broad areas of clarity and agreement within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America were evidenced on many matters addressed during this church's study of human sexuality, responses during this study also indicated the existence of substantial differences on other biblical and theological issues;

To express the commitment of this church to address the foundational and practical issues identified thus far in this study and to urge continued examination and discussion of those issues within the congregations and other settings of this church;

To encourage continued exploration by the Division for Church in Society of these issues including further development of study resources in cooperation with other churchwide units, ELCA-related seminaries, colleges and universities, and social ministry organizations;

To continue a strong public ethical witness by this church in those areas for which there is clarity and wide agreement within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To underscore the importance of the efforts of the work group on social statements, convened by the Division for Church in Society, as that group explores the purposes, forms, and role of social statements and other resources on social issues for consideration and use by members of this church;

To inform the members of this church that a proposed social statement on human sexuality will not be available for consideration by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly and that any decision related to the scheduling of a possible social statement on human sexuality will not be made until after the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, following further churchwide study and discussion;

To note particularly the contributions to this process by the board of the Division for Church in Society, the task force, the consulting panel, and the writing team;

To express deep appreciation to all those in this church who participated in the development and critique of the draft statements on human sexuality and to all those who studied and responded to these drafts; and

To encourage all persons in this church to continue to deepen the dialogue and prayerful

reflection on this important issue.

The Rev. Carl A. Jensen [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] then questioned whether consideration of the recommendation was appropriate in view of the assembly's previous action with respect to the report of the Memorials Committee (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 3, page 904). He said, "We already adopted a memorial in Category 5, and item 3. of that on page 904, affirming the existing plan approved by the Church Council to review the process for the development of social statements, and so forth. That refers to page 810-A where it states that there will not be consideration of a sexuality statement in 1997. Since we have already settled this issue, I would think this Motion F and Motion G would be out of order."

Bishop Chilstrom responded, "It was discussed overnight, since you raised the question in the last plenary session. It is a good and legitimate question. My conclusion is that it is true that the background material suggests that we should not do this in 1997. However, the substance of that memorial itself does not limit us to 1997. The other problem that I have is that by happenstance (or whatever) the report of the Memorials Committee was called first and we gave that consideration and took appropriate action. Had I done the opposite [taken the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee first] it would not have closed the door for the proposal that comes in Motion F. The judgment of the chair is that we ought to test this—that we ought to bring Motion F up for consideration—and if, in fact, you approve Motion F, it would mean that the message would be very clear and that we must move with dispatch and come up with a social statement by 1997."

Bishop J. Philip Wahl [Southeast Michigan Synod] spoke in favor of the resolution, stating, "I am proud of our church and the good start that we have had. At times, it has been stormy and obviously we do not all agree, but I believe it has been a teaching and learning opportunity. Without a specific date, I do not think we are going to keep the issue before us. Without a specific date, I think we are going to be doing a disservice to this church. The recommendation [of the Committee of Reference and Counsel] will be interpreted as putting it on the back burner and avoidance—a disservice to this church that allows for procrastination. We have much to give and we need to support a statement to our church."

The Rev. Derek J. Engfelt [South Dakota Synod] moved to amend the motion:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend Motion F by adding an additional "Resolved" paragraph:

Resolved, that in the interim, we in assembly affirm the following statement:

"God created people male and female, and provided for the marriage relationship in which two may become one. A publicly declared, legally binding marriage between one woman and one man remains the one appropriate place for genital sexual relations. Heterosexual marriage, faithfulness within marriage, abstinence outside of marriage—these constitute the Christian standard. When we fall short, we are invited to repent, receive the forgiveness of God, and amend our lives."

Pastor Engfelt spoke to the motion, stating, "I think that at this time, as a church, we are clearly not uniform in our understanding and in our response to this issue, but at this time during the interim period, we can stand someplace and this [amendment] is consistent with the Scriptures and also with the predecessor statements [social statements of the Lutheran Church in

America and The American Lutheran Church]. Quoting the Rev. James E. Andrews of the Presbyterian Church (USA) who spoke earlier, he said that his church would study anything, if it means putting off making a decision. I think we have been doing that for too long. This statement, I believe, affirms faithfulness within marriage, abstinence outside of marriage, the good news for all that when we fall short, we are invited to repent and receive the forgiveness of God.”

Ms. Kathryn F. Kees [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] stated, “With all due respect to the mover [of Motion F, Bishop J. Philip Wahl], I do not think the motion makes a lot of sense. Essentially what it says is that, because we cannot make a decision on this particular issue, we should make this decision. We should make that statement, because we cannot agree with any other statement. I think it is better that we stick with what we have said, which is basically an agreement to struggle on with this as a whole church until we can come to much more consensus than we have now.”

Mr. Craig Lubinsky [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Voice Vote
Carried: To move the previous question.

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-384; No-518
Defeated: To amend Motion F by adding the following:
Resolved, that in the interim, we in assembly affirm the following statement:
God created people male and female, and provided for the marriage relationship in which two may become one. A publicly declared, legally binding marriage between one woman and one man remains the one appropriate place for genital sexual relations. Heterosexual marriage, faithfulness within marriage, abstinence outside of marriage—these constitute the Christian standard. When we fall short, we are invited to repent, receive the forgiveness of God, and amend our lives.

Bishop Harold S. Weiss [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] sought to offer a substitute for the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel:

To amend the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel by substitution of the following:

That the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the motion offered by Bishop J. Philip Wahl [Southeast Michigan Synod] be the previous action of this assembly on the Church Council’s report on the Study of Human Sexuality, including plans for ongoing moral deliberation and positive strategies for study and pastoral care (CA95.6.59).

Bishop Weiss stated: “The reason for the motion is to get us out of a parliamentary dilemma of having to deal with the recommendation [of the Committee of Reference and Counsel] to disapprove.” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “I think we have cleared that up by stating that the motion on the floor is the resolution submitted by Bishop J. Philip Wahl.” Bishop Weiss stated, “I understand that, but this would get us back to a motion to reaffirm that which the assembly has

already said in different ways.” Since the motion on the floor was the resolution from Bishop Wahl, with the advice from the Committee of Reference and Counsel not to approve, Bishop Chilstrom ruled Bishop Weiss’s motion out of order.

Bishop Weiss then restated his motion as a substitute for Motion F:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the following for the motion before the assembly:

That the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the motion offered by Bishop J. Philip Wahl [Southeast Michigan Synod] be the previous action of this assembly on the Church Council’s report on the Study of Human Sexuality, including plans for ongoing moral deliberation and positive strategies for study and pastoral care (CA95.6.59).

Editor’s note:

The action [CA95.6.36] previously taken by the assembly was the recommendation of the Memorials Committee to several synodical resolutions. Item 2.a. of that action indicates acceptance of the action by the Church Council [1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 810A], which includes the statement: “To inform the members of this church that a proposed social statement on human sexuality will not be available for consideration by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly and that any decision related to the scheduling of a possible social statement on human sexuality will not be made until after the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, following further churchwide study and discussion.”

Bishop Chilstrom stated, “I will treat that then as a substitute for what was proposed by Bishop Wahl.”

The Rev. Jerald L. Folk [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer both the resolution (Motion F) and the substitute to the Division for Church in Society as advice as the division continues to explore how to proceed in this process.

Speaking to the motion, Pastor Folk said, “I believe that even as this assembly has unfolded, we have received further wisdom and further guidance as to how we should address this topic of human sexuality. Therefore, I think the most appropriate way to act on these resolutions is to pass them on to the Division [for Church in Society] as it continues to develop that process.”

The Rev. Robin J. McCullough [Northeastern Ohio Synod] spoke against the referral. She stated, “I think we need to get on with this issue. If we keep referring and referring, it is just procrastination. The people of this church are wanting to know what we have to say about this statement and we need a time line. At that point, the assembly can decide what we can say and, if there are things that we are not in agreement with, then we can certainly deal with it at that point.”

The Rev. John K. Stendahl [New England Synod] spoke in favor of referral. He said, “I am strongly in favor of the intent of the original motion. I am in support of referral. It seems to me that we have a lot of reasons to be disappointed, a lot of reasons to be ashamed—ashamed of how brittle the bonds of Christian charity have been in our church.”

Bishop Chilstrom noted that the eight-minute limit for consideration of a motion had passed. He called, therefore, for a vote on all matters before the house.

Assembly

Action Yes-506; No-402

CA95.7.71 To refer both the resolution (Motion F) and the substitute to the Division for Church in Society as advice as the division continues to explore how to proceed in this process.

Motion F

Whereas, this church has been engaged for a number of years in a study leading to a proposed social statement on human sexuality; and

Whereas, the Church Council at its meeting immediately preceding the 1995 Churchwide Assembly decided to postpone indefinitely the further development of any proposed social statement on human sexuality; and

Whereas, it is unlikely that this church will continue the process of moral deliberation without the process being tied to the development of a social statement on human sexuality; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly direct the Church Council, through the Division for Church in Society, to continue the process of developing a social statement on human sexuality to be presented at the 1997 Churchwide Assembly.

Substitute Motion

That the response of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to the following motion, offered by Bishop J. Philip Wahl [Southeast Michigan Synod], be the previous action of this assembly on the Church Council's report on the Study of Human Sexuality, including plans for ongoing moral deliberation and positive strategies for study and pastoral care (CA95.6.59):

1. To affirm the call of the synods:
 - a. for commendation of all of those who participated in the development and who commented on the draft statements on human sexuality;
 - b. for our leaders and members to practice and teach biblical and confessional guidance for speaking the truth in love in matters of faith and life, as this church continues to discuss matters of human sexuality;
 - c. for mutual repentance and forgiveness for those instances in which our actions in our debate on human sexuality may have harmed members of the body of Christ;
2.
 - a. To convey to the Sierra Pacific, Western North Dakota, Eastern North Dakota, South Dakota, Central States, Metropolitan Chicago, Northeastern Iowa, Indiana-Kentucky, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods the August 1995 report of the Division for Church in Society and the Church Council on the process for the development of a possible social statement on human sexuality as a response to their memorials;
 - b. To refer the memorials of these synods to the Division for Church in Society as it continues its work related to human sexuality and to the review and possible revision of the ELCA's process for the development of all social statements;
 - c. To affirm the existing deliberative process for a continuing discussion of human sexuality and thus to decline to consider Churchwide Assembly action on the specific language proposed for statements, which is contained in the memorials from various synods;

3. To affirm the existing plan approved by the Church Council to review the process for the development of social statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, including the issues of the future development of any social statements and the appropriate roles of task forces, boards, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, theological faculties, and congregations in this process.

Motion G: Study of Human Sexuality

Ms. Bergquist presented Motion G, submitted by Ms. Christine L. Davis [New England Synod], and the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. Since the recommendation of the committee was rejection, the resolution as submitted became the main motion before the assembly as provided in the Rules of Organization and Procedure (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 593) and the recommendation of the committee was received as information.

Reference and Counsel Recommendation

In view of the plans for ongoing moral deliberation and the positive strategies for study and pastoral care outlined in the Church Council's report on the Study on Human Sexuality, including advice of the consulting panel (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, pages 810 A-G), the committee recommended disapproval of this resolution.

Ms. Bergquist noted a correction to line 29 of the committee's printed report, which would correct "paragraphs 48-62" to read: "paragraphs 48-63."

Moved;

Seconded: Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has been struggling with the issue of human sexuality for eight years; and

Whereas, the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, Division for Church in Society, the task force, the consulting team, the writing team, and others have devoted countless hours and endless energy to the Spirit-led deliberating that produced the working draft (10/94); and

Whereas, this draft was shared throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and produced many areas of agreement; and

Whereas, some few sections produced unprecedented dissension and divisiveness throughout this church; and

Whereas, there are many in our church, many who have left the church and many standing outside the church, all who are in desperate need of a word of affirmation, of hope, of support, and of guidance from the church in all areas of human sexuality; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this assembly urge the Church Council to place on the agenda of the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, for consideration, a Statement on Human Sexuality, except the topics covered in paragraphs 48-63 of the draft (October 1994); and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly urge that work continue unabated on resolving the church's position on homosexuality, now covered in paragraphs 48-63 of the working draft (October 1994).

Ms. Christine L. Davis [New England Synod] spoke to the motion, stating, "As the maker of the resolution, I would like to speak to it, although we have heard the sense. I believe, as it

stands now, there are no plans to continue work, no time commitment to finish this work; we are just referring it to further study. It is an amazing document. We have said a lot of positive things about family, concerns about prostitution, and how we feel about pornography. We need to get on with it. My motion is to excise the section on homosexuality and ask that the rest of it be brought to the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, since that is the area that is causing most of the problem. We need get on with making positive social statements that this church needs to hear on all of the other issues of human sexuality.”

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute the following for the two resolves in the motion before the assembly:

RESOLVED, that the Conference of Bishops be authorized by this assembly to issue on behalf of this church an interim social statement on human sexuality, contingent upon a two-thirds majority vote of that body, with this authority expiring upon the adoption of a social statement on human sexuality by a future Churchwide Assembly.

Pastor Weston spoke to the motion, stating, “I believe that this recommendation answers the concerns of this assembly, first of all, to decide not to decide at this time; and also the very strong desire to say something pastoral about the issue of human sexuality. This motion would entrust those pastoral words to the chief pastors [synodical bishops] of our church. If they happen to say something objectionable, then that would give a prod to the process of producing a real social statement.”

Bishop Chilstrom then ruled the motion to substitute to be out of order, stating, “The Conference of Bishops, by our governing documents, cannot develop a social statement such as you are calling for in your motion.” He then advised that Motion G as submitted by Ms. Davis was again before the assembly.

Mr. Trevis Butcher [Montana Synod] spoke in favor of the motion. He said, “I would like to support this resolution strongly in just the simple fact that I see, across our state and through our synod, that there is strong support for much of the document. We have spent a great deal of time and a quarter of a million dollars on this. Let us put what is agreeable to work. . . .”

Ms. Stacy Walker [New Jersey Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the first “Resolved” paragraph of Motion G by deleting the words, “except the topics covered in paragraphs 48-63,” and by adding the words, “reflecting the areas in which there is substantial agreement within this church.”

Ms. Walker spoke to the motion, stating, “Basically, I agree with what [Mr. Butcher] said. There are many parts of this statement that this church agrees upon. I would like to suggest that we present a statement in 1997 on what we agree upon. Everyone in this room is crying out for this church to say something, so why do not we present what we know and continue to study the areas where we do not know [the mind of this church].”

Mr. Blake C. Marles [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] called the question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote
Carried: To move the previous question on all matters before the house.
Moved;
Seconded; Yes-526; No-362
Carried: To amend the first “Resolved” paragraph of Motion G by deleting the words, “except the topics covered in paragraphs 48-63,” and by adding the words, “reflecting the areas in which there is substantial agreement within this church.”

Mr. William C. Phillippi [Florida-Bahamas Synod] requested clarification regarding whether the assembly was now voting on the original motion as amended. Bishop Chilstrom responded that the vote to be taken was on Motion G, submitted by Ms. Davis, as amended.

The Rev. Larry V. Smoose [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] inquired, “If the house approves this, and we have just previously referred an action that is virtually the same, and have passed memorials that also deal with this, which action are we going to follow?” Bishop Chilstrom responded that the Church Council would need to make that determination.

Assembly

Action Yes-491; No-409

CA95.7.72 Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has been struggling with the issue of human sexuality for eight years; and

Whereas, the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, Division for Church in Society, the task force, the consulting team, the writing team, and others have devoted countless hours and endless energy to the Spirit-led deliberating that produced the working draft (October 1994); and

Whereas, this draft was shared throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and produced many areas of agreement; and

Whereas, some few sections produced unprecedented dissension and divisiveness throughout this church; and

Whereas, there are many in our church, many who have left the church, and many standing outside the church, all who are in desperate need of a word of affirmation, of hope, of support, and of guidance from the church in all areas of human sexuality; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this assembly urge the Church Council to place on the agenda of the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, for consideration, a Statement on Human Sexuality reflecting the areas in which there is substantial agreement within this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly also urge that work continue unabated on resolving the church’s position on homosexuality, now covered in paragraph 48-63 of the working draft (October 1994).

Motion C: Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

Reference: Continued from Minutes, pages 654-660.

The Rev. James W. Addy [South Carolina Synod] moved to reconsider Motion C, since the assembly was “operating under a different understanding [of what was before the house], in order to be sure we have the understanding of this assembly.”

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-245; No-573

Defeated: To reconsider the action of this Churchwide Assembly with respect to Motion C

regarding the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

Motion H: Study of Human Sexuality

Co-Chair Bergquist presented Motion H, which comprised two resolutions: one submitted by the Rev. Amandus J. Derr [New Jersey Synod] and one submitted by the Rev. John K. Stendahl [New England Synod].

RESOLVED, that this fourth biennial assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America receive with thanks the report of the Church Council on the proposed social statement on human sexuality, and, affirming the strong recommendation of the consulting panel that “there is a compelling need for this church to find ways to communicate its pastoral concerns to its gay and lesbian members and their families,” this assembly urges that “such words of communal confession and pastoral encouragement come quickly from the Conference of Bishops, the bishop of this church, and the Division for Church and Society” so that this church may say “a positive and hopeful word at this time to our gay and lesbian members and their families” (Consulting Panel Conference-Call Minutes, June 14, 1995, in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2: Study of Human Sexuality, pg. 810-F); and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly

- a. commend the Church Council on its intent to “continue a strong public ethical witness by this church in those areas for which there is clarity and wide agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” (Consulting Panel Conference Call Minutes, June 14, 1995, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2: “Study of Human Sexuality,” page 810-F); and
- b. encourage the Church Council to advance that intent by addressing such ethical witness to our church and our society in the manner suggested by recommendation number three from the consulting panel (Consulting Panel Conference Call Minutes, June 14, 1995, 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2: “Study of Human Sexuality,” page 810-F);

and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly

- a. urge the Church Council quickly to implement recommendation number four of the consulting panel, addressing “a positive and hopeful word at this time to our gay and lesbian members” (Consulting Panel Conference-Call Minutes, June 14, 1995, in 1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2: “Study of Human Sexuality,” page 810-F); and
- b. urge toward that end the use of a message formulated both to express caring welcome for gay and lesbian persons and to repudiate all words and acts of hatred toward such persons in our church and in our communities.

The recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel was presented to the assembly as the main motion as provided in the Rules of Organization and Procedure (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 593).

Moved;

Seconded: RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America receive with thanks the report of the Church Council (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, “Study of Human Sexuality,” pages 810 A-F) on the possible social statement on human sexuality and affirm the strong recommendation of the consulting

panel (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, “Study of Human Sexuality,” pages 810 F-G), especially recommendations three and four calling the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to “lift up those areas in which there is clarity and wide agreement within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide a public ethical witness” and to affirm that there is a “compelling need for this church to find ways to communicate its pastoral concerns to its gay and lesbian members and their families”; and be it further RESOLVED, that words of communal confession and pastoral encouragement come quickly from the Conference of Bishops, the bishop of this church, and the Division for Church and Society, so that this church can express a caring welcome for gay and lesbian persons and repudiate all words and acts of hatred toward such persons in our church and in our communities.

The Rev. Albert R. Ahlstrom [Metropolitan New York Synod] observed, “The most recent action [the assembly] took suggests that this church is in agreement about a matter. I am not sure that we have any basis for saying that this church is in agreement about any of the matters dealing with the sexuality statement. It seems to me that on the face of it, it makes no sense.”

The Rev. John H. P. Reumann [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the second “Resolved” paragraph by deleting the words, “words of communal confession and pastoral encouragement,” and by inserting the words, “words of prayer and pastoral concern and encouragement.”

Pastor Reumann spoke to the proposed amendment, stating, “The words here are in quotation marks and if you turn to the previous page you will find they are cited as the source in the original motion from Pastor Derr. Actually, I believe, they come from page 810-G, which is not from the conference call [of the consulting panel, June 14, 1995], but commentary on minutes from 1994. I lost the paper trail after that as to whose commentary it was. My concern is that I do not know quite what “communal confession” means in this context and that originally the reference to such words may have been somewhat different. If it is confession of sin, do we agree what sin is before God? If it is a matter for the bishop of this church and the Conference of Bishops, this is an ecclesial matter of who speaks how. My wording, which reverts to items on page 810-F, by using prayer may include the confession of sin.”

The Rev. Jack E. Eggleston [Southeast Michigan Synod] requested clarification about what was now before the house—the resolutions submitted by Pastor Derr and Pastor Stendahl, or the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Ms. Bergquist stated that the Committee of Reference and Counsel would accept the motion as presented by Pastor Reumann as a friendly amendment. There being no objection, Bishop Chilstrom declared it to be so ordered.

The Rev. John K. Stendahl [New England Synod] commented, “In addition to being somewhat confused, we have reason, as I said a little earlier, to be ashamed that our communal handling of Scripture has proved so clumsy in these matters, that the bonds of our Christian charity have been so brittle. But, I think it is time now that we do something that is rather Lutheran—take our shame and turn it into a salutary humility about what we can do and what we can understand, and that we rise up in the power of the Gospel and say something. [I suggest that] we do what was very well recommended by the Consulting Panel. The Consulting Panel’s recommendations were good, and the Church Council has said that they will do at least most of

them, but it is too important a matter just to leave to panels and councils. I believe that this church needs to rise up, and we as the highest legislative body of this church, need to rise up and say, 'We will do this.'"

Ms. Laura C. Bourdo [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod] spoke against the replacement of the words as suggested by Pastor Reumann and accepted by the Committee of Reference and Counsel. She said, "Changing from 'words of communal confession and pastoral encouragement' to words of 'prayer and pastoral concern' indicates not a position of positive encouragement to this community, but instead carries a negative connotation to me."

The Rev. H. George Anderson, a member of the Church Council and bishop-elect of this church, stated, "I think with the deletion of those words, that I understand clearly the interest in this church of both reaching out [to gay and lesbian persons] and at the same time recognizing that confession should not be simply on the part of the Church Council and so on. I would pledge that my understanding of this present motion as amended would mean that we would try to reach out and extend a hand to gay and lesbian persons."

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] said, "I speak in favor of the motion on the floor recommended by the Reference and Counsel Committee with particular urgency, calling again attention to the recommendation of the Consulting Panel that the Church Council proceed with its intent 'to continue a strong public ethical witness by this church in those areas for which there is clarity and wide agreement in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,' but also calling attention to recommendation four, addressing a positive and hopeful word at this time to our gay and lesbian members."

Mr. Bill Wood [Greater Milwaukee Synod] stated, "I would like to express, on behalf of all the gay and lesbian individuals in this assembly and in the church, the appreciation that we have for this pastoral support. Your approval of this particular resolution, although it leaves out that hopefulness that was in the original motion, gives the voice of the church [ability] to say that at least we are important people. I would urge that you accept it and remember, at least one out of every four families has a gay or lesbian individual. Only one bishop has spoken out on our behalf. If there are 65 of them, that would assume that there are at least 15 bishops who probably have a relative who is a gay or lesbian. So remember when you speak those hateful words, we are among you, we are afraid to come out to you."

Mr. Dave Gosewich [Minneapolis Area Synod] said, "As a former co-dependent type person, it has been very difficult in the past to determine what is a hateful word and whether we are experiencing that at this assembly. When we disagree, it is difficult for those who are of the homosexual orientation to hear the love that comes through even in disagreement. So, I speak against the resolution since the last "Resolved" is very difficult to determine what are words and acts of hatred towards those who are of the homosexual orientation. It is very confusing."

Bishop Steven L. Ullestad [Northeastern Iowa Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the second "Resolved" paragraph by adding the word, "and," after the words, "Conference of Bishops," and by deleting the words, "and the Division for Church in Society."

Bishop Ullestad spoke to the motion, stating, "Surely, as the Conference of Bishops has no authority to develop social statements on this issue, as was previously indicated, we are the ones

that have been entrusted with the pastoral care and concern and prayers for this church. I would suggest that these concerns can be communicated most appropriately through the bishop of this church and the Conference of Bishops.”

The Rev. John K. Stendahl [New England Synod] said, “One of the resolutions [submitted] lifted up that aspect of the Consulting Panel’s recommendations. It spoke about the possibility of a message. That message would be sent out as a word from the church by the approval of the Church Council, but it comes out in preparation and over the name of the Division [for Church in Society].”

Bishop Chilstrom indicated that the eight-minute time limit for debate had expired. He called, therefore, for the vote on all pending matters.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-495; No-370

Carried: To amend the second “Resolved” paragraph by adding the word, “and,” after the words, “Conference of Bishops,” and by deleting the words, “and the Division for Church in Society.”

The Churchwide Assembly then proceeded to adopt the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee as amended:

Assembly

Action Yes-786; No-88

CA95.7.73 RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America receive with thanks the report of the Church Council (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, “Study of Human Sexuality,” pages 810 A-F) on the possible social statement on human sexuality and affirm the strong recommendation of the consulting panel (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, “Study of Human Sexuality,” pages 810 F-G), especially recommendations three and four calling the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to “lift up those areas in which there is clarity and wide agreement within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide a public ethical witness” and to affirm that there is a “compelling need for this church to find ways to communicate its pastoral concerns to its gay and lesbian members and their families”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that words of prayer and pastoral concern and encouragement come quickly from the Conference of Bishops and the bishop of this church, so that this church can express a caring welcome for gay and lesbian persons and repudiate all words and acts of hatred toward such persons in our church and in our communities.

The Rev. John A. Clausen [Northwestern Ohio Synod] requested clarification on Motion C. He said, “I thought I understood what we did on Motion C, and I wanted the clarification of the chair. I am assuming that we disapproved the motion that was submitted. Is that a correct understanding?” Bishop Chilstrom responded, “My sense of the assembly on that vote, even though we may have taken it incorrectly and later decided not to go back and reconsider it, was that we agreed to not adopt that proposal.”

Motion I: ELCA Lutheran Men in Mission and Promise-Keepers

Mr. Peña presented Motion I, submitted by Mr. Darrel S. Rice [Northeastern Ohio Synod],

and the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. Since the recommendation of the committee was approval, the resolution as submitted became the main motion before the assembly, as provided in the Rules of Organization and Procedure (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 593), and the recommendation of the committee was received as information.

Reference and Counsel

Recommendation

The committee recommended approval of this resolution.

Moved;

Seconded: RESOLVED, that the assembly be informed about relationships developing between Lutheran Men in Mission, our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America men's organization, and a current phenomenon of "Promise Keepers" by considering the following resolution:

Whereas, the "Promise Keepers" movement has confirmed the need for men's ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

Whereas, since its inception seven years ago, Lutheran Men in Mission has designed its efforts to respond to men's issues in a manner similar to those addressed by "Promise Keepers," but in a way that is consistent with our Lutheran biblical and confessional understanding, and this has been done through the development of resources, leadership development programs, retreats, and gatherings, as well as special projects; and

Whereas, Lutheran Men in Mission, together with other denominational men's ministries in the North American Conference of Church Men's Staff recognize the importance and impact of the "Promise Keepers" movement on denominational men's ministries; and

Whereas, it is recognized that the "Promise Keepers" movement has demonstrated men's thirst for biblical study and it is acknowledged that our sisters in Christ have benefited from gathering together around the Word over the years, so, too, there is opportunity for men to become more intimate with the Word and its value in day-to-day life; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the assembly encourage the Division for Congregational Ministries and Lutheran Men in Mission, in consultation with the Commission for Women, the Commission for Multicultural Ministries, and the Division for Ministry, to continue exploring the "Promise Keepers" movement and to provide further resources and information, similar to the commissioned paper on "Promise Keepers" developed by the Rev. James A. Nestingen, for men at the synodical and congregational expressions of Lutheran Men in Mission to assist them in their reflection of the "Promise Keepers" experience; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Men in Mission identify what learnings and re-learnings this movement suggests to the men's ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and circulate this information so that men's ministry within this church will have meaning to men of all ages, including those who are on college campuses and seminary campuses; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Men in Mission be encouraged to continue its efforts to dialogue with "Promise Keepers" personnel to determine the commonalities and differences that exist between the two ministries and to provide such information to appropriate persons within synods and congregations for consideration as they make decisions about their involvement in the "Promise Keepers" program; and be it further

RESOLVED that Lutheran Men in Mission and the Division for Congregational Ministries be

encouraged to expand their efforts to supply materials and experiences to address the demonstrated thirst by men for biblical study.

Mr. Ralieg A. Sandy Jr. [Southern Ohio Synod] commented, “I am fortunate to be one of those that was raised in high spirit—I am a Promise Keeper. I remain and retain that high spirit from going in 1993 to the Boulder [Colo.] convention, and strongly [encourage] the men of this ministry to look at this in wholesome prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ as we develop our organizations to support the hungry men who need spiritual guidance as they return from these conferences.”

Mr. Harry Arne [North Carolina Synod] spoke in favor of the motion “with some information that the assembly might like to have. Promise Keepers anticipate a million-and-a-quarter men to participate in their program and events this coming year. Without question this is a powerful, positive program. However good it is, it is not Lutheran. Lutheran Men in Mission has been aware of men’s needs since its inception in 1988 and since its first publication in 1989. [It has initiated] about forty studies dealing with things like relationships with spouse, children, work place, addiction, and problems of men today. These studies are from a Lutheran perspective. This resolution deals with our continued contact with Promise Keepers, because we can learn from them, but it also supports the purpose of Lutheran Men in Mission—to serve our men, to reclaim those we have lost, and to bring in those who are unchurched.”

Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod] moved to amend the resolution so as to eliminate the term, “Promise Keepers”:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the first “Resolved” paragraph under the “Whereas” paragraphs of the quoted motion by deleting the words, “‘Promise Keepers’ Movement,” and by replacing them with the words, “phenomenon of the men’s ministry movement outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and

To amend the first “Resolved” paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting before the word, “developed,” the words, “Promise Keepers,” and replacing them with the words, “these ministries”; and

To amend the first “Resolved” paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting before the word, “experience,” the words, “Promise Keepers,” and by adding after the word, “experience,” the words, “of these men’s ministries outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and

To amend the third “Resolved” paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting the words, “‘Promise Keepers’ personnel” and by replacing them with the words, “personnel of the men’s ministries outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and

To amend the third “Resolved” paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting the words, “‘Promise Keepers’ program,” and replacing them with the words, “men’s ministry programs outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Mr. Brasgalla spoke to the motion and observed that, while the “Promise Keepers” movement has much to commend it, it is “dangerous” to align more closely with it at this time, because it would be interpreted in some circles as alignment with the so-called “Religious Right.”

Mr. Darrel S. Rice [Northeastern Ohio Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, and in favor of the entire motion.

An unidentified voting member called the question.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To move the previous question.

Bishop Chilstrom advised the assembly, "We have before us a motion to amend. It was rather lengthy. Is there any demand that it be read again?" Hearing none, he called for the vote.

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-412; No-377

Carried: To amend the first "Resolved" paragraph under the "Whereas" paragraphs of the quoted motion by deleting the words, "Promise Keepers' Movement," and by replacing them with the words, "phenomenon of the men's ministry movement outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America"; and

To amend the first "Resolved" paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting before the word, "developed," the words, "Promise Keepers," and replacing them with the words, "these ministries"; and

To amend the first "Resolved" paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting before the word, "experience," the words, "Promise Keepers," and by adding after the word, "experience," the words, "of these men's ministries outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America"; and

To amend the third "Resolved" paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting the words, "Promise Keepers' personnel" and by replacing them with the words, "personnel of the men's ministries outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America"; and

To amend the third "Resolved" paragraph of the quoted motion by deleting the words, "Promise Keepers' program," and replacing them with the words, "men's ministry programs outside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

The Rev. Steven R. P. Weston [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] moved the following:

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the amended motion by striking the introductory paragraph:

RESOLVED, that the assembly be informed about relationships developing between Lutheran Men in Mission, our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America men's organization, and a current phenomenon of the men's ministry movement outside the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by considering the following resolution.

Pastor Weston spoke to his motion, stating, "The motion before us is confusing, because we are resolving to consider something and then, as I understand it, if we vote for that, then we would have to consider it. This amendment is just to resolve that confusion in having us consider it."

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-426; No-323

Carried: To amend the amended motion by striking the introductory paragraph: RESOLVED, that the assembly be informed about relationships developing between Lutheran Men in Mission, our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America men's organization, and a current phenomenon of the men's ministry movement outside the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by considering the following resolution.

Bishop Chilstrom said, "Now you have the action before you without the first "Resolved" and amended as approved earlier. Any further comments?"

Mr. Darrel S. Rice [Northeastern Ohio Synod] commented, "I would just like to bring to the assembly some information that would be helpful to them concerning the men's ministries throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Lutheran Men in Mission is the official organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and many congregations have men's groups that are not affiliated with it. We could give a much stronger witness, if all that have men's groups would affiliate with their Lutheran Men in Mission organization at the conference or at the synod level. To help you, we have information available. On page 50-52 [of the September 1995 issue] in The Lutheran [magazine] that was distributed to us, there is an article that describes an effort that is going on now and evaluates Promise Keepers to a certain extent. We have, in addition to that, a document [written by] the Rev. James Nestingen that evaluates [Promise Keepers]. We have a guide book for congregations, a supplement for small groups, and then we would encourage individuals to become Master Builders."

Mr. Trevis Butcher [Montana Synod] said, "Basically, I was very disappointed to see [the intent of] this document completely changed. In the churches in our area, there are many men who have been involved with "Promise Keepers." I am opposed to this document, because it no longer stands for what it started as. We have great Lutheran Men in Mission programs in hand, and it is kind of redundant to use it at this point."

The Rev. David A. Mann [North/West Lower Michigan Synod] inquired, "Since the document has been changed, when we vote, are we voting on the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee?" Bishop Chilstrom responded, "You raise a good question. We are into really complicated business here. It [the resolution submitted by Mr. Rice] came before us through the Reference and Counsel Committee. [The committee had recommended approval of the motion, which then became the main motion before the assembly.] Now, we have amended it a couple of times, so we will vote on the amended resolution."

The Rev. Jane E. Kunzie-Brunner [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] spoke against the amended motion, stating, "I have a great concern that there are many popular spiritual renewal programs, but we have an obligation as a church to make sure that the spirituality we are speaking about is in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When we say, 'such as these,' we cannot guarantee that they are confessionally in alignment with the Lutheran Confessions."

Ms. Susan Rodine [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] spoke against Motion I as amended, stating, "I have a lot of concern and I had a chance to read The Lutheran magazine article last night about the Promise Keepers movement. I lived in Colorado and know something about Bill McCartney and his personal theology. I wonder whether we are not acting in ways that are opposite to our affirmation of the equality and the validity of women in ministry and the role of women in society, [specifically] whether this movement is in alignment with the affirmation this church has made about the role of women."

The Rev. David W. Schulte [Southwestern Texas Synod] requested further clarification about the Rules of Organization and Procedure. He said, "Mr. Mark Helmke, a little bit earlier, pointed out that, according to the rules of the assembly, whenever the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval or disapproval, the original motion is what comes before the assembly."

Bishop Chilstrom responded, "Let us check that one more time." He then read the two paragraphs [paragraphs two and three on page 593 of 1995 Pre- Assembly Report, Volume 2] of the Rules of Organization and Procedure that relate to recommendations for approval or disapproval by either the Memorials Committee or the Committee of Reference and Counsel. He then said, "It is complicated, but I think we have got it right."

Mr. Donald Rasmussen [Saint Paul Area Synod] commented that, with the resolution as amended, the assembly no longer had what the Reference and Counsel Committee had recommended for approval.

Ms. Susan Dill [Delaware-Maryland Synod] inquired about the document, authored by the Rev. James A. Nestingen, which had been cited in the original motion. She asked, "It refers to a very specific, commissioned paper that was written about Promise Keepers. Would we substitute the language here also?" Her question was related to the amendment to the substitute motion that had deleted the words, "Promise Keepers," after the word, "developed," in the first "Resolved" under the "Whereas" paragraphs and that had replaced it with "these ministries." She questioned whether the substitution was appropriate, since the document was cited as a specific example. Bishop Chilstrom responded, "You raise a good point, but we did approve that change and it is before you now. We must go ahead and vote. You will just have to keep that problem in mind as you cast your vote."

Bishop Chilstrom then advised the assembly, "You have before you now, Motion I, submitted by Mr. Darrel S. Rice. It has been amended by removing the first ['introductory'] 'Resolved' paragraph and the number of deletions and additions. We will vote now on whether you approve this resolution as amended."

Bishop E. LeRoy Riley Jr. [New Jersey Synod] requested further clarification.

Subsequently, the Rev. David W. Schulte [Southwestern Texas Synod] commented, "According to the rules you read a moment ago, what is before us is not the recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee. It is the original motion as amended."

Mr. Douglas Reeves [Rocky Mountain Synod] asked, "Is a motion to lay the resolution upon the table . . . in order?" Bishop Chilstrom responded, "Yes." Mr. Reeves then moved the following:

Moved;
Seconded; Yes-501; No-335
Carried: To table further discussion of this matter.

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] moved to amend the orders of the day to move directly to Motion M.

Moved;
Seconded: To amend the orders of the day, in order to discuss Motion M.

Pastor Schaper spoke to the motion, stating, “The intervening motions are issues of substance and also important. However, none of them has the urgency of Motion M. We are dealing here with two congregations that at the end of the calendar year will be expelled from our church. I ask that this receive the attention of the assembly.”

Bishop Chilstrom stated that the assembly must conclude business at 11:30 a.m. “Any items of business not taken care of by [this assembly] automatically are referred to the Church Council,” he said.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-586; No-193

Carried: To amend the orders of the day, in order to discuss Motion M.

Motion M—First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches,
Sierra Pacific Synod

Mr. Peña presented Motion M, which addressed two resolutions, submitted respectively by Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod] and the Rev. Albert R. Ahlstrom [Metropolitan New York Synod].

The following motion was submitted by Mr. Ron Brasgalla [Southern California (West) Synod]:

Whereas, the Discipline Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in a six-to-five majority decision on June 18, 1990, suspended the congregations of St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco, for calling an openly lesbian couple to serve as pastors of their congregation, and First United Lutheran Church, San Francisco, for calling an openly gay man to serve as pastor of their congregation; and

Whereas, the suspension, which expires December 31, 1995, was for a five-year period to allow time for: “(1) Study and dialogue within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with respect to its practices regarding ordination of homosexual persons; and (2) action at one or more churchwide assemblies. If by that date or sooner, the practices of these congregations are in accord with the pastoral leadership criterion of recognition, they will be restored to full membership in the church. If such accord does not occur by the end of the suspension period, the congregations will be removed from the roll of ELCA congregations” (Decision of the Discipline Committee, Introduction, paragraph 7, page 3); and

Whereas, the Memorandum of Reasons in support of the decision stated: “There is a need for dialogue and reconciliation within this church in the face of ambiguity and conflict on the issue of ordination of practicing homosexual persons” (Decision of the Discipline Committee, Section II.B.2, paragraph 1, page 21); and “As the Lutheran church, we cannot remain true to our own purpose and confession as an open, teaching, and inclusive church unless we are willing to participate in genuine dialogue with gay and lesbian persons. And genuine dialogue cannot continue if they are ignored in our studies and deliberations or removed from our community” (Decision of the Discipline Committee, Section II.B.2, paragraph 6, page 22); and

Whereas, the ELCA Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America document, developed by the Division for Ministry, and adopted October 1990 by the ELCA Church Council, which included guidelines regarding those “who are homosexual in their self-understanding,” did not include gay and lesbian persons in the study and deliberation process that brought forth the document; and

Whereas, the Discipline Committee, as constituted on June 8, 1990, has retained jurisdiction over this case “to provide any interpretation of this statement of decision and to determine the occurrence of any of the conditions described” (Decision of the Discipline Committee, paragraph 3, pages 5 and 8); and

Whereas, the purpose of the five-year suspension period was chosen to allow for careful study and deliberation, and yet, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has not acted upon the recommendations of the Discipline Committee to participate in genuine dialogue with gay and lesbian persons on the issue of ordination of practicing homosexuals; therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reconvene the Discipline Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (as constituted June 18, 1990, and which has retained jurisdiction over this case), to review faithfully and determine the status, during the last five years, of all conditions set forth in their decision and discipline of June 18, 1990, so that the Discipline Committee and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be of clear conscience when the final condition of discipline is imposed on December 31, 1995.

In addition, the following motion was submitted by the Rev. Albert R. Ahlstrom [Metropolitan New York Synod]:

RESOLVED, to commend the action taken by the 1995 Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly and commended by the 1995 assembly of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod: “that when the First United and St. Francis congregations are expelled from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we encourage the bishop and the Synod Council of the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to explore creative ways to ‘maintain a strong bond of fellowship’ with these congregations.”

Reference and Counsel Recommendation

The committee recognizes the deep pain experienced throughout this church at both the present suspension and anticipated removal from the roster of the San Francisco congregations of First United and St. Francis Lutheran churches. The committee honors the integrity of the witness to the Gospel and compassionate outreach ministry of the two congregations. Likewise honored are the integrity and faithfulness of the Sierra Pacific Synod bishop and council who filed charges, as well as the disciplinary panel which rendered its decision in 1990.

The committee’s review of pertinent documents leads it to note with sorrow that the anticipated study and dialogue, as recommended in the written disciplinary decision, have not yielded resolution of the continuing conflict.

At the same time, the committee recognizes that for the promotion and protection of the rights of all parties in disciplinary proceedings, this church in assembly, as well as its congregations and synods must follow the constitutional provisions governing such proceedings.

The recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel was presented to the assembly as the main motion as provided in the Rules of Organization and Procedure (1995 Pre-Assembly Report, Volume 2, page 593).

Moved;

Seconded: To affirm and support the action of the Sierra Pacific Synod in seeking “creative ways to maintain a strong bond of fellowship” with the San Francisco congregations of First United and St. Francis Lutheran churches during the time of suspension and if they are removed from the roster of this church.

Mr. Gregory R. Jahnke [Sierra Pacific Synod] requested that privilege of the floor be extended to Ms. Mari Irvin, in order that she might present a communication from the two San Francisco congregations.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Yes-564; No-216

Carried: To extend the privilege of voice to Ms. Mari Irvin, president of St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco, Calif., for the purpose of delivering a brief message from the two suspended San Francisco conference churches.

Bishop Chilstrom asked Mr. Jahnke, “Did you include in your motion a length of time?” Mr. Jahnke responded, “No, I did not, but it would be approximately two and one half minutes.”

In addressing the assembly, Ms. Mari Irvin said, “I welcome the opportunity to speak to you today. As the president of St. Francis Lutheran Church in San Francisco, I bring greetings in the name of Jesus Christ to each of you from members of that community and from First United Lutheran Church. Some of you have visited us; many of you have prayed for us. We very much value your support in many ways. I will cut my statement somewhat short because I know we are very much under the pressure of time.

“Let me simply say that as a person who participated in the hearing in July 1990, it is my personal knowledge that the discipline committee was very sensitive to the issue before us and wanted very much in its recommendation to make sure that the Churchwide Assembly had the opportunity to deal with policy issues after appropriate study and communication.

“I stand before you today as a lesbian daughter of the Lutheran church. But most importantly, I stand among you as a person who for nearly 62 years has been a baptized child of our God. I ask you, the members of this Churchwide Assembly, to take the good-faith action needed at this time. I am asking you to find a way to extend the suspension period of St. Francis and First United Lutheran Churches so that the yet undone work asked for urgently by the discipline committee five years ago might be dealt with. Let expulsion be regarded as the disciplinary committee so intended—an act to come after, if necessary, rather than to come before a time of study and dialogue among those of us who have differences. I do not know the parliamentary mechanism needed to extend the period of suspension, but I do believe that parliamentary and administrative procedures to be our servant, not our master. For that reason, it is my urgent hope that this assembly can find a procedurally correct way to insure that the intention of the discipline committee can be honored and that expulsion not occur on December 31, [1995].

“In closing, I would like to say that I believe that we have nothing to fear in conflict and disagreement, because these are the necessary and transitory components of the process by which we work together. Our God has been with us and those who have gone before us on other difficult journeys that have revealed to those who seek, a deeper understanding of God’s message and of God’s love. May we all go out with good faith and courage, not knowing where we go,

but only that God's hand is leading us and God's love supporting us through Jesus Christ. Thank you."

Bishop George P. Mocko [Delaware-Maryland Synod] moved:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer this matter to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Bishop Mocko spoke to the motion, stating, "This is an extremely important issue and, if we want to be a community of moral deliberation, we cannot deal with this adequately in the amount of time left."

Mr. Dart Westphal [Metropolitan New York Synod] commented, "I believe this resolution, Motion M, if I am hearing it correctly, is something that we can all support and understand that we are not making any change. We are just asking for a word, some statement by this body, that we would like to retain some sort of fellowship with these congregations. If we were dealing with Motion N, I believe the gentleman would be correct [Bishop Mocko's rationale for the motion to refer], but on Motion M, I do not think so."

The Rev. Gary L. Olson [Saint Paul Area Synod] inquired about a statement made in the resolution submitted by Mr. Brasgalla. Bishop Chilstrom advised that the matter immediately before the assembly was the motion to refer.

The Rev. Albert R. Ahlstrom [Metropolitan New York Synod] said, "This is a very important issue, but it seems to me that to extend a bond of fellowship is not a matter that needs to be referred to the Church Council. We should act on it."

Moved;

Seconded; Yes-400; No-446

Defeated: To refer this matter to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper [Sierra Pacific Synod] moved to extend debate.

Moved;

Seconded: To extend debate by five minutes.

Bishop Chilstrom stated, "Our problem is two-fold—the building, which we must vacate and the eight-minute limit [on debate on any issue], which is about to expire. However, the motion is in order."

Pastor Schaper then withdrew his motion and moved to call the question:

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To call the question on all matters before the house.

Bishop Ralph A. Kempinski [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] inquired about the meaning of the phrase, "strong bond of fellowship" in the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and

Counsel. He said, "Before I can vote one way or the other, I would like to know that definition."

Mr. Peña responded to the question, "That is picking up the language from the [Sierra Pacific] Synod and I would ask Bishop Robert W. Mattheis to address that."

Bishop Mattheis said, "That language comes from a resolution adopted at our Synod Assembly this year. The substance of that is still being explored and will be addressed by our synod council in September [1995]. We intended to express a mutual fellowship and oneness that is ours in Christ as we labor together for the cause of the Gospel. The exact content of it, or the shape it is going to take, has not yet been determined."

Assembly

Action Yes-674; No-172

CA95.7.74 To affirm and support the action of the Sierra Pacific Synod in seeking "creative ways to maintain a strong bond of fellowship" with the San Francisco congregations of First United and St. Francis Lutheran churches during the time of suspension and if they are removed from the roster of this church.

Motions S, T, U, V, and W

The Rev. Eric C. Kutzli [Western Iowa Synod] moved to suspend the orders of the day, in order to consider several of the remaining motions en bloc.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded; Voice Vote

Carried: To suspend the orders of the day, in order to consider en bloc Motions S, T, U, V, and W.

Assembly

Action Yes- 695; No-77

CA95.7.75 To adopt en bloc Motions S, T, U, V, and W; and

To agree, in the interest of time, that they not be read, but that the printed copies received by each voting member be entrusted to them with the understanding that this en bloc action does not diminish in any way our thanks and appreciation:

Motion S: Acclamation of Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom

[Assembly

Action]

CA95.7.76 It is with deep gratitude that we, the members of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, on behalf of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, receive the report of Herbert W. Chilstrom, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

We are thankful for God's servant, Bishop Chilstrom, who from the beginning of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has given visionary, faithful, and steady leadership. Bishop Chilstrom has charted the course for making Christ known within this church and beyond. With energy and dedication he has nurtured significant relationships among others in the human family of faith around the globe. Through these years Bishop Chilstrom has shown pastoral care and concern while the church has wrestled with sensitive issues.

Bishop Chilstrom has served us well through the capable and committed work of his staff. We take this opportunity to offer thanks and recognition to each of them.

We pledge ourselves, and encourage all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to:

- Pray that the winds of the Spirit will blow among us and convert us from a settled church to a mission-driven church;
- Come alive in the Spirit, use our gifts and carry the Good News of the Gospel into our daily lives;
- Be the Church with confidence, use the Bible with care, and work for peace with vigor;
- Strengthen the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and their ministries to the world;
- Provide solid theological education and reflection for the leadership of this church, its rostered and lay leaders;
- Contribute to the financial health of the church for mission and ministry;
- Renew our commitment to justice as we struggle with complex social issues in a way that all voices are heard; and
- Share more fully our oneness in Christ through ecumenical relationships.

We ask God's blessing on Bishop Herbert W. and Pastor E. Corinne Chilstrom in new opportunities for ministry as they continue to make Christ known throughout the world.

Motion T: Acclamation of Vice President Kathy J. Magnus

[Assembly

Action]

CA95.7.77 We give God thanks for the gifted, dynamic, and deeply committed leadership of Vice President Kathy J. Magnus. Ms. Magnus not only conscientiously directs the important ministry of the Church Council, but also mentors the development of leaders in the church, particularly among the laity.

We rejoice in the leadership she has offered as she represents this church in this country and around the world.

We receive with genuine gratitude the vice president's creative report of the work of the Church Council and its committees.

We celebrate her re-election and affirm Ms. Magnus' focused vision for this church and her leadership in making Christ known.

Motion U: Acclamation of Secretary Lowell G. Almen

[Assembly

Action]

CA95.7.78 In response to the report of Secretary Lowell G. Almen, we hereby express our admiration and respect for his tireless, thorough work. For this unique servant of God, we give thanks and celebrate his affirming re-election.

We appreciate his care in giving leadership to the many significant tasks of the Office of Secretary. We join his "fan club" in celebrating his genuine humor and love for this church. We express deep gratitude for his encyclopedic knowledge that serves so well the congregations, synods, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, and this entire church. Our gratitude also goes to the efficient staff of the office who meticulously tend to such necessary information as current rosters, membership statistics, and benevolence trends.

Finally, we thank Secretary Lowell G. Almen for all of his faithful efforts in guaranteeing that

this assembly is effective, efficient, and, indeed, makes Christ known. We pray God's continual blessing as he begins his new term.

Motion V: Acclamation of Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe

[Assembly
Action]

CA95.7.79 We greatly appreciate Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe and staff for their dedicated attention to the financial health of this church.

We are deeply concerned that there be continued improvement in the financial status of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America while maximizing the resources for ongoing mission and ministry.

We commit ourselves to prayer, wise stewardship, and personal sacrifice for the mission of the Church.

Motion W: A General Thanksgiving

[Assembly
Action]

CA95.7.80 As God's people, we have gathered in Minneapolis, Minn., to make Christ known through our worship, our prayer, our deliberations, and our decisions. We have named a new leader, affirmed the effective work of two officers by reelection, and chosen many to carry on the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America during the next biennium. As we return to our homes and congregations, we give thanks to God for God's blessings these days, among them:

- The dedication and leadership of our officers: Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom, Vice President Kathy J. Magnus, Secretary Lowell G. Almen, and Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe.
- The guidance, support, and direction for the ministries of our church by the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and the churchwide staff.
- The many people who have contributed to this assembly:
 - Bishop David W. Olson (Minneapolis Area Synod) and Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl (Saint Paul Area Synod) and their staffs, the Local Arrangements Committee, and the gracious volunteers for their welcome and hospitality.
 - The ELCA Staff Planning Committee, Assembly Manager Mary Beth Nowak, and all staff who provided many extra hours of service and support.
 - The Worship Committee, worship leaders, Bible study presenters, and musicians who inspired each day as we focused on Word and Sacrament.
 - The board of directors for the "Festival: Word and Deed" for their enriching contribution of special events and inspiration.
 - The task force members who generously gave time, energy, and expertise to craft the "Social Statement on Peace."
 - The media staff members who with their creativity and technical expertise enriched the assembly with a rich variety of visual images, with special thanks to all those who brought us together through the teleconference.
 - The people of Minneapolis and St. Paul who extended their welcome and care through the staff of Central Lutheran Church, the Convention Center, and hotels.
 - The members of the Youth Convocation who energized us with their witness, song, and

dance.

- All assembly presenters from whom we learned about our church and its mission.
- The faithful people of God at this assembly, who have come with the prayers of congregations across the country, have experienced God's Spirit and presence in memorable ways:
 - in the warmth and interaction of the Hospitality Center;
 - in the rich color and beauty of the quilts;
 - in the inspiration of Festival music and drama;
 - in the creation of a stained-glass window; and
 - in the mutual greetings in Minneapolis skyways.

And, so we pray for God's benediction on this assembly and on each one who has come together to make Christ known.

Ms. Bergquist thanked Pastor Kutzli for the action bringing these motions before the assembly. Concluding the report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, she said, "The committee had planned to bring these resolutions of thanks to the assembly en bloc and to say that they would not be read at this time, but that the printed copy received by each voting member be entrusted to them with the understanding that this does not diminish in any way our thanks and appreciation. Thank you for the acclamation of the work that has been done."

Ms. Kim Prestidge [Northeastern Minnesota Synod] requested a moment of personal privilege. She said, "On behalf of the State of Minnesota, we would like to thank the Church Council for selecting Minneapolis as the host site of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have all of you here in our state and I hope that you will get a chance to return to our state someday to enjoy one of our 14,000 lakes, the trees of the northern woods, the northern lights—and make sure you take time to have an authentic Finnish sauna."

Announcement of the Next Regular Assembly

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to make final announcements.

Secretary Almen announced that the 1997 Churchwide Assembly would convene in the city of Philadelphia, Pa., August 14-20, 1997. He then requested a moment of personal privilege in order that the bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, the Rev. Roy G. Almquist, might greet assembly members in anticipation of that event.

Bishop Almquist said, "It is a joy for us to have this opportunity to express a personal welcome to the voting members and to share with you these words of welcome [from the Mayor of Philadelphia]:"

From its very birth in 1682, when it was founded by William Penn, Pennsylvania has been a haven of religious freedom and diversity. The first Lutheran synod was established in Philadelphia by Henry Melchoir Muehlenberg in 1748 joining an historic group of religious organizations, which also traced their roots to this city. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which was founded in 1987, will mark its tenth anniversary when it holds its fifth biennial assembly in Philadelphia from August 14-20, 1997.

Now, therefore, I Edward G. Rendell, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, do extend an advance welcome to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and do assure all that the citizens of the "City of Brotherly Love" [and I am sure he means also Sisterly Love, Bishop Almquist interjected], will extend their full hospitality and welcome to its members when they

convene in Philadelphia in 1997 for their fifth biennial assembly.

Bishop Almquist added, "I do want to extend a personal invitation . . . and we hope that many of you [voting members] will return. We are particularly delighted that we will have returning to Philadelphia, H. George Anderson, who received most of his professional degrees in Philadelphia. He got one degree from a small non-Lutheran academy in New Haven, Conn. [Yale University], but everything else from Philadelphia. It is a joy to welcome you all and to present to the Andersons, Jutta and George, some T-shirts that they can start wearing now to get ready for the joy of Philadelphia."

Other Announcements

Secretary Almen announced that the installation of the Rev. H. George Anderson as the second bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America would occur at a Service of Holy Communion at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 18, 1995, at Rockefeller Chapel on the campus of the University of Chicago.

Secretary Almen also announced that a teleconference featuring Bishop Anderson would be held from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, on Sunday, December 3, 1995.

Closing of the 1995 Churchwide Assembly

Bishop Chilstrom called upon Ms. Ruth Allin (Chicago, Illinois) to lead the closing service of worship. Bishop Chilstrom then presided at the Order for the Closing of the Churchwide Assembly. He declared the 1995 Churchwide Assembly to be adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Exhibit A

Members of the
Churchwide Assembly

Voting Members

Officers

Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom, bishop
Ms. Kathy J. Magnus, vice president
Rev. Lowell G. Almen, secretary
Mr. Richard L. Mc Auliffe, treasurer

Alaska Synod (1A)

Ms. Jamie Berge
Mr. Larry Graham
Rev. Duane J. Hanson
Bishop Donald D. Parsons
Mr. Vincent Tocktoo Sr.

Northwest Washington Synod (1B)

Rev. L. Paul Bartling
Ms. Bobbie Domenico
Rev. Karen L. Hanson
Mr. Carroll Hovland
Ms. Luana Langford
Ms. Bernice Lavik
Ms. Erma Lee
Mr. James Logghe
Bishop Donald H. Maier
Rev. James D. Stender
Rev. Robert F. Winkel

Southwestern Washington Synod (1C)

Ms. Norah Bringer

Ms. Merri Erickson

Mr. Jack Johnson

Mr. Ray Odmark

Rev. Gordon L. Omdal Jr.

Rev. Carol L. Plummer

Ms. Kay Ronde

Mr. Howard Thronson

Bishop David C. Wold

Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D)

Ms. Barbara L. Bauer

Ms. Tanya Christenson

Rev. Barbara J. Condon

Ms. Laura Estes

Bishop Robert M. Keller

Rev. John A. La Munyon

Mr. Al Liebetrau (8/16-8/20; 8/22)

Mr. Peter Shen

Mr. Ray Vallejo

Mr. John David Watrous (8/21)

Oregon Synod (1E)

Ms. Sandra C. Anderson

Mr. Hal Dick

Ms. Bonny Groshong

Ms. Judy Jernberg

Rev. Martha H. Maier

Rev. Muriel E. Peterson

Mr. Robert Steen

Bishop Paul R. Swanson

Mr. Paul Tews

Montana Synod (1F)

Mr. Trevis Butcher

Ms. Melissa Dreyer

Mr. Mark Halvorson

Mr. Adrian Hoye

Rev. Richard A. Jespersen

Rev. Dorene C. King

Rev. Wayne H. Pris

Bishop Mark R. Ramseth

Ms. Loretta Stordahl

Ms. Cherrie Wood

Sierra Pacific Synod (2A)

Ms. Patricia R. Cash
Mr. Roy Davis
Rev. Lauren I. Egdahl
Rev. Paul J. Gravrock
Mr. Dennis F. Haugan
Mr. Tom Hoegel
Rev. Mark W. Holmerud
Mr. Gregory Jahnke
Ms. Cynthia Johnson
Ms. Diane Lowe
Mr. Jack Lowry
Rev. Glenn W. Lundahl
Bishop Robert W. Mattheis
Ms. Darlene Paulsen
Ms. Joan W. Peery
Rev. Richard L. Schaper
Rev. Randall K. Wilburn

Southern California (West) Synod (2B)

Ms. Carol Arsaga
Mr. Ron Brasgalla
Mr. A. Dean Buchanan
Mr. Robert Chillison
Bishop Paul W. Egertson
Ms. Racine Forrest
Ms. Stephenie Gittoes
Rev. James E. Kinseley
Rev. James Lodbell
Rev. Randal L. Ouimette
Rev. Kathleen A. Richter

Pacifica Synod (2C)

Ms. Betty Anderson
Mr. Larry Anderson
Rev. Margaret A. Duttera
Mr. Bill Evans
Ms. Linda Hansen
Rev. Jonathan A. Heierman
Bishop Robert L. Miller
Rev. A. Everett Nielsen
Ms. Diane Nissen
Rev. Peter A. Pettit
Ms. Donna Scott
Mr. Willie Velasco

Grand Canyon Synod (2D)

Rev. Joseph L. Carucci
Mr. Wally Gigstad
Mr. Dennis Haugan
Ms. Jami Johnson
Mr. Carl Morgan
Ms. Delee Rehak
Ms. Inez Rodning
Rev. John A. Schaumburg
Rev. Donald P. Schneider
Mr. Clifford Scott
Bishop Howard E. Wennes
Ms. Jennifer Zahnnow

Rocky Mountain Synod (2E)

Rev. Grant L. Aaseng
Rev. Robert C. Barger
Rev. Kristi K. Beebe
Mr. Mark A. Betley
Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg
Ms. Mary Erickson
Mr. Ron Guse
Ms. Dianna Johnston
Mr. Jack K. Kronser
Rev. Frank E. Lay
Rev. Harold T. Nilsson
Rev. John S. Petty
Mr. Douglas Reeves
Mr. Robert Sandoval
Ms. Nina Soltwedel
Mr. Harold Steinhoff
Ms. Mercy Torres
Ms. Bonnie J. Yockstick

Western North Dakota

Synod (3A)

Rev. Nola M. Eisenbrandt
Rev. Allyne Holz
Mr. Lowell Jensen
Ms. Nichole Johnson
Mr. Walter Johnson
Rev. Geraldine C. King
Ms. Marge Krohn
Bishop Robert D. Lynne
Mr. Pat Mc Cormack

Ms. Diane Melbye
Ms. Alice Olson
Rev. Jo D. Olson
Mr. Harold Pahlmeyer
Rev. Klaus W. Raab
Mr. Rolland Redlin
Rev. Darrel W. Saathoff
Mr. William Trautman
Mr. Harry Zacher

Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B)

Ms. Darci Asche
Ms. Charlene Burthold
Rev. Karla J. Coen-Tuff
Rev. Susan K. Folks
Bishop Richard J. Foss
Ms. Sharon Fox-Bogen
Ms. Borghild Haven
Rev. James L. Hilde
Rev. Barbara L. Johnson
Rev. Timothy G. Johnson
Rev. James D. Kegel
Ms. Carol Lewis
Ms. Jean Luttschwager
Mr. Brent Nerland
Rev. Harold D. Ovre
Mr. Harlan Pederson
Mr. Wayne Quam
Ms. Lola J. Ruff
Mr. Larry Thiele
Mr. Joel Thompson
Mr. Alvin Tollefsrud

South Dakota Synod (3C)

Ms. Chelle Calvert
Mr. Reid Christopherson
[Rev. Andrea F. DeGroot-Nesdahl,
 bishop-elect]
Mr. Martin Drefs
Bishop Norman D. Eitrheim
Rev. Derek J. Engfelt
Rev. Bruce P. Falksen
Ms. Waynette Geigle
Rev. Robert D. Hansen
Rev. Kevin H. Kline

Mr. Jim Kranhold
Rev. John A. Mayer
Mr. Richard Moe
Ms. Helen Nelson
Rev. Vaughn R. Nesheim
Ms. Donna Nolte
Mr. Donald Olauson
Ms. Dorothy Pulscher
Rev. Olaf Roynesdal
Rev. Hans M. Sacrison
Mr. James Schade
Mr. Harlan Stoley
Ms. Sarah Wieland

Northwestern Minnesota
Synod (3D)
Rev. Irving J. Arnquist
Mr. Curtis Benson
Rev. William E. Boelter
Rev. Dennis W. Brovold
Rev. Paul S. Brunsberg
Ms. Nancy Christian
Mr. David Green
Rev. Michael A. Gustafson
Rev. Gary L. Halverson
[Rev. Arlen D. Hermodson,
 bishop-elect]
Mr. Glenn J. Kangas
Mr. Darrel Krogseng
Ms. Marianne Lorentzen-Pickett
Mr. Sergio A. Mendes
Ms. Lynne Olson
Bishop Arthur V. Rimmereid
Ms. Delores Seamon
Rev. Martin A. Seamon
Ms. Oliane Sharp-Anderson
Rev. Stephen J. Sveom
Mr. Phil Volkman
Ms. Jane Walker
Rev. Steven R. P. Weston
Ms. Ute White

Southwestern Minnesota
Synod (3E)
Ms. Anne Andert

Mr. Mike Francis
Rev. Larry C. Johnson
Rev. Arthur C. Larson
Rev. Todd M. Mattson
Ms. Ruth Mills
Bishop Roger L. Munson
Rev. Duane C. Nelson
Ms. Corrine Olsen
Ms. Kim Prestidge
Rev. Bruce P. Rimmereid
Rev. Frederick J. Tessmer
Mr. David Vik
Mr. Merrill Widmark

Southwestern Minnesota
Synod (3F)
Rev. William R. Boettner
Ms. Maxine Broderius (8/18-8/22)
Mr. Paul Buhr
Rev. Daniel B. Carlson
Mr. Lee Cunningham
Mr. Bill Ehlke
Mr. Richard Gross
Ms. Miriam Hackmann
Rev. Roger L. Hanson
Rev. Andrew D. Hermodson-Olsen
Rev. Robert A. Kempainen
Ms. Donna Kurth
Ms. Brenda Larson
Rev. Peggy A. Paugh Leuzinger
Ms. Mary Lou Ludeman
Ms. Margery Mensing
Mr. Harold Nash
Bishop Stanley N. Olson
Rev. Charles R. Paulson
Rev. Diane S. Pederson
Ms. Leila Preston
Rev. Robert L. Rendahl
Mr. William Styles
Mr. Leland Swanson
Mr. John Thompson
Ms. Joanne Wahl (8/16-8/17)
Rev. Arthur E. Wiese
Ms. Rose Youngquist

Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

Mr. Dennis Anderson
Ms. Elaine Anderson
Rev. Rodney L. Anderson
Ms. Barbara Ann Brown
Mr. Jeff Brummer
Ms. Kari Christianson
Mr. Curtis Coates
Rev. Russell E. Comnick
Mr. Ted Dornfeld
Ms. Linda Eckman
Rev. Susan L. Engh
Ms. Greta Gantriis
Rev. Karen Geisendorfer-Lindgren
Mr. Dave Gosewich
Ms. Goytree Hakim
Mr. Dave Herboldt
Mr. Arnold Hermanson
Rev. Mark K. Holman
Mr. Harold Huwe
Mr. Ray Johnson
Ms. Carol La Hurd
Ms. Charlotte Ley
Ms. Sue Liemohn
Rev. Judith M. Mattison
Mr. Howard P. Melaen
Rev. Steven J. Melander
Mr. Roger Miller
Mr. Joel Mugge
Rev. Raita J. Neely
Ms. Joanne Negstad
Rev. Margaret T. Nutter
Bishop David W. Olson
Rev. Mark R. Olson
Rev. Luther E. Peterson
Ms. Mary Ann Portz
Ms. Stephanie Smith
Rev. Valerie L. Strand
Mr. Dang Thao
Rev. Sandralea B. Watson

Saint Paul Area Synod (3H)

Rev. Mark R. Aune
Ms. Linda R. Brook
Rev. Daniel C. Brumm

Ms. Cheryl Chatman
Mr. Frank D. Enfield
Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl
Rev. James E. Erlandson
Ms. Joann Gunderson
[Rev. Mark S. Hanson, bishop-elect]
Mr. Yoshio C. Haraguchi
Rev. Paul H. Harris
Rev. Eleanor M. Hunsberger
Ms. Alice Johnson
Ms. Robin Kieffer
Ms. Agnes Leer
Ms. Betty Marquardt
Ms. Lynne Moratzka
Mr. Larry W. Nelson
Mr. Gary Olson
Rev. Gary K. Olson
Rev. M. Susan Peterson
Mr. Donald Rasmussen
Rev. Steven K. Thorson
Rev. M. Caroline Tokheim
Mr. John Walker
Rev. George C. Weinman

Southeastern Minnesota
Synod (3I)
Mr. Larry Anderson
Mr. Vern Anderson
Mr. C. J. Anderson
Rev. Eric G. Burtness
Rev. Charles R. Christensen
Ms. Nancy Danielson
Rev. Charles E. Espe
Mr. Jason Fish
Rev. Kathryn L. Gauger
Mr. Robert Goldman
Rev. Thomas G. Koelln
Rev. Natanael F. Lizarazo
Ms. Sara Markham
Ms. Joyce Newman
Bishop Glenn W. Nycklemoe
Ms. Shannon Olson
Ms. Elloyce Queensland
Ms. Dorothy J. Satre
Mr. Glenn Schubbe

Ms. Michelle Simonson
Rev. Gary L. Terrio
Ms. Marie Tesch
Rev. Arthur H. Thorstensen Jr.
Mr. Leverage Vangsness

Nebraska Synod (4A)
Ms. Jolene Anderson
Mr. Robert Anderson
Ms. Mary Lou Aune
Rev. David C. Bronstad
Mr. David Coker
Rev. Nancy H. Cole
Ms. Shirley Daire
Mr. Bob Ehlers
Ms. Dorothy Ehlers
Mr. Ronald D. Goldenstein
Rev. Dennis N. Hahle
Rev. Thomas J. Hallstrom
Rev. Carl E. Hunzeker Jr.
Bishop Richard N. Jessen
Ms. Arlene Johnson
Mr. Gerald Johnson
Rev. David P. Kramer
Ms. Joann Kramer
Rev. James S. Lindgren
Rev. George D. Matthews
Mr. Thomas Miller
Ms. Betty Olson
Mr. Jeff Pederson
Mr. Elmer Sasse
Ms. Carrol Wells
Mr. Norman Wichman

Central States Synod (4B)
Rev. Michael G. Clark
Ms. Nanette Ellis
Mr. Larry Frank
Ms. Katie Garcia
Mr. Dan Glamann
Rev. Ronald T. Glusenkamp
Ms. Barbara Johnson
Rev. Susan G. Langhauser
Mr. Harold Light
Rev. Karen A. Lundwall

Bishop Charles H. Maahs
Mr. Jim Meisenheimer
Ms. Eleanor A. Pedersen
Rev. David C. Rossbach
Ms. Diane E. Wagner

Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C)
Rev. Marsha C. Anderson
Rev. Robert T. Dealey
Mr. L. H. Dodson
Ms. Mary Mc Dowall
Bishop Floyd M. Schoenhals
Ms. Lylie Standingwater

North Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D)
Ms. Helen Beaujour
Ms. Caroline Brown
Ms. Janet Calico
Rev. Melvin J. Hammer Jr.
Bishop Mark B. Herbener
Rev. John S. Hillmer
Ms. Ruth Vinciguerra
Mr. Dan Whittington

Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)
Mr. Kevin Anderson
Bishop James E. Bennett
Rev. David L. Carrillo
Mr. Juan Garcia
Mr. Mark Helmke
Mr. Elmer Herbort
Ms. Dorothy K. Jacobs
Ms. Alice Luedke
Ms. Sarah B. Mitchell
Rev. George S. Munroe Jr.
Ms. Gladys Nelson
Rev. J. Elliott Pancoast
Ms. Cuca Ricord
Rev. David W. Schulte
Rev. Ray Tiemann

Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F)
Rev. John T. H. Anderson
Bishop Paul J. Blom
Rev. Bruce E. A. Booher

Ms. Laura C. Bourdo
Mr. Oscar Ekelund
Ms. Judy Gerner
Rev. Jill Knueppel
Mr. Ralph Martin
Mr. Mark Probst
Ms. Ada Stasny
Mr. Paul Zoch

Metropolitan Chicago
Synod (5A)

Ms. Doris A. Bettin
Mr. Norman Briggs
Rev. Thomas S. Church
Mr. Calvin K. Claus
Mr. Douglas A. Fisher
Mr. Steven L. Homberg
Mr. Robert B. Hurdle
Rev. Jane E. Kunzie-Brunner
Ms. Gretchen Mc Dowell
Ms. Beverly J. Moody
Rev. Colleen R. Nelson
Bishop Kenneth R. Olsen
Mr. Robert Olsen
Rev. Bruce W. Pangborn
Ms. Jean Pavela
Mr. Ivan A. Perez
Rev. F. Leonard Peterson
Ms. Pamela R. Sall
Ms. J. Eva Savolainen
Rev. Kathie Bender Schwich
Rev. Daniel J. Schwich
Ms. Ethel Smith
Rev. Peter Y. Wang
Rev. Maxine M. Washington
Ms. Katharyn L. Wilson

Northern Illinois Synod (5B)

Ms. Myrna K. Andersen
Rev. Terrence G. Baeder
Rev. Denver W. Bitner
Rev. Gary J. Erickson
Rev. Keith L. Forni
Bishop Ronald K. Hasley
Rev. Dawn P. Hass

Mr. Gerald Huslander
Ms. Sandra Julifs
Rev. Gary R. La Croix
Rev. S. Kim Lee-Brown
Mr. Daryl Murken
Ms. Rose Murphy
Mr. Gary Nelson
Mr. Ross E. Paulson
Ms. Elsie Pribbenow
Ms. Dorothy Rossing
Ms. Donna Samuelson
Mr. Lawrence Smith Jr.

Central/Southern Illinois
Synod (5C)

Ms. Tia Dawn Bartos
Ms. Marilyn Black (8/17-8/22)
Rev. Thomas B. Christell Jr.
Mr. Benjamin J. Hertenstein
Ms. Nancy A. Hornseth
Rev. Jerene Houser
Ms. Mary Loken
Ms. Rosalie A. Park
Mr. John G. Satter
Rev. John S. Setterlund
Rev. William J. Shields
Rev. Thomas W. Wilson
Bishop Alton Zenker

Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D)

Rev. David A. Aanonson
Mr. Pedro Bata
Mr. Douglas Busch
Ms. Elda Ewoldt
Rev. George W. Forell
Rev. Jane A. Granzow
Mr. Herbert Heinicke
Rev. Mark J. Holmes
Rev. Philip L. Hougen
Ms. Jane Miller
Rev. Mark W. Pries
Mr. Harlan Ranshaw
Ms. Renee Sneitzer
Ms. Susan Stamm
Mr. David Tesdahl

Bishop Paul M. Werger
Ms. Ann Weston

Western Iowa Synod (5E)

Rev. Marcia L. Hall
Ms. Kay Helland
Mr. Dale Jensen
Rev. Karla J. Kirkeby
Rev. Eric C. Kutzli
Mr. Tom Lo Van
Mr. Raymond Lubben
Bishop Curtis H. Miller
Ms. Vicky Nelson
Ms. Mary Rawson
Rev. Marvin E. Robeck
Mr. Darold Sea
Rev. Marlin E. Snyder
Ms. Christy Van Deventer
Mr. Ron Wessels

Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)

Ms. Lois Amundson
Ms. Carol Andersen
Ms. Mary Bosacker
Ms. Kristi Ann Gjere
Rev. Mark N. Gravdal
Rev. Linda A. Johnson
Rev. Thomas C. Jones
Mr. Marc Karrmann
Rev. Clark M. Kilgard
Mr. James Latham
Mr. Erling Lohman
Ms. Sue O'Brien
Mr. Ron Onsager
Ms. Dorothy Peterson
Mr. James Schwarz
Rev. Charles M. Smith
Bishop Steven L. Ullestad
Rev. Barbara M. Wills

Northern Great Lakes
Synod (5G)

Rev. Kim L. Beckmann
Ms. Jonelle Collins
Ms. Cynthia E. Cowen

Mr. Peter O. Johnson
Mr. David D. Kauppi
Rev. Keith A. Kolstad
Mr. Alvin Picotte
Bishop Dale R. Skogman
Mr. Jon Teichman

Northwest Synod of
Wisconsin (5H)
Ms. Janice Ahneman
Rev. Timothy P. Anderson
Bishop Robert D. Berg
Ms. Joyce Breen
Mr. Donald Dietze
Rev. Karen M. Ditlefsen
Ms. Barbara Johnson
Rev. Paul E. Landstrom
Mr. Craig Lubinsky
Ms. Anne Lunda
Rev. Cheryl L. Matthews
Mr. Merle Michaelson
Rev. William D. Montgomery
Ms. Elaine Moore
Mr. Alan Nelson
Rev. Mary J. Olson
Ms. Mary Peterson
Mr. Eric Phelps
Rev. Gordon D. Thorpe
Mr. Glen Wiese
Ms. Barbara Williams

East-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5I)
Rev. Nancy I. Amacher
Ms. Mary E. Bakken
Bishop John C. Beem
Mr. Gary Gisselman
Ms. Helen Heil
Mr. Gordon Holten
Rev. Kenneth G. Knutson
Ms. Randean Kussow
Mr. Virgil Kussow
Rev. Todd B. C. Murken
Ms. Stephanie Olson
Ms. Carrie Opperman
Ms. Helen Pagel

Rev. James C. Plymire
Rev. Merle M. Ries
Rev. Robert A. Simensen
Ms. Ruth Ann Smith
Ms. Donna Watson

Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)

Ms. Susan Bischmann
Mr. Reginald Butler
Ms. Carol De Back
Ms. Jean Guenther
Rev. Frank D. Janzow
Rev. Blaine L. Johnson
Mr. Tim Larson
Mr. George Liberatore
Ms. Gloria Marshall
Ms. Borge Mc Clelland
Rev. Dean W. Nelson
Rev. Karl J. Nelson
Bishop Peter Rogness
Rev. Susan Ruehle
Ms. Lori Schmidt
Mr. John Schroeder
Rev. James P. Stein
Mr. Chue Ge Thao
Mr. Bill Wood

South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)

Mr. Kevin Boatright
Mr. William Bravener
Rev. Gail A. Brodersen-Heins
Ms. Solveig Carlson
Mr. Douglas Daeschel
Bishop Jon S. Enslin
Rev. Jerald L. Folk
Mr. Robert Forbess
Rev. Lisa L. Nelson
Rev. Joel L. Olsen
Rev. Jo Ann A. Post
Ms. Janet Reed
Mr. Marvin Reis
Ms. Lori Richardson
Ms. Mary Jane Schieve
Rev. Louise L. Stromberg
Ms. Martha Taylor
Rev. Robert T. Voss

Ms. Rosibel H. Woodward

La Crosse Area Synod (5L)

Mr. Michael Digby

Ms. Carolyn Hollatz

Ms. Betty Holmquist

Rev. Elizabeth A. Jaeger

Bishop April C. Ullring Larson

Mr. Leslie Leirmo

Mr. Steve Mc Dougal

Ms. Carol Navrestad

Rev. John H. Twiton

Southeast Michigan Synod (6A)

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Ms. Sandra J. Aslaksen

Ms. Cyndi Campbell-Jones

Rev. Jack E. Eggleston

Rev. John K. Hesford

Mr. Curtis Johnson

Rev. Paul M. Kopka

Ms. Kay Mukumoto

Bishop J. Philip Wahl

Mr. George C. Watson

Mr. George Westerman

Rev. Beth E. Wieseman

Mr. Burgess Wilson

Ms. Janet Wingo

Ms. Linda Worman

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Ms. Marilyn J. Bloom
Ms. Patricia L. Bowsher
Rev. John A. Clausen
Mr. James Hagemeyer
Rev. Fred E. Hasecke
Rev. Janice M. Kuder
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Mr. Donald West
Ms. Dawn Wiechers
Rev. David R. Wietelmann

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Mr. Y. T. Chiu
Ms. Linda K. Cregan
Ms. Connie Garrett
Ms. Karen Kaufman
Bishop Robert W. Kelley
Ms. Mary Ellen Kohler
Rev. Charles J. Lundquist
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Ms. Connie Foster
Mr. John Gavin
Ms. Barbara Giffin
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Mr. Paul Jansak
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Ms. Gladystine B. Hodge (8/21-8/22)
Ms. Deborah R. Joncas
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Mr. William C. Lee
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Rev. William F. Scholl
Rev. Dale C. Selover
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Rev. Kathleen O. Reed
Rev. John K. Stendahl
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Rev. Winston S. Bone
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Ms. Martha Messner
Bishop Lee M. Miller
Rev. Karl M. Richard
Mr. Harold A. Sargeant
Rev. William E. Siiss (8/16-8/19;
8/21-8/22)
Ms. Lucille Teufel
Mr. Warren H. Truland (8/20)
Ms. Kathleen Victorson
Mr. Frank Walker
Mr. Fred Wukits

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Ms. Melanie E. Billig
Rev. Dennis L. Bushkofsky
Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky
Mr. John Cebrosky Jr.
Mr. William E. Diehl

Rev. Byard J. Ebling
Ms. Fern L. Furst
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Rev. Jerel W. Gade
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Ms. Lynda L. Jarsocrak
Rev. Darrell H. Jodock
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Mr. Randy A. Lockhart Sr.
Mr. Blake C. Marles
Rev. Cheryl F. Meinschein
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Rev. Dennis S. Ritter
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Rev. P. Richard Grove
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Rev. George E. Keck
Ms. Marian Lampkin
Sr. Janice E. Painter
Ms. Barbara Piston
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Mr. Thomas A. Salter
Ms. Patricia L. Smith

Ms. Sharon L. Smith
Rev. Larry V. Smoose
Mr. Jonathan Suloff
Ms. Betsey A. Tiemeyer
Mr. Richard Henry Williams

Slovak Zion Synod (7G)
Bishop Juan Cobrda
Rev. Thomas J. Drobena
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Ms. Ruth Ellen Nice
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Mr. David E. Pennebaker
Rev. Philip L. Thorsen
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Rev. Lawrence S. Cameron
Ms. Stephanie Catlett
Rev. Mark C. Dill
Ms. Susan Dill
Mr. John Eustis
Mr. Carl Harvey (8/21-8/22)
Ms. Delores Harvey
Ms. Mary Hodgin
Ms. Meredith Lovell
Rev. Willard Mc Kiver Jr. (8/16-8/20)
Rev. Connie S. Miller
Bishop George P. Mocko
Mr. Warren Pertee
Rev. Gerry F. Rickel
Rev. Daniel R. Risch
Ms. Peggy Scheeler
Mr. Richard Shiles
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Ms. Anna Graeber
Mr. Stanley Greigg
Mr. Joe Mc Mahon
Rev. Elizabeth A. Platz
Ms. Susan Rodine
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Rev. Ralph W. Dunkin
Ms. Dorcas Friedline
Mr. George Friedline

Ms. Carolyn Humberston
Mr. Leroy Humberston
Ms. Gloria Salazar

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Bishop Richard F. Bansemer
Rev. Terry D. Clark
Ms. Callister Dailey
Mr. John Garst
Mr. Leroy R. Hamlett Jr.
Ms. Adrienne Lumpkin
Mr. Mark N. Reed
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Ms. Kaye Beatty
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Rev. John E. Boyd Jr.
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Wartburg Theological Seminary,
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Mr. Nelvin L. Vos

Exhibit B

Report of the Elections Committee

Note: An Asterisk (*) indicates persons elected.

(PC/L) indicates persons of color or whose primary language is other than English.

First Ballot

Church Council / Ticket 1 / Clergy

- a. Rev. H. George Anderson, Decorah, Iowa 5D
votes 2
percent 2%
- *b. Rev. Joan A. Mau, Washington Island, Wisconsin 5I
votes 590
percent 59.3%
- c. Rev. George W. Forell, Iowa City, Iowa 5D
votes 403
percent 40.5%

Total Ballots

votes 995
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 2 / Clergy–Region 9 Reserved

- a. Rev. Edward L. Counts, Charleston, South Carolina 9C
votes 368
percent 39.8%
- *b. Rev. Robert L. Dasher, Columbia, South Carolina 9C
votes 551
percent 59.6%

Invalid Ballots

votes 6
percent 6%

Total Ballots

votes 925
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 3 / Clergy–Female Reserved

- a. Rev. Cynthia Ganzkow-Wold, Madison, Wisconsin 5K
votes 442
percent 45.8%
- *b. Rev. Susan L. Engh, Minneapolis, Minnesota 3G
votes 515
percent 53.4%

Invalid Ballots

votes 8

percent 8%
Total Ballots
votes 965
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 4 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Fred S. Opalinski, Latrobe, Pennsylvania 8B
votes 318
percent 33.3%
- b. Rev. Larry V. Smoose, Langhorne, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 360
percent 37.7%
- c. Rev. Roger L. Dahlin, Springfield, Virginia 8G
votes 272
percent 28.5%

Invalid Ballots

votes 5
percent 5%

Total Ballots

votes 955
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 5 / Lay Female

- *a. Carol L. Weiser, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 529
percent 55.1%
- b. Kathleen S. Hurty, New York, New York 7C
votes 427
percent 44.5%

Invalid Ballots

votes 4
percent 4%

Total Ballots

votes 960
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 6 / Lay Female

- a. Linda J. Brown, Fargo, North Dakota 3D
votes 465
percent 48.7%
- *b. Sandra G. Gustavson, Lawrenceville, Georgia 9D
votes 489
percent 51.2%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1

percent 1%
Total Ballots
votes 955
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 7 / Lay Female

- a. Beverly A. Peterson, Billings, Montana 1F
votes 464
percent 48.6%
- b. Ruth C. Kistler, Boalsburg, Pennsylvania 8C
votes 240
percent 25.2%
- c. Sharon R. Ness, Temple Terrace, Florida 9E
votes 250
percent 26.2%

Total Ballots
votes 954
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 8 / Lay Male

- a. Leroy R. Hamlett Jr., Charlottesville, Virginia 9A
votes 426
percent 45.9%
- *b. Donald G. Hayes, Hickory, North Carolina 9B
votes 502
percent 54.0%

Invalid Ballots
votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots
votes 929
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 9 / Lay Male

- a. Theodore A. Rosky, Louisville, Kentucky 6C
votes 395
percent 42.6%
- *b. J. David Watrous, Richland, Washington 1D
votes 530
percent 57.1%

Invalid Ballots
votes 3
percent 3%

Total Ballots
votes 928
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 10 / Lay Male

- a. Richard E. Lee, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 4C
 - votes 458
 - percent 48.9%
 - *b. Steven E. Koenig, Elwood, Nebraska 4A
 - votes 478
 - percent 51.1%
- Total Ballots
- votes 936
 - percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 11 / Lay Male

- *a. Dale V. Sandstrom, Bismarck, North Dakota 3A
 - votes 761
 - percent 80.4%
 - b. Jack Lester, San Diego, California 2C
 - votes 184
 - percent 19.5%
- Invalid Ballots
- votes 1
 - percent 1%
- Total Ballots
- votes 946
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 12 / Clergy–Female Reserved

- a. Rev. Susan R. Carloss, Alta, Iowa 5E
 - votes 387
 - percent 40.8%
 - b. Rev. L. Sacia Young, North Platte, Nebraska 4A
 - votes 258
 - percent 27.2%
 - c. Rev. Marysol Diaz, Bayamón, Puerto Rico 9F
 - votes 301
 - percent 31.8%
- Invalid Ballots
- votes 2
 - percent 2%
- Total Ballots
- votes 948
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 13 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Louise A. Knotts, Grantsville, Maryland 8H
 - votes 241

- percent 25.4%
- b. Rev. John B. Mawhirter, Sandusky, Ohio 6D
 - votes 385
 - percent 40.7%
- c. Rev. Terry D. Clark, Virginia Beach, Virginia 9A
 - votes 132
 - percent 13.9%
- d. Rev. Richard N. Stewart, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7D
 - votes 187
 - percent 19.7%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 947
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 14 / Clergy (PC/L)

- a. Rev. Viviane Thomas-Breitfeld, Brookfield, Wisconsin 5J
 - votes 469
 - percent 49.8%
- b. Rev. Gary J. Benedict, Lakeville, Minnesota 3H
 - votes 470
 - percent 49.9%

Invalid Ballots

votes 3
percent 3%

Total Ballots

votes 942
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 15 / Lay Female

- a. Ann Seitz-Brown, Ephrata, Pennsylvania 8D
 - votes 429
 - percent 45.5%
- b. Barbara M. Stuckey, Houston, Texas 4F
 - votes 319
 - percent 33.9%
- c. J. Eva Savolainen, Chicago, Illinois 5A
 - votes 194
 - percent 20.6%

Total Ballots

votes 942
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 16 / Lay Female (PC/L)

- a. Patricia A. Davenport, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 436
percent 46.8%
- *b. Esther K. Prabhakar, Rochelle, Illinois 5B
votes 493
percent 53.0%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 931
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 17 / Lay Male

- a. Ralph B. K. Peterson, Escanaba, Michigan 5G
votes 281
percent 30.2%
- b. Ronald C. Bruggeman, Omaha, Nebraska 4A
votes 294
percent 31.6%
- c. Albert J. Zimmerman, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 8B
votes 123
percent 13.2%
- d. Matthew D. Musteric, Toledo, Ohio 6D
votes 230
percent 24.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 929
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 18 / Lay Male

- a. Charlie Roberts, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 232
percent 24.6%
- b. Larry Thiele, Tokio, North Dakota 3B
votes 391
percent 41.4%
- c. Jose David Zayas, Veya Baja, Puerto Rico 9F
votes 177
percent 18.8%
- d. Paul E. Lumpkin, Newburgh, New York 7C
votes 144

percent 15.3%
Total Ballots
votes 944
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 19 / Clergy

- a. Rev. James E. Miley, Las Vegas, Nevada 2D
votes 317
percent 33.8%
- b. Rev. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe, Redwood Falls, Minnesota 3F
votes 407
percent 43.3%
- c. Rev. Randall K. Wilburn, Palo Alto, California 2A
votes 214
percent 22.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 939
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 20 / Clergy

- a. Rev. William F. Adix, Portland, Oregon 1E
votes 295
percent 31.7%
- b. Rev. Robert L. Quam, Billings, Montana 1F
votes 337
percent 36.2%
- c. Rev. Jeanne C. Lowe, Marion, Indiana 6C
votes 207
percent 22.2%
- d. Rev. Robert F. Winkel, Everett, Washington 1B
votes 90
percent 9.7%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 931

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 21 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Richard P. Carlson, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 8C
votes 356
percent 36.8%

- b. Rev. Walter R. Bouman, Columbus, Ohio 6E
votes 320
percent 33.1%
- c. Rev. James J. Lobdell, Inglewood, California 2B
votes 87
percent 9.0%
- d. Rev. Paul A. Tidemann, St. Paul, Minnesota 3H
votes 202
percent 20.9%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 967
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 22 / Lay Female

- a. Josefina Nieves-Lebron, Bayamón, Puerto Rico 9F
votes 413
percent 44.6%
- b. Betty A. Pettit, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 286
percent 30.9%
- c. Anita J. Moe, Washington, District of Columbia 8G
votes 226
percent 24.4%

Total Ballots

votes 925
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 23 / Lay Female

- a. Frances C. Holman, Towson, Maryland 8F
votes 188
percent 20.7%
- b. Allison L. Carlson, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 401
percent 44.1%
- c. Lisa M. Simonsen, Tacoma, Washington 1C
votes 321
percent 35.3%

Total Ballots

votes 910
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 24 / Lay Female

*a. Carolyn J. Riehl, Ann Arbor, Michigan 6A

votes 475
percent 51.4%

b. Linda P. Seppanen, Winona, Minnesota 3I

votes 448
percent 48.5%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 924
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 25 / Lay Male

*a. Glenn L. Evavold, Duluth, Minnesota 3E

votes 479
percent 52.3%

b. Laurence C. Smith, Interlochen, Michigan 6B

votes 435
percent 47.5%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 915
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 26 / Clergy

*a. Rev. Ronald K. Johnson, Minneapolis, Minnesota 3G

votes 509
percent 54.0%

b. Rev. Susan E. Tjornehoj, Moorhead, Minnesota 3D

votes 432
percent 45.9%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 942
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 27 / Clergy–Female Reserved

a. Rev. Catherine K. Mode, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 5I

votes 447
percent 48.0%

b. Rev. Carolyn Myers Fredriksen, Rockford, Illinois 5B

votes 305
percent 32.7%

c. Rev. Kathleen M. Sukke, Arden Hills, Minnesota 3H
votes 178
percent 19.1%

Invalid Ballots
votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots
votes 932
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 28 / Clergy

a. Rev. George W. Larson, Port Orchard, Washington 1C
votes 367
percent 40.5%

b. Rev. Richard L. Wendt, Mukilteo, Washington 1B
votes 175
percent 19.3%

c. Rev. Ralph W. Dunkin, Wheeling, West Virginia 8H
votes 155
percent 17.1%

d. Rev. Paul E. Christ, Vero Beach, Florida 9E
votes 205
percent 22.6%

Invalid Ballots
votes 4
percent 4%

Total Ballots
votes 906
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 29 / Lay Female

a. Caroline Wolff, Erie, Pennsylvania 8A
votes 345
percent 37.2%

b. Judy Engebretson, Crystal Lake, Illinois 5B
votes 403
percent 43.4%

c. Sabrina M. Hervey, Altus, Oklahoma 4C
votes 180
percent 19.4%

Total Ballots
votes 928
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 30 / Lay Female (PC/L)

*a. Johnice C. Orduna, Fremont, Nebraska 4A

votes 486

percent 53.2%

b. Linda Smith, Auburn, Washington 1C

votes 421

percent 46.1%

Invalid Ballots

votes 7

percent 8%

Total Ballots

votes 914

percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 31 / Lay Male

a. Daniel L. Free, Glendale, Arizona 2D

votes 324

percent 35.7%

b. Marshall Bautz, Scotts Valley, California 2A

votes 288

percent 31.8%

c. Joseph E. McMahon, Washington, District of Columbia 8G

votes 295

percent 32.5%

Total Ballots

votes 907

percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 32 / Lay Male

a. Norman E. Briggs, Chicago, Illinois 5A

votes 363

percent 39.3%

b. Loren W. Mathre, St. Petersburg, Florida 9E

votes 341

percent 36.9%

c. Robert Chaffee, North Branch, New York 7C

votes 218

percent 23.6%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1

percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 923

percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 33 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. Walter E. Pilgrim, Steilacoom, Washington 1C
 - votes 517
 - percent 56.1%
 - b. Rev. Dennis C. Asp, Columbus, Ohio 6F
 - votes 405
 - percent 43.9%
- Total Ballots
- votes 922
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 34 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Debra R. Grant, College Station, Texas 4F
 - votes 343
 - percent 36.8%
 - *b. Rev. Elizabeth A. Platz, College Park, Maryland 8G
 - votes 586
 - percent 62.8%
- Invalid Ballots
- votes 4
 - percent 4%
- Total Ballots
- votes 933
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 35 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. John G. Andreasen, Moorhead, Minnesota 3B
 - votes 674
 - percent 74.9%
 - b. Rev. Arley K. Fadness, North Mankato, Minnesota 3I
 - votes 223
 - percent 24.8%
- Invalid Ballots
- votes 3
 - percent 3%
- Total Ballots
- votes 900
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 36 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Raymond E. Orth, Pigeon, Michigan 6B
 - votes 423
 - percent 47.6%
- *b. Rev. Paul J. Thielo, Fairview Park, Ohio 6E
 - votes 461
 - percent 51.9%

Invalid Ballots

votes 4
percent 5%

Total Ballots

votes 888
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 37 / Lay Female

- a. Patricia A. Schibler, Van Wert, Ohio 6D
votes 376
percent 41.6%
- b. Esther L. Gilbertson, Fargo, North Dakota 3B
votes 327
percent 36.2%
- c. Carol I. Arsaga, Sylmar, California 2B
votes 200
percent 22.1%

Total Ballots

votes 903
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 38 / Lay Female (PC/L)

- a. Addie J. Butler, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 405
percent 44.3%
- *b. Cheryl T. Chatman, Roseville, Minnesota 3H
votes 508
percent 55.6%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 914
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 39 / Lay Male

- a. L. Baird Tipson, Springfield, Ohio 6F
votes 403
percent 43.1%
- *b. David L. Wee, Northfield, Minnesota 3I
votes 531
percent 56.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 935
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 40 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. James M. Childs Jr., Pickerington, Ohio 9B
votes 518
percent 55.8%
- b. Rev. Roy J. Enquist, Germantown, Maryland 8G
votes 407
percent 43.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 4
percent 4%

Total Ballots

votes 929
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 41 / Clergy–Female Reserved

- a. Rev. Jeannine M. Sweet, Lakewood, Colorado 2E
votes 278
percent 30.0%
- b. Rev. Gladys G. Moore, Newark, New Jersey 7A
votes 463
percent 49.9%
- c. Rev. Melinda A. Quivik, Froid, Montana 1F
votes 186
percent 20.0%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 928
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 42 / Lay Female

- a. Mary Lu Bowen, Apalachin, New York 7D
votes 353
percent 39.8%
- *b. Sue Ellen Spotts, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 530
percent 59.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 4
percent 5%

Total Ballots

votes 887
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 43 / Lay Female

- a. Corinne Olsen, Babbitt, Minnesota 3E
votes 431
percent 48.2%
- *b. Bertina W. Helmers, East Lansing, Michigan 6B
votes 457
percent 51.1%

Invalid Ballots

votes 6
percent 7%

Total Ballots

votes 894
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 44 / Lay Female

- a. Mary L. Bergstrom, Elwood, Nebraska 4A
votes 315
percent 35.0%
- b. Mary Ruedisili, Minot, North Dakota 3A
votes 304
percent 33.8%
- c. Janet E. Franzen, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 8B
votes 276
percent 30.7%

Invalid Ballots

votes 4
percent 4%

Total Ballots

votes 899
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 45 / Lay Male

- a. Charles J. Lusch, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 311
percent 34.4%
- b. George D. Westerman, Ferndale, Michigan 6A
votes 253
percent 28.0%
- c. Ronald Bragalla, Signal Hill, California 2B
votes 113
percent 12.5%

- d. Ivan A. Perez, Chicago, Illinois 5A
votes 135
percent 14.9%
 - e. Jeff L. Kane, Hopkinton, Massachusetts 7B
votes 92
percent 10.2%
- Invalid Ballots
votes 1
percent 1%
- Total Ballots
votes 905
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 46 / Lay Male

- a. Leonard C. Weiser Jr., Reading, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 286
percent 31.2%
- b. Brian C. King, Dubuque, Iowa 5C
votes 370
percent 40.3%
- c. Robert W. Gibeling Jr., Atlanta, Georgia 9D
votes 159
percent 17.3%
- d. Jon Teichman, Marquette, Michigan 5G
votes 99
percent 10.8%

Invalid Ballots
votes 4
percent 4%

Total Ballots
votes 918
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 47 / Clergy

- a. Rev. James G. Munter, Sandy, Utah 2E
votes 311
percent 35.1%
- b. Rev. Ronald L. Swenson, Aurora, Colorado 2E
votes 256
percent 28.9%
- c. Rev. Martha L. McCracken, San Juan, Puerto Rico 9F
votes 317
percent 35.8%

Invalid Ballots
votes 2

percent 2%
Total Ballots
votes 886
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 48 / Clergy

- a. Rev. James A. Scherer, Chicago, Illinois 5A
votes 346
percent 38.0%
- b. Rev. Neville B. Kretzmann, Moline, Illinois 5B
votes 311
percent 34.1%
- c. Rev. George E. Handley, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 254
percent 27.9%

Total Ballots
votes 911
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 49 / Lay Female

- a. LaVaun L. Danielson, Franklin, Minnesota 3F
votes 349
percent 39.5%
- *b. Cecil Maureen Johnson, Harcourt, Iowa 5E
votes 524
percent 59.3%

Invalid Ballots
votes 10
percent 1.1%

Total Ballots
votes 883
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 50 / Lay Female

- a. Dorothy J. Sorrell, Fairfax, Virginia 8G
votes 276
percent 31.0%
- b. Shai Celeste, Newtown, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 397
percent 44.6%
- c. Jennifer Lee Villalon, Guaynabo, Puerto Rico 9F
votes 217
percent 24.4%

Invalid Ballots
votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 891
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 51 / Lay Male

- a. Waino E. Aukee, Holland, Michigan 6B

votes 342
percent 39.8%

- *b. Charles G.H. Schaefer, Valparaiso, Indiana 6C

votes 516
percent 60.1%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 859
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 52 / Lay Male

- a. Charles N. Mohn, Hershey, Pennsylvania 8D

votes 270
percent 30.8%

- *b. Philip W. Moeller, Washington, District of Columbia 8G

votes 605
percent 69.0%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 877
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 53 / Lay Male

- *a. J. David Ellwanger, Plano, Texas 4D

votes 470
percent 52.3%

- b. Llewellyn Hille, Waverly, Iowa 5F

votes 428
percent 47.6%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 899
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 54 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. Reginald H. Holle, Okemos, Michigan 6B
 - votes 469
 - percent 51.3%
- b. Rev. Gerald J. Hoffman, Columbia Heights, Minnesota 3G
 - votes 444
 - percent 48.6%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 914
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 55 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Raymond D. Christenson, Las Vegas, Nevada 2D
 - votes 276
 - percent 30.3%
- *b. Rev. Paul A. Wee, Washington, District of Columbia 8G
 - votes 633
 - percent 69.4%

Invalid Ballots

votes 3
percent 3%

Total Ballots

votes 912
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 56 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Susan R. Briehl, Chelan, Washington 1D
 - votes 331
 - percent 35.3%
- b. Rev. Susan L. Gamelin, Clearwater, Florida 9E
 - votes 382
 - percent 40.7%
- c. Rev. Nancy Koester, St. Paul, Minnesota 3H
 - votes 224
 - percent 23.9%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 939
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 57 / Lay Female

- a. Karen Himle, Bloomington, Minnesota 3G
votes 344
percent 37.6%
- *b. Shirley A. Teig, Plymouth, Minnesota 3G
votes 567
percent 62.0%

Invalid Ballots

votes 4
percent 4%

Total Ballots

votes 915
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 58 / Lay Female

- a. Ann Ellenson, Moorhead, Minnesota 3D
votes 226
percent 25.4%
- b. Julie K. Aageson, Moorhead, Minnesota 3D
votes 366
percent 41.1%
- c. Myra L. Fozard, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania 8B
votes 298
percent 33.5%

Total Ballots

votes 890
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 59 / Lay Male

- *a. Richard E. Lodmill, Seattle, Washington 1B
votes 521
percent 60.3%
- b. Dennis M. Sobolik, Hallock, Minnesota 3D
votes 338
percent 39.1%

Invalid Ballots

votes 5
percent 6%

Total Ballots

votes 864
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 60 / Lay Male

- *a. Jonathan C. Messerli, Kutztown, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 453
percent 51.4%

- b. George Kapplinger, Plano, Texas 4D
 - votes 427
 - percent 48.5%

Invalid Ballots

- votes 1
- percent 1%

Total Ballots

- votes 881
- percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 61 / Plan Participants

- a. Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, Defiance, Ohio 6D
 - votes 372
 - percent 42.5%

- *b. Janet H. Neff, Havertown, Pennsylvania 7F
 - votes 502
 - percent 57.4%

Invalid Ballots

- votes 1
- percent 1%

Total Ballots

- votes 875
- percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 62 / Lay Female

- *a. Lisa K. Chalstrom, Des Moines, Iowa 5D
 - votes 431
 - percent 50.1%

- b. Brenda A. Grandell, Brooklyn, New York 7C
 - votes 429
 - percent 49.8%

Invalid Ballots

- votes 1
- percent 1%

Total Ballots

- votes 861
- percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 63 / Lay Female (PC/L)

- *a. Ruth H. Beagles, St. Croix, Virgin Islands 9F
 - votes 574
 - percent 67.2%

- b. Helen C. Owens, St. Croix, Virgin Islands 9F
 - votes 278
 - percent 32.6%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 854
percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 64 / Lay Male

*a. Earl L. Mummert, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 8D

votes 507
percent 59.4%

b. Frank J. Leber, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 8D

votes 346
percent 40.5%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 854
percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 65 / Lay Male

a. Richard L. Wahl, Millersville, Maryland 8F

votes 393
percent 45.5%

*b. John K. Roberts, Gretna, Louisiana 4F

votes 468
percent 54.2%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 863
percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 66 / Lay Male

a. J. Lance Jacobson, Rochester, Minnesota 3I

votes 318
percent 36.0%

b. Willis I. Else, Hudson, Ohio 6E

votes 320
percent 36.2%

c. Robert J. Myers, Silver Spring, Maryland 8G

votes 245
percent 27.7%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%
Total Ballots
votes 884
percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 67 / Lay Male

- *a. Robert Thimjon, Sioux Falls, South Dakota 3C
votes 518
percent 61.0%
- b. Edward C. Bonderson, Duluth, Minnesota 3E
votes 329
percent 38.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 849
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 68 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Darrel O. Lundby, Beaverton, Oregon 1E
votes 434
percent 49.7%
- *b. Rev. James E. Braaten, Yakima, Washington 1D
votes 438
percent 50.2%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 873
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 69 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Robert L. Vogel, Waverly, Iowa 5F
votes 420
percent 46.7%
- b. Rev. Jerald L. Wendt, Whitewater, Wisconsin 5K
votes 264
percent 29.4%
- c. Rev. Peter A. Pettit, Riverside, California 2C
votes 214
percent 23.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%
Total Ballots
votes 899
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 70 / Lay Female

- *a. Barbara J. Eaves, Phoenix, Arizona 2D
votes 482
percent 56.5%
- b. Carolyn Thomas, Broomfield, Colorado 2E
votes 368
percent 43.1%

Invalid Ballots

votes 3
percent 4%

Total Ballots

votes 853
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 71 / Lay Female

- a. Deborah R. Joncas, Newark, New Jersey 7A
votes 214
percent 24.4%
- b. Roberta C. Schott, Princeton Junction, New Jersey 7A
votes 409
percent 46.7%
- c. Elizabeth Tiemeyer, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 253
percent 28.9%

Total Ballots

votes 876
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 72 / Lay Male

- a. Keith P. Brown, Roanoke, Virginia 9A
votes 422
percent 49.6%
- b. Clifton W. Anderson, Charlottesville, Virginia 9A
votes 231
percent 27.2%
- c. Richard E. Von Spreckelsen, Pensacola, Florida 9E
votes 197
percent 23.2%

Total Ballots

votes 850
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 73 / Lay Male (PC/L)

- *a. Fred B. Renwick, New York, New York 7C
votes 531
percent 63.5%
- b. Willis H. Hines, Matawan, New Jersey 7A
votes 303
percent 36.2%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 836
percent 100.0%

Committee on Appeals / Ticket 74 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. Charles D. Anderson, Red Wing, Minnesota 3F
votes 470
percent 51.6%
- b. Rev. Lyle G. Miller, Gig Harbor, Washington 1C
votes 439
percent 48.2%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 910
percent 100.0%

Committee on Appeals / Ticket 75 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Paul M. Cornell, Collegeville, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 441
percent 49.3%
- *b. Rev. Leslie G. Svendsen, Northfield, Minnesota 3I
votes 454
percent 50.7%

Total Ballots

votes 895
percent 100.0%

Committee on Appeals / Ticket 76 / Lay Female

- *a. Sandra A. Jennings, Kent, Washington 1B
votes 529

percent 61.2%
b. Fae E. Appleby, Middletown, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 334
percent 38.6%
Invalid Ballots
votes 2
percent 2%
Total Ballots
votes 865
percent 100.0%

Committee on Appeals / Ticket 77 / Lay Male

a. Noel I. Fedje, Fargo, North Dakota 3B
votes 355
percent 38.5%
*b. William E. Diehl, Emmaus, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 567
percent 61.5%
Total Ballots
votes 922
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 78 / Clergy

*a. Rev. Melissa Maxwell-Doherty, Grand Forks, North Dakota 3B
votes 605
percent 67.9%
b. Rev. Eugene W. Beutel, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 284
percent 31.9%
Invalid Ballots
votes 2
percent 2%
Total Ballots
votes 891
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 79 / Clergy

a. Rev. Robert H. Herder, Appleton, Wisconsin 5I
votes 428
percent 48.9%
b. Rev. Gerhard I. Knutson, Rice Lake, Wisconsin 5H
votes 447
percent 51.1%
Total Ballots
votes 875

percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 80 / Clergy–Term to 1999

- a. Rev. P. Kempton Segerhammar, Palo Alto, California 2A
votes 425
percent 49.1%
- *b. Rev. Bruce G. Trethaway, Hudson, Ohio 6E
votes 439
percent 50.8%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 865
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 81 / Clergy–Term to 1999

- a. Rev. David G. Gabel, Traverse City, Michigan 6B
votes 376
percent 44.2%
- *b. Rev. Paul J. Joncas, Wayne, New Jersey 7A
votes 473
percent 55.6%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 850
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 82 / Clergy–Term to 2001

- a. Rev. Andrea R. Hagen, Towson, Maryland 8F
votes 392
percent 47.2%
- *b. Rev. Carol S. Hendrix, Dillsburg, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 439
percent 52.8%

Total Ballots

votes 831
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 83 / Clergy–Term to 2001

- a. Rev. Donald E. Melchert, Puyallup, Washington 1C
votes 309
percent 35.1%

*b. Rev. Harold C. Skillrud, Atlanta, Georgia 9D

votes 571
percent 64.9%

Total Ballots

votes 880
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 84 / Clergy (PC/L)

a. Rev. Carmelo N. Canino, Dorado, Puerto Rico 9F

votes 386
percent 45.1%

*b. Rev. Edmond Yee, El Cerrito, California 2B

votes 468
percent 54.7%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 855
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 85 / Lay Female

*a. Lola Ruff, Moorhead, Minnesota 3B

votes 503
percent 61.0%

b. Marilyn Witkop, Springfield, Illinois 5C

votes 319
percent 38.7%

Invalid Ballots

votes 3
percent 4%

Total Ballots

votes 825
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 86 / Lay Female

a. Nancy McNally, Westminster, Colorado 2E

votes 384
percent 45.3%

*b. Louise P. Shoemaker, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7F

votes 460
percent 54.3%

Invalid Ballots

votes 3
percent 4%

Total Ballots

votes 847
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 87 / Lay Female–Term to 1997

- a. Doris Pagelkopf, Minneapolis, Minnesota 3G
votes 311
percent 35.9%
- b. Marybeth A. Peterson, Omaha, Nebraska 4A
votes 417
percent 48.2%
- c. Mari Giffiths Irvin, Stockton, California 2A
votes 138
percent 15.9%

Total Ballots

votes 866
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 88 / Lay Female (PC/L)–Term to 2001

- *a. Charlotte D. Light, St. Louis, Missouri 4B
votes 475
percent 55.8%
- b. Dorothy F. Ricks, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 374
percent 43.9%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 851
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 89 / Lay Male

- a. J. Daniel Brown, Salisbury, North Carolina 9B
votes 326
percent 39.2%
- *b. Terry A. Lieb, Mertztown, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 505
percent 60.7%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 832
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 90 / Lay Male–Term to 1997

- a. Bachman S. Brown Jr., Kannapolis, North Carolina 9B
 - votes 364
 - percent 43.5%
- *b. C. Gary Fischer, Fargo, North Dakota 3B
 - votes 471
 - percent 56.3%

Invalid Ballots

votes 2
percent 2%

Total Ballots

votes 837
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 91 / Lay Male–Term 2001

- a. Joseph R. Malone, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 6E
 - votes 383
 - percent 47.6%
- *b. Paul V. Rieke, Seattle, Washington 1B
 - votes 420
 - percent 52.2%

Invalid Ballots

votes 1
percent 1%

Total Ballots

votes 804
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 92 / Lay Male (PC/L)

- *a. Charles Matsumoto, Indianapolis, Indiana 6C
 - votes 500
 - percent 60.0%
- b. Warren T. Pertee, Baltimore, Maryland 8F
 - votes 333
 - percent 40.0%

Total Ballots

votes 833
percent 100.0%

Second Ballot

Church Council / Ticket 4 / Clergy

- a. Rev. Fred S. Opalinski, Latrobe, Pennsylvania 8B
 - votes 406
 - percent 43.4%
- *b. Rev. Larry V. Smoose, Langhorne, Pennsylvania 7F

votes 530
percent 56.6%
Total Ballots
votes 936
percent 100.0%

Church Council / Ticket 7 / Lay Female

*a. Beverly A. Peterson, Billings, Montana 1F
votes 595
percent 65.2%
c. Sharon R. Ness, Temple Terrace, Florida 9E
votes 317
percent 34.8%
Total Ballots
votes 912
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 12 / Clergy–Female Reserved

*a. Rev. Susan R. Carloss, Alta, Iowa 5E
votes 546
percent 59.7%
c. Rev. Marysol Diaz, Bayamón, Puerto Rico 9F
votes 369
percent 40.3%
Total Ballots
votes 915
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 13 / Clergy

a. Rev. Louise A. Knotts, Grantsville, Maryland 8H
votes 384
percent 41.9%
*b. Rev. John B. Mawhirter, Sandusky, Ohio 6D
votes 532
percent 58.1%
Total Ballots
votes 916
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 14 / Clergy (PC/L)

a. Rev. Viviane Thomas-Breitfeld, Brookfield, Wisconsin 5J
votes 468
percent 49.8%
*b. Rev. Gary J. Benedict, Lakeville, Minnesota 3H
votes 471

percent 50.2%
Total Ballots
votes 939
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 15 / Lay Female

*a. Ann Seitz-Brown, Ephrata, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 548
percent 59.4%
b. Barbara M. Stuckey, Houston, Texas 4F
votes 375
percent 40.6%
Total Ballots
votes 923
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 17 / Lay Male

a. Ralph B.K. Peterson, Escanaba, Michigan 5G
votes 413
percent 45.8%
*b. Ronald C. Bruggeman, Omaha, Nebraska 4A
votes 489
percent 54.2%
Total Ballots
votes 902
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Congregational Ministries / Ticket 18 / Lay Male

a. Charlie Roberts, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 332
percent 36.0%
*b. Larry Thiele, Tokio, North Dakota 3B
votes 590
percent 64.0%
Total Ballots
votes 922
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 19 / Clergy

a. Rev. James E. Miley, Las Vegas, Nevada 2D
votes 410
percent 43.9%
*b. Rev. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe, Redwood Falls, Minnesota 3F
votes 523
percent 56.1%
Total Ballots

votes 933
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 20 / Clergy

- a. Rev. William F. Adix, Portland, Oregon 1E
votes 420
percent 45.2%
- *b. Rev. Robert L. Quam, Billings, Montana 1F
votes 509
percent 54.8%

Total Ballots

votes 929
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 21 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. Richard P. Carlson, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 8C
votes 488
percent 51.2%
- b. Rev. Walter R. Bouman, Columbus, Ohio 6E
votes 465
percent 48.8%

Total Ballots

votes 953
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 22 / Lay Female

- *a. Josefina Nieves-Lebron, Bayamón, Puerto Rico 9F
votes 568
percent 61.5%
- b. Betty A. Pettit, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania 7E
votes 356
percent 38.5%

Total Ballots

votes 924
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Ministry / Ticket 23 / Lay Female

- *b. Allison L. Carlson, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 8D
votes 483
percent 56.4%
- c. Lisa M. Simonsen, Tacoma, Washington 1C
votes 374
percent 43.6%

Total Ballots

votes 857

percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 27 / Clergy–Female Reserved

- *a. Rev. Catherine K. Mode, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 5I
votes 593
percent 64.0%
- b. Rev. Carolyn Myers Fredriksen, Rockford, Illinois 5B
votes 333
percent 36.0%

Total Ballots

votes 926
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 28 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. George W. Larson, Port Orchard, Washington 1C
votes 576
percent 64.2%
- d. Rev. Paul E. Christ, Vero Beach, Florida 9E
votes 321
percent 35.8%

Total Ballots

votes 897
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 29 / Lay Female

- a. Caroline Wolff, Erie, Pennsylvania 8A
votes 386
percent 42.2%
- *b. Judy Engebretson, Crystal Lake, Illinois 5B
votes 528
percent 57.8%

Total Ballots

votes 914
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 31 / Lay Male

- *a. Daniel L. Free, Glendale, AZ 2D
votes 453
percent 51.9%
- c. Joseph E. McMahon, Washington, District of Columbia 8G
votes 420
percent 48.1%

Total Ballots

votes 873
percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Outreach / Ticket 32 / Lay Male

- *a. Norman E. Briggs, Chicago, Illinois 5A
 - votes 470
 - percent 51.4%
 - b. Loren W. Mathre, St. Petersburg, Florida 9E
 - votes 445
 - percent 48.6%
- Total Ballots
- votes 915
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Board of Division for Higher Education and Schools / Ticket 37 / Lay Female

- *a. Patricia A. Schibler, Van Wert, Ohio 6D
 - votes 505
 - percent 55.6%
 - b. Esther L. Gilbertson, Fargo, North Dakota 3B
 - votes 403
 - percent 44.4%
- Total Ballots
- votes 908
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 41 / Clergy–Female Reserved

- a. Rev. Jeannine M. Sweet, Lakewood, Colorado 2E
 - votes 396
 - percent 42.7%
 - *b. Rev. Gladys G. Moore, Newark, New Jersey 7A
 - votes 532
 - percent 57.3%
- Total Ballots
- votes 928
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 44 / Lay Female

- *a. Mary L. Bergstrom, Elwood, Nebraska 4A
 - votes 471
 - percent 52.7%
 - b. Mary Ruedisili, Minot, North Dakota 3A
 - votes 422
 - percent 47.3%
- Total Ballots
- votes 893

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 45 / Lay Male

- *a. Charles J. Lusch, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania 7E

- votes 456
- percent 50.5%
- b. George D. Westerman, Ferndale, Michigan 6A
 - votes 447
 - percent 49.5%
- Total Ballots
 - votes 903
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Church in Society / Ticket 46 / Lay Male

- a. Leonard C. Weiser Jr., Reading, Pennsylvania 7E
 - votes 372
 - percent 40.7%
- *b. Brian C. King, Dubuque, Iowa 5C
 - votes 541
 - percent 59.3%
- Total Ballots
 - votes 913
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 47 / Clergy

- a. Rev. James G. Munter, Sandy, Utah 2E
 - votes 435
 - percent 48.8%
- *c. Rev. Martha L. McCracken, San Juan, Puerto Rico 9F
 - votes 456
 - percent 51.2%
- Total Ballots
 - votes 891
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 48 / Clergy

- *a. Rev. James A. Scherer, Chicago, Illinois 5A
 - votes 525
 - percent 58.1%
- b. Rev. Neville B. Kretzmann, Moline, Illinois 5B
 - votes 378
 - percent 41.9%
- Total Ballots
 - votes 903
 - percent 100.0%

Board of Division for Global Mission / Ticket 50 / Lay Female

- a. Dorothy J. Sorrell, Fairfax, Virginia 8G
 - votes 336
 - percent 38.0%

*b. Shai Celeste, Newtown, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 549
percent 62.0%

Total Ballots

votes 885
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 56 / Clergy

a. Rev. Susan R. Briehl, Chelan, Washington 1D
votes 463
percent 49.8%

*b. Rev. Susan L. Gamelin, Clearwater, Florida 9E
votes 467
percent 50.2%

Total Ballots

votes 930
percent 100.0%

Board of ELCA Publishing House / Ticket 58 / Lay Female

*b. Julie K. Aageson, Moorhead, Minnesota 3D
votes 525
percent 61.4%

c. Myra L. Fozard, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania 8B
votes 330
percent 38.6%

Total Ballots

votes 855
percent 100.0%

Board of Pensions / Ticket 66 / Lay Male

a. J. Lance Jacobson, Rochester, Minnesota 3I
votes 443
percent 49.2%

*b. Willis I. Else, Hudson, Ohio 6E
votes 457
percent 50.8%

Total Ballots

votes 900
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 69 / Clergy

*a. Rev. Robert L. Vogel, Waverly, Iowa 5F
votes 556
percent 60.5%

b. Rev. Jerald L. Wendt, Whitewater, Wisconsin 5K

votes 363
percent 39.5%
Total Ballots
votes 919
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 71 / Lay Female

*b. Roberta C. Schott, Princeton Junction, New Jersey 7A
votes 505
percent 56.7%
c. Elizabeth Tiemeyer, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7F
votes 386
percent 43.3%
Total Ballots
votes 891
percent 100.0%

Nominating Committee / Ticket 72 / Lay Male

*a. Keith P. Brown, Roanoke, Virginia 9A
votes 593
percent 68.0%
b. Clifton W. Anderson, Charlottesville, Virginia 9A
votes 279
percent 32.0%
Total Ballots
votes 872
percent 100.0%

Committee on Discipline / Ticket 87 / Lay Female–Term to 1997

a. Doris Pagelkopf, Minneapolis, Minnesota 3G
votes 335
percent 36.3%
*b. Marybeth A. Peterson, Omaha, Nebraska 4A
votes 588
percent 63.7%
Total Ballots
votes 923
percent 100.0%

Exhibit C

Mission Prayers

Limitations of time did not permit the following “Mission Prayers” to be said during the plenary sessions of this Churchwide Assembly:

Almighty God, by the grace and mercy of your hand, you have guided us along this chosen path. We pray now that you direct our actions during this convention and cause us to realize the magnitude of our mission. Help us to be shining lights to those whose lives are darkened by fear, oppression, sickness and hunger. Come now, Holy Spirit, and plant us firmly in this faith and guide us to boldly proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, forever and ever. Amen

Ruth Ellen Nice, Upper Susquehanna Synod

Pray that as Christians we come to realize that we are called upon to care for all the people of God's creation—both with our hearts and with our money!

submitted by an unidentified voting member and synod

We pray, all seeing God who gives us a holy vision and calling to mission. We confess our vision has too often been dim and our mission effort weak. So bless, impart, empower, improve, and inspire the working relationships of ELCA mission staff, mission developers, mission congregations, mission founders, mission partners, and mission builders that many new mission congregations will be birthed by this parent church and then grow to mature ministry with clear and great vision for mission.

The Rev. Rodney L. Anderson, Minneapolis Area Synod

From the comes this prayer greeting from Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church on Chicago's south side:

Heavenly Father, look upon the South Cluster Lutheran Churches' parish nurse ministry with mercy. Send us as shepherds to rescue the lost, to heal the sick, to feed your people with knowledge and understanding of holistic health. Kindle in us the fire of your love and strengthen this ministry for continual service in your kingdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Rev. Bruce W. Pangborn, Metropolitan Chicago Synod

Those of us who know you, Lord, know your perfect and continuing love for us. We are sustained by your peace and love and by the fruit of your Spirit. But, more need to know of your love. May the Spirit move among us Lord so that each of us will be moved to do one or two or three things that will help bring others into your perfect and continuing love. We ask that you continue to bless the 12 mission sites in the Northern Illinois Synod May these efforts be caused to continue so that many more will come to know your love.

Daryl Murken, Northern Illinois Synod

God of the universe, this prayer is for all of us to be missionaries to children. An unknown author reminds us to pray for the children "who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead, for children who live in an x-rated world, who never get dessert, who have no safe blanket to drag behind them, who watch their parents watch them die, who can't find any bread to steal, who don't have any rooms to clean up, whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser, whose monsters are real. We pray for children whose tears we sometimes laugh at and whose smiles can make us cry. And we pray for those whose nightmares come in the daytime, who will eat anything, who aren't spoiled by anybody, who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep, who live and move, but have no being. We pray for children who want to be carried and for those we

must. For those we never give up on and for those who don't get a second chance. And for those who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it."

Touch each heart today. Give each of us a child to serve; a child for whom we are "the" answer to a prayer for help.

submitted by an unidentified voting member and synod

Gracious God, creator of mountains, trees and sky, we thank you for the work of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, and especially for the ministry of Pastor Gary Stevenson of Mt. Cross in the Santa Cruz mountains. We ask for your continued blessing on the staff at Mt. Cross, especially as they reach out to children and teens who come as campers and grow in faith as they assemble and work and play together in this beautiful outdoor setting.

We also pray for those young people who have gone on from camping to counseling at Mt. Cross, and in the day camps held in many congregations. May they grow in faith and in power to witness to the children they serve.

At this time of financial difficulty, may we who have benefitted from the work of outdoor ministries, be moved to support Mt. Cross with our offerings, our prayers and our appeals to others. Bless our efforts to strengthen this effective ministry and mission. We pray in Christ's name.

Jack Lowry, Sierra Pacific Synod

Our Father, hear our prayer. Bless the efforts of the members of Peace Lutheran Church, rural Plymouth, Nebraska, as we strive to make Christ known, as the saints before us have done for 107 years. We do this with:

- our donations to local food pantries, by our Bible school and Sunday school children as they support world hunger, the Heifer Project, and the ELCA Disaster Response fund through their offerings;
- Our members' participation in the Vision for Mission Appeal, our Lutheran Men in Mission group through their support of the Nebraska Loan and Grant Fund to help educate new pastors;
- Our Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America unit as they support Lutheran World Relief; the Women and Children Living in Poverty project, and local families in need; and
- Our youth group as they witness each day in school as students and leaders to attend Lutheran Youth Organization (Nebraska) events.

Especially bless our Pastor Abigail Byrd and the fire of their faith as she witnesses to each of us and our community when we feel insignificant in our place. We know we are not so different from many other parts of your body but help us to keep your Vision for Mission before us and to do your will.

Arlene Johnson, Nebraska Synod

Dear Lord, thank you for the competent and dedicated leaders in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Give them guidance and wisdom as they lead this church toward the next century. Bless all of those involved in special ministries throughout our church, keeping them in your loving care. We pray for Bishop Siphuma and the Evangelical Church in Zimbabwe, companion church to Upstate New York Synod. Strengthen then the bonds of friendship that exist between us. Thank you, Lord God, for giving Gloria Dei the opportunity to be a center for pastoral counseling services. Help and guide all involved in this ministry of care to hurting

people. Keep our counseling staff in the strength and power of your presence and peace, in Christ's name.

Joann W. Forsberg, Upstate New York Synod.

A prayer for Dakotah Oyate Lutheran Church on behalf of its Native American members: We praise you, O God, and rejoice with [the members of Dakotah Oyate Lutheran Church] as they move into a new sanctuary next month. Help them to be a faithful flock through your grace. May they continue firmly in the Gospel as they reach out with the good news. Thank you, Lord, for sending a Mission Builders team to North Dakota to construct this building; we pray that you will continue to call forth more such dedicated and willing workers through the Holy Spirit. Make us all better servants, reaching out in mission to the whole world.

Larry Thiele, Eastern North Dakota,

Dear heavenly Father: the members of Christ Lutheran Church of Newburgh, New York, are thankful for the many warm, caring, sensitive people you have given us as we enter our 120th year of being ministers to your Word. Give us strength and guidance in the decisions that we make so we may continue to witness Christ and share the power of his resurrection with other Christians and the world.

We pray for our sisters and brothers in Bosnia. Help them make peace a reality. We pray for all pastors, bishops, deacons and missionaries in Christ, especially for Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom and Bishop-Elect H. George Anderson. We are thankful for their willingness to serve. Please, let all leaders of this church take their jobs seriously as a calling from our Lord, to do the work of His Church. Let us together, do what is right to proclaim Christ in the world. Lord, in your mercy. Hear our pray. Amen.

Paul Lumpkin Sr., Metropolitan New York Synod

Heavenly Father, we from Western Iowa and Augustana Church in Sioux City are thankful to be playing a role in the training of Vicar Mauricio Haacke from Brazil who will soon return to Brazil to be one of your shepherds. Also, we ask for your blessings on those from Western Iowa who are now preparing for a mission visit to assist our brothers and sisters in Tanzania. Grant us the wisdom and strength to continue to build our El Renacimiento Congregation. For challenges and gifts to make Christ known we offer thanks. Amen.

Darold Sea, Western Iowa Synod.

Lord, thank you for Pastor [Tricia A.] McMackin's recovery. And Lord, help our congregation to support missions globally, not just locally. There are many "I ams. Let ours not be a selfish 'I am' just for me."

submitted by an unidentified voting member,
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

Dear Lord, I look at my grandsons and I wonder, "What will your world be like?" I realize, God, that Christians have wrestled with your will and our values since the beginning of time. I know that there have been times in history just as good and just as diseased as today. But, God, please direct us now.

Please touch this group gathered here with your spirit so that decisions here will send signals of your will through our church. Inspire us, the whole membership of the Evangelical Lutheran

Church in America. And God, thank you for being our base and giving us direction. Accept our love.

submitted by an unidentified voting member and synod

Dearest Lord Jesus, we pray that your Vision for Mission for each one of us would become ours. We pray for guidance and wisdom and empowerment to carry out your vision whether at church headquarters, in synodical offices or our local churches. We pray for the mission of a congregation tucked into a neighborhood where sometimes it seems "Everything is different, but nothing has changed." We thank you the beginning glimpse of vision that diversity is your good gift and we pray that you sharpen this until our picture is clear. We ask for your blessings upon our member, Judy McGuire leaving for internship in Zimbabwe next week, and for the South Carolina Synod's Vision 2000, working for inclusivity. Grant us all your guidance in all things. In Jesus name we pray.

The Rev. Kathleen B. Chartier, South Carolina Synod

Almighty God, by the grace and mercy of your hand, you have guided and shepherded us along this chosen path. We pray now that you direct our actions and cause us to realize the magnitude of our mission. Help us to be shining lights to those whose lives are darkened by fear, oppression, sickness, and hunger. Come now, Holy Spirit, and plant us firmly in this faith and guide us to boldly proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, forever and ever.

submitted by an unidentified voting member and synod

God, our Creator, Father of all people, we thank you for our salvation in your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Help us, as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to be a missionary people, I pray for my own congregation, Trinity Lutheran in Ishpening, Mich. Bless our outreach effort through: the Ericksons in Papua, New Guinea, the Annual Hunger Walk, and our support of a foster child in Columbia by our Sunday School.

Peter O. Johnson, Northern Great Lakes Synod

Creator, God, we pray for the Eskimo congregations of the Seward Peninsula in Alaska, and for all Native American ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Continue to bring us faithful leaders, to raise up talented people from our own congregations, and provide for us a vision for ministry and mission in our own communities. In Jesus' name we pray.

Vincent Tocktoo Sr., Alaska Synod

Lord God of our salvation, give wisdom and guidance to the leaders and people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa as our congregation and synod develop a partnership with our companion synod. Lord, we ask you to place your guiding hand on the bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as they dialogue, listen, and expand their vision of the Church. Protect and guide our bishops as they are sensitized to and unite in developing an interactive relationship on such issues as justice. We pray for safe travel for all bishops in September 1995, especially our Bishop Gregory Villalón. May they return home safely with an abundance of rich experiences. We ask in your name.

submitted by an unidentified voting member, Caribbean Synod

Our gracious heavenly Father, your divine intention was that your people would live together in harmony as a family. Lord, today we see families of all kinds, shapes, and sizes under strain and stress, feeling the pressures of our society. Families are the lifeblood of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and at Bethany in LaPorte, Indiana, it is our hope to renew the family spirit, strengthen the family units in our congregation and community, seeking to model Jesus' love for his disciples—his family—as we construct our new Family Life Center. Our prayer is that this facility and the efforts of our pastor and congregation will enable us to expand the mission and ministry of Bethany far beyond our church walls, giving families the hope, strength and joy of a home centered around Christ and the Good News of salvation. Help and guide us through your Holy Spirit, that our efforts will glorify your name and reach out to those who are hurting and in need of your loving, saving Grace. We praise and glorify your name.

Shirley Carlson, Indiana-Kentucky Synod

We praise you God and give you thanks for our church made up by different people of diverse cultures, visions, and races. These differences in each of us are a gift from you; help us, O Lord, to appreciate them and to lift them up in the roles that we have in our church and our society. Give us the capacity to live with our brothers and sisters in an atmosphere of peace and understanding, celebrating with joy our differences and finding in them means of learning and spiritual growth.

Rosibel H. Woodward, South/Central Synod of Wisconsin

Lord God, as we embrace this church's Vision for Mission we ask your special blessing on our efforts. We are especially thankful as a rural community of the mission of our farmers who feed the world. We also pray for the continuing mission of our companion synod in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia and for our missionaries, Lon and Mira Kightlenager serving now in Madagascar. Thank you, heavenly Father.

submitted by an unidentified voting member, Northeastern Iowa Synod

Dear Lord, you have blessed us with many wonderful congregations within our synod, where we can hear the Word, receive the sacraments, and take joy and comfort in fellowship. Now, we pray that you may inspire us anew to reach out beyond our churches to those in our communities who have not yet found a church home—who have not yet heard the Gospel, experienced your Grace, and learned of your promise of everlasting life through Christ. Give us, we pray, the will and determination to welcome actively all into our congregations. Amen.

submitted by an unidentified voting member and synod

Gracious God, giver of all gifts, we pray for those in our world who feel the pangs of hunger. Ease their suffering and bless the efforts of those who collect and distribute foods and other items to those in need.

submitted by an unidentified voting member and synod

Our gracious heavenly Father, I pray for two missionaries who have a connectedness with our congregation. They are Carol Cottingham and Carol Rasmussen. I also pray for all other missionaries who give their "all" to spread the Gospel. I pray that our congregation and all congregations will find new financial means to support additional missionaries to proclaim and

live the Good New of Jesus. I pray this in the name of Jesus.
Glen Wiese, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

O God, the father and mother of us all. We joyfully sing your praises and thank you for the many blessings you have bestowed upon us in our small rural settings and center-cities. Continue to be with us and give us your counsel as we strive to reach out beyond the walls of our church to make Christ known in city, town and country.
submitted by an unidentified voting member and synod

We ask your strength as we struggle with difficult decisions affecting your church. Reveal your will and show us the way to embrace, love, and nurture the whole human family, the children whom you love, especially those we sometimes find it hard to love: the homeless, that they may be sheltered; those living and dying of HIV/AIDS, along with their caregivers, that they may be supported and comforted; the hungry, that they may be nourished; gay and lesbian people who feel that they have been abandoned by the church, that they may be welcomed into our fellowship and worship as equal partners as we move toward a more inclusive and diverse body of Christ. Be with the many parts of your one body gathered in this assembly as we return to our home congregations, that our journeys be safe and that our re-energized vision be shared with all your people. These things we ask through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
submitted by an unidentified voting member, Central States Synod

We ask your blessing on the mission and ministry of our companion synod in the Kotte district of Papua, New Guinea, and on the new congregation in our synod, Iglesia Luterana de la Resurrección in Garden City, Kansas; Family of Christ in Imperial, Missouri, and Joy Lutheran in Weldon Springs, Missouri.
Dan Glamann, Central States Synod

Kind and Gracious God, you call us to be one. Today, as we lift up our partnership with Christians in other traditions, we thank you for the thousands of small, town-and-country congregations where ecumenical matters are conducted daily over the back fence with a neighbor. Help us to gain a new vision for unity as we love and serve together. In Christ's name.
Kay Conrad, North Carolina Synod

Gracious Lord, we give thanks for the opportunities given us. Help us be of service to reach out in peace, to those from all walks of life; to reach out in hope to those in need of your guidance; to reach out in faith, sharing your word with one another; to reach out in love, to all God's children, infants to elders. Inspire us in Ministry. Bless our support of mission and other ministries. Support our efforts to help the children of Romania, families of Eastern Europe, and other parts of the world. Empower us to share the "life giving" news of your grace. Hand in hand, community to community, nation to nation in Jesus name.
Mike Francis, Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Heavenly Father, fill us with your Holy Spirit and empower us to continue to develop and implement educational strategies for our youth as they engage in Bible studies, discussion, and prayer during an annual summer retreat and regularly during the rest of the year. Bless them, our pastor, and all others involved in this ministry. We prayer in the name of our Lord and Savior,

Jesus the Christ.

John G. Satter, Central/Southern Illinois Synod

Dios Todopoderoso, oremos por nuestro Obispo Chilstrom quien con mucha fe y entusiasmo ha servido a nuestra iglesia. Por nuestro obispo electo Anderson y espero y esperamos que el Señor le cuide para que pueda servir a nuestra iglesia en el futuro. Él es una esperanza para nuestra iglesia, para todos nosotros del Sínodo de la Montañas Rocosas. También oremos por nuestra hermana la pastora Valenzuela y su esposo de la Iglesia Cristo Rey Centro Luterano mientras tratan de guiar nuestra misión latina en El Paso, Texas, cuya región les corresponde.

submitted by an unidentified voting member, Rocky Mountain Synod

Gracious God, fill us with your Holy Spirit that we may reflect your boundless love and compassion, rather than our self-righteous judgment. May we use the wisdom and knowledge you have given us to mediate our differences so that we may devote our talents and treasure to advance the true mission of our church, to spread throughout the world the joyous news of your grace and salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Arline E. Shannon, Lower Susquehanna Synod

Heavenly Father, give us ears to listen, shoulders to lean on, hands to help others, a caring heart, ready smiles, and arms full of abundant hugs to give out whenever needed. Let our “doors” be opened all the time, not just on Sunday mornings.

Connie Foster, Southern Ohio Synod

Lord God of our salvation, we pray that your will be done in all places throughout creation. Not only the missions abroad, but also at home, that we may continue in the everyday ministries of the rural churches of America. With thankfulness to you, Lord, we pray for all the courageous people who give their lives to bring the Gospel of the Lord to people who have never heard of your almighty love. Inspire our witness to you, Lord, that all may know the power of your forgiveness.

Nichole Johnson, Western North Dakota Synod

Dear Lord, we thank you for the guidance and ministry of our retiring Bishop Norman Eitheim, and we welcome the leadership of Bishop-Elect Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl. In a world where many live with violence and poverty, we thank you for the freedom to travel and to gather as part of your church; we thank you for the safety of ourselves, our families and our communities; and we thank you for the wealth all of us here enjoy. As we come before you now, mindful of our pride and our comfort, lead us in the mission given by your Son to grow in our love for you and to care for our neighbor. As we pray for those who are hungry, give those of us with plenty a hunger for your spirit. As we pray for those who are homeless, help those of us with homes to find rest in your presence. As we pray for those who are afflicted, afflict us with a sense of our own sin and guilt, so that we may know our need for your redemption. In the name of your son, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Richard Moe, South Dakota Synod

We thank you, O God, for the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 25, where you tell us to feed the

hungry, clothe the naked, and show hospitality to strangers among us. Our Lord, you have empowered us at Tracy Lutheran Church to collect food for food shelves and deliver Meals-on-Wheels. Our Lord, you have given us time, talents, and energies to take the colors of your rainbow, the fabrics and fibers of your creation, to fashion our quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Our Lord, you have encouraged us to open our church building to our Hmong Christian Lutherans where they can worship in their language with freedom and peace. For all these opportunities of love and concern, we thank you. In the name of your blessed Son, Jesus Christ.
Mary Lou Ludeman, Southwestern Minnesota

Dear and beloved God, rising out of our life together as kin in Christ and as colleagues in his blessed church and committed to his cause, we speak our gratitude and present our intercessions: For the people of the 200 congregations of our synod, the pastors, associates in ministry, and other leaders; for our bishop and his colleagues in the care and leadership of us; for all the settings of our daily ministries that we may exercise our influence faithfully and to the well-being of all; for the diverse, focused ministries of our synod, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Upsala College, all the schools sponsored by our congregations, Lutheran Social Ministry of New Jersey, Office of Governmental Affairs, Beisler Camping and Retreat Center; for endeavors to provide shelters, safe houses, clothing, food, support, and encouragement to many; and in gratitude and with our glad intercessions for all with whom your Spirit has united us in faith and witness in the wider circles of your Church: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service; Lutheran World Federation and other Lutherans who have not joined us in it; the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.; and the World Council of Churches. How urgently we pray your blessing upon your one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church! And how grateful we are that you have called us by your Gospel, enlightened us with your gifts, and sanctified and preserved us in faith by weaving us together in the family of faith. Hear and accept our prayers, for Christ's sake.
submitted by an unidentified voting member, New Jersey Synod

Gracious heavenly Father, thank you for your Holy Spirit, which has been our guide and informer through this assembly. Continue to anoint us with your Spirit, so that we may return home with winds of song, the spirit of laughter, and Christ guiding us. Lord, I pray for all the members of your Church, that we may be servants of your Word and proclaim the promise of Christ. Give us boldness to proclaim who Christ is to kids in school, our co-workers, our families and friends. Lord God, I say a special prayer for our ELCA seminaries. Strengthen each campus with your protection and affirming love. Bind Satan from trying to cause division and turmoil. Empower the professors and students as they apply Your Word to doing Your ministry. I also lift up the Southeastern Minnesota Synod and Bishop Nycklemoe. Surround him and his wife with your continual renewal and strength. Bless them both with their ministry in Christ's work. I also pray that you will send pastors to the congregations of our synod that have vacancies. May the calls be filled with people that you have chosen. Thank you Lord. All these things I lift up in your name.

Michelle Simonson, Southeastern Minnesota Synod

Gracious Father, in the beginning your Spirit brooded over the waters. And from those waters filled with chaos, your own words resounded: 'Let there be life. And there was life.' In a

synod where there is so much density, continue to give us strength in our missions, lifting up spiritual nurturing, Bible evangelism, and thriving small congregations. Lift up the leadership, the conferences, and all 155 congregations dedicated to doing your will. In the middle of our hectic lives, give us the vision to live our lives devoted to you. We have a special synod with many different shades of color and many cultural backgrounds. There are homeless and hungry, the rich and the poor, the educated and uneducated, gay and lesbian, the mentally ill, gangs and the walking wounded, and the average working class. Yes, we have a special synod filled with diversity. And, yes, in these difficult times when the burden of life seems too great to bear, remind us of your loving presence. Help us to grasp your vision to see your new creation. We pray to hear those words: 'Let there be life'—in the city, in the suburbs, in the country, in our homes, and in our hearts. Let there be life.

submitted by an unidentified voting member,
Southern California [West] Synod

O Lord, each summer we invite to our community a group of teenagers from Northern Ireland, 50 percent of them being Roman Catholic and the other 50 percent being Protestant. As we prepare them, along with our children, making Christ known to them in a peaceful environment through a summer's fun and games, through play acting and sharing, they will learn that they are not enemies, they are not Roman Catholic nor Protestant, but brothers and sisters in Christ. O Lord, bless them and keep them, so that they will remember what they have learned throughout their journey of life, that they can be peacemakers. O Lord, please make Christ known to us. Teach us to use the Bible carefully. Make us learn from them that, under Christ, we are neither Greek nor Jew, neither male nor female, but children of God. This we pray in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ.

Y. T. Chiu, Northeastern Ohio Synod

ELCA GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions

The text of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as amended by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly follows. When referring to continuing resolutions, note the emendations cited below.

Emendation of Continuing Resolutions

During the 1993-1995 biennium, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America acted to adopt, amend, or delete continuing resolutions from the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of this church as follows:

Action Number	Council Action
CC93.12.96	Amendment of continuing resolution 9.52.A87., renumbered as 9.52.A93.
CC94.4.9	Amendment of continuing resolution 15.11.E91., renumbered as 15.11.E94.
CC94.4.10	Adoption of new churchwide continuing resolution 19.61.A94.
CC95.4.27	Amendment of continuing resolution 15.21.A91., renumbered as 15.21.A95.; and amendment of continuing resolution 16.11.C91.

The texts of those provisions, as adopted or amended, follows:

9.52.A93. The Church Council, in cooperation with the synods, shall provide an ongoing process for congregations whose governing documents have been accepted into the church under 9.52. to review those documents and compare them with the required elements of the Model Constitution for Congregations listed in 9.25.b., applicable to the extent provided in 9.52. to congregations recognized and received by this church as of January 1, 1988. Congregations are encouraged to resolve significant conflicts between their governing documents and the Model Constitution for Congregations.

15.11.E94. Department for Information Tech-

nology

The treasurer shall provide for information technology that shall include . . . [with the remainder of the continuing resolution remaining unchanged].

15.21.A95. Operation of Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA

a. The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have primary responsibility for promotion of Mission Investments.

b. The provisions of 15.11.D91. shall apply to the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA.

c. The board of trustees of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA shall be eleven in number, who shall be elected by the Church Council for six-year terms and shall be eligible for reelection, with six members nominated by the Church Council's Budget and Finance Committee, four members nominated by the board of the Division for Outreach, and one member nominated by the board of the Division for Church in Society.

d. Relationship to Division for Outreach: The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA shall relate to the Division for Outreach. The Division for Outreach shall request real estate acquisition for new and existing ministries within the limits of the capital funds available and within criteria established jointly by the Division for Outreach and the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA shall provide expertise for management of real property and execute all necessary documents for the acquisition and disposition of such property.

e. Capital Budget Development: An annual capital budget for ministry development shall be established. The budget shall be prepared by a joint staff committee composed of staff from the Division for Outreach and the Mission Investment Fund. This budget is to be based on projected availability of capital funds and projected requirements for loans and real property acquisition for ministry development, church building programs, or other approved capital needs. This

capital budget, upon recommendation of the joint staff committee, will be submitted to the board of the Division for Outreach and the board of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA for approval and recommendation to the Church Council. Following approval, the capital budget shall be monitored by the joint staff committee.

- f. Within guidelines established jointly by the Division for Outreach and the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, the Mission Investment Fund shall have the responsibility for determining which congregations shall receive loans, the amount of each loan, and the repayment schedule. The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA shall execute the loan, ensure safekeeping for the legal documents, provide accounting services for the repayment, supervise collection, and confer with the Division for Outreach on any exceptions to established loan policies.
- g. The Mission Investment Fund shall offer building and architectural consultative services to new congregations entering first-unit construction, to congregations relocating with synodical approval, to other congregations, and to campus ministry programs of the Division for Higher Education and Schools.

16.11.C91. Division for Outreach

This division shall provide leadership and support for this church as it reaches out in witness to the Gospel in the areas served by the synods of this church by developing new ministries and congregations; supporting existing ministries and congregations in transition or with special needs; and working with synods in developing area strategies for outreach. To fulfill these responsibilities, this division shall:

- a. develop and recommend policy for, and then assist in the development of new ministries and congregations, the support of existing ministries and congregations in transition or with special needs, and of urban and rural coalitions. To do so, this division will:
 - 1) function in cooperation with synods and congregations.
 - 2) have primary responsibility in working with synods to determine where and when new congregations of this

church shall be developed and to recommend ministries for recognition and reception as congregations of this church.

- 3) be responsible for the churchwide Mission Partners program and Mission Builders program, in coordination with synods and appropriate churchwide units.
- 4) relate to the Mission Investment Fund in accord with the applicable continuing resolutions and policies that govern the operation of the Mission Investment Fund.
- b. develop and carry out programs of evangelism in the development of new ministries, working in coordination with the Division for Congregational Ministries as the Division for Congregational Ministries develops programs and resources to nurture evangelism efforts of existing congregations.
- c. establish, support, and plan, in consultation with the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Division for Congregational Ministries, for the outreach of this church among persons of color and those whose primary language is other than English.
- d. provide staff services and financial grants to assist synods or groups of synods in the development of area strategies for outreach, in coordination with the Division for Church in Society and the Division for Congregational Ministries.
- e. provide for appropriate training and support, in cooperation with synods, for persons in outreach ministries of development and re-development, and those in urban, rural, and area ministries.
- f. develop, in consultation with the Mission Investment Fund, an annual capital budget for loans, real-property acquisition, and building programs in support of the development of new ministries and congregations. It also shall support investment in the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. Criteria for real-estate acquisition for new or existing ministries within the limits of capital funds available shall be established jointly by the Division for Outreach and the Mission Investment Fund. Within jointly established guidelines, the Mission Investment Fund shall determine which congregations shall receive loans, the amount of

- each loan, and the repayment schedule.
- g. be responsible for representing this church in churchwide cooperative planning for outreach together with other church bodies and ecumenical organizations serving in the geographic territory of this church's synods.
- h. cooperate, under the coordination of the Division for Global Mission, with Lutheran church bodies based in other nations that desire to carry out ministry in the U.S.A., and consult with synods of this church in planning and implementing such ministry.
- i. cooperate with the Division for Global Mission, the Division for Congregational Ministries, the Division for Higher Education and Schools, and the synods of this church in providing programs of education for mission and for witness to persons of other faiths.
- j. relate to congregationally based community organizations that are associated with outreach ministries supported by this division and assist in the development of such organizations, under the coordination of the Division for Church in Society and synods.

19.61.A94. Ecclesiastical Ballot

An "ecclesiastical ballot" for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereby defined as an election process:

- a. In which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;
- b. Through which the possibility of elec-

tion to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;

- c. That precludes spoken floor nominations in the assembly prior to or following the casting of the first ballot;
- d. In which the first ballot is considered a nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;
- e. In which the first ballot defines the total slate of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations permitted following the casting of the first ballot;
- f. That does not preclude, at some point subsequent to the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated on such a ballot to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;
- g. In which the name of any individual that appears on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot may not be withdrawn;
- h. That does not preclude an assembly's adoption of rules that may permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and
- i. In which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents.

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pages: left—blank
right—1 [title page]

pages: left—2 (copyright page)
right—3 (contents begins)

pages 4-5

pages 6-7

pages: left—8 (blank)
right—9 (Introduction)

pages: left—10 (blank)
right—11 (Restated Articles . . .)

pages 12-13

pages: left—14 (blank)
right—15 (divider page, “CONSTITUTIONS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS . . .”)

pages: left—16 (blank)
right—17 (“CODIFICATION EXPLANATION”)

pages 18-19

pages 20-21

pages 22-23

pages 24-25

pages 26-27

pages 28-29

pages 30-31

pages 32-33

pages 34-35

pages 36-37

pages 38-39

pages 40-41

pages 42-43

pages 44-45

pages 46-47

pages 48-49

pages 50-51

pages 52-53

pages 54-55

pages 56-57

pages 58-59

pages 60-61

pages 62-63

pages 64-65

pages 66-67

pages 68-69

pages 70-71

pages 72-73

pages 74-75

pages 76-77

pages 78-79

pages 80-81

pages 82-83

pages 84-85

pages 86-87

pages 88-89

pages 90-91

pages 92-93

pages 94-95

pages 96-97

pages 98-99

pages 100-101

pages 102-103

pages 104-105

pages 106-107

pages 108-109

pages 110-111

pages 112-113

pages 114-115

pages 116-117

pages 118-119

pages 120-121

pages 122-123

pages 124-125

pages 126-127

pages 128-129

pages 130-131

pages 132-133

pages 134-135

pages 136-137

pages 138-139

pages 140-141

pages 142-143

pages 144-145

pages 146-147

pages 148-149

pages 150-151

pages 152-153

pages 154-155

pages 156-157

pages: left—158
right—159 (divider

page “CONSTITUTION for SYNODS”)

pages: left—160 [blank]
right—161 [CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS]

pages 162-163

pages 164-165

pages 166-167

pages 168-169

pages 170-171

pages 172-173

pages 174-175

pages 176-177

pages 178-179

pages 180-181

pages 182-183

pages 184-185

pages: left—186
right—187 [divider

page “MOEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS . . .”]

pages 188-189

pages 190-191

pages 192-193

pages 194-195

pages 196-197

pages 198-199

pages 200-201

pages 202-203

pages 204-205

pages 206-207

pages left—208
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List of Assembly Actions

CA95.1.1: Adoption of Rules of Organization and Procedure	14
CA95.1.2: Approval of Order of Business	39
CA95.2.3: Response to Synodical Memorials on Interim Ministry	75
CA95.2.4: Response to Synodical Memorials on HIV/AIDS	88
CA95.3.5: Response to Synodical Memorials on Extremist Groups	143
CA95.3.6: Synodical Memorial on U.S. Army School of the Americas	146
CA95.3.7: Synodical Memorials on Guatemala	150
CA95.3.8: Synodical Memorial on Women Bishops	156
CA95.3.9: Synodical Memorial on Multicultural Welcoming Video	157
CA95.3.10: Habitat for Humanity International, Covenant	252
CA95.3.11: Posting of Results of First Ballot for Vice President	254
CA95.3.12: Report on Ministry of the Baptized Received	255
CA95.4.13: Election of the Rev. H. George Anderson as ELCA Bishop	265
CA95.4.14: Resolution on ELCA Representational Principles	275
CA95.4.15: Amendments to Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions	277
CA95.4.16: Amendments to Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions	278
CA95.4.17: Persons with Disabilities, Commitment to Reaffirmed	282
CA95.4.18: Post-High School Youth, Outreach to	285
CA95.4.19: Nominees for the Office of Bishop, Appreciation to	291
CA95.4.20: Election of Kathy J. Magnus as ELCA Vice President	296
CA95.4.21: Amendments to ELCA Governing Documents Implementing the Study of Ministry	298
CA95.4.22: Misc. Amendments to Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions	299
CA95.4.23: Election of the Rev. Lowell G. Almen as ELCA Secretary	341
CA95.5.24: Social Statement on Peace, Adoption of	357, 358
CA95.5.25: Report of the Memorials Committee, En Bloc Adoption of	360
CA95.5.26a: Response to Synodical Memorial on Care of Creation	376
CA95.5.26b: Response to Synodical Memorial on Energy Audits	378

CA95.5.27: Response to Synodical Memorial on Candidacy Process	379	
CA95.5.28: Response to Synodical Memorial on Discipline Process	380	
CA95.5.29: Response to Synodical Memorial on Discipline (Congregations)	382	
CA95.5.30: Response to Synodical Memorial on Removal of a Pastor	383	
CA95.5.31: Response to Synodical Memorial on Proposed Changes in the Discipline Process	386	
CA95.5.32: Response to Synodical Memorial on Calendar of Commemorations	388	
CA95.5.33: Response to Synodical Memorial on Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities	390	
CA95.5.34: Response to Synodical Memorial on Synodical–Churchwide Relations	391	
CA95.5.35: Response to Synodical Memorials on ELCA Representational Principles	397	
CA95.5.36: Response to Synodical Memorials on Voting Privilege for Retired, Rostered Laypersons	398	
CA95.5.37: Response to Synodical Memorials on Limitation of Amendment of Model Constitution for Congregations	399	
CA95.5.38: Response to Synodical Memorial on Budget and Staffing of Churchwide Units		401
CA95.5.39: Response to Synodical Memorial on Equalized Health-Care Expense	403	
CA95.5.40: Response to Synodical Memorial on Marriage-Counseling Coverage	405	
CA95.5.41: Response to Synodical Memorial on Expansion of Aetna Roster	407	
CA95.5.42: Response to Synodical Memorial on Federal Disaster Damage Regulations	408	
CA95.5.43: Response to Synodical Memorial on Worship Resources	409	
CA95.5.44: Response to Synodical Memorial on Family Farms	411	
CA95.5.45: Response to Synodical Memorial on Roster Language	412	
CA95.5.46: Response to Synodical Memorial on Foundation Endowment for Evangelism	413	
CA95.5.47: Response to Synodical Memorials on Health-Insurance Coverage of Abortions	415	
CA95.5.48: Response to Synodical Memorials on Future Churchwide Studies or Emphases	426	
CA95.6.49: “Mission Support Alternative Formula and Process”	443	
CA95.6.50: Response to Synodical Memorial on Welcoming Gay and Lesbian People	463	
CA95.6.51: 1996-1997 Budget Proposals, Adoption of	465	

CA95.6.52: Motion Defeated Triennial Churchwide Assemblies	474
CA95.6.53: Offering for Special Needs Retirement Fund; and Commendation of Board of Pensions	484
CA95.6.54: Elections to Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	565
CA95.6.55: Final Report of the Study of Theological Education	573
CA95.6.56: Election of Editor of The Lutheran Magazine	579
CA95.6.57: “Urban Initiative” Received; and Report of Implementation Requested	583
CA95.6.58: Response to Synodical Memorials on Urban Ministry Proposed Reconsideration of	600 637
CA95.6.59: Response to Synodical Memorials on Social Statements (Human Sexuality)	614
CA95.7.60: Elections to Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	622
CA95.7.61: Amendment of ELCA 10.31.a.9); S6.03.a.4); S8.12.d.	628
CA95.7.62: Violence against Women	634
CA95.7.63: Response to Synodical Memorial on Aid to Cuba	642
CA95.7.64: Amendment of C13.04. (Mutual Ministry Committee)	645
CA95.7.65: Amendment of C13.04. (Deletion of Limitation of Service of Mutual Ministry Committee Members)	647
CA95.7.66: Africa Development Foundation; Development Fund for Africa	651
CA95.7.67: U.S. Election Campaign Finance Reform	655
CA95.7.68: Not Adopted—Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice proposed reconsideration of	659 675
CA95.7.69: Use of Inclusive Geographical Maps	662
CA95.7.70: Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage	664
CA95.7.71: Study of Human Sexuality; Referral to Division for Church in Society	670
CA95.7.72: Motion G: Study of Human Sexuality	674
CA95.7.73: Study of Human Sexuality	679
CA95.7.74: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches, Sierra Pacific Synod	690
CA95.7.75: Adoption of Motions S, T, U, V, and W	690
CA95.7.76: Acclamation of Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom	690
CA95.7.77: Acclamation of Vice President Kathy J. Magnus	691
CA95.7.78: Acclamation of Secretary Lowell G. Almen	692
CA95.7.79: Acclamation of	

Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe 693
CA95.7.80: A General Thanksgiving 693

Index

1991 Churchwide Assembly 88
1995 Churchwide Assembly 42, 56
1997 Churchwide Assembly
announcement of 695
directive requesting report on ministry
of the baptized CA95.3.12) 256
25th Anniversary of the Ordination of
Lutheran Women 96

Abortion

CA95.5.47: response to synodical memorial
on insurance coverage for abortion 415
CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
Coalition for Reproductive Choice,
proposed reconsideration of 675
CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
Coalition for Reproductive Choice 659
Aetna 406
CA95.5.41: response to synodical
memorial on expansion of
Aetna roster 407
Africa Development Foundation; Fund for African Development 648
CA95.7.66: Africa Development Foundation; Fund for African Development 651
African Methodist Episcopal Church
introduction of ecumenical guests 579
Agenda Committee
membership of 37
Agriculture
CA95.5.44: response to synodical
memorial on family farms 411
Aker, George Edwin
Servus Dei Medal presented to 294, 342
Allegheny Synod
response to synodical memorial on
representational principles 395, 396
Almen, Secretary Lowell G.
CA95.4.23: Election of the Rev. Lowell G. Almen as ELCA Secretary 341
CA95.7.78: acclamation of
Secretary Lowell G. Almen 692
report of the secretary 488
response to election as ELCA secretary 346
American Lutheran Church, The
recognition of former bishops of ELCA
predecessor churches 103

recognition of
 Mrs. Fredrik A. (Dagny) Schiotz 355
 Americans with Disabilities Act
 CA95.4.17: persons with disabilities,
 commitment to reaffirmed 282
 Anderson, The Rev. Dennis A.
 address by nominees for ELCA bishop 110
 Anderson, The Rev. H. George
 address by nominees for ELCA bishop 111
 CA95.4.13: election as ELCA bishop 265
 nominees for ELCA bishop
 respond to questions 163
 response to election as ELCA bishop 266
 Anniversary of the Ordination of Lutheran Women, 25th 96
 Appreciation
 CA95.4.19: nominees for the office of
 bishop, appreciation to 291
 Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage
 Association of Lutherans of
 Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage 662
 CA95.7.70: Association of Lutherans of
 Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage 664
 Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod
 response to synodical memorials on Guatemala 147
 Army
 see U.S. Army
 Assembly Actions
 see List of Assembly Actions at head of this section
 Associates in Ministry
 additions to roster of ELCA-certified,
 1993-1994 521
 CA95.5.36: response to synodical
 memorial on voting privileges for 398
 commissioning of (CA95.7.61) 628
 removals from roster of ELCA-certified,
 1993-1994 522
 statistics, congregational and personnel,
 1989-1994 535
 Association of Evangelical Lutheran
 Churches, The
 recognition of former bishops of ELCA
 predecessor churches 355
 Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage 662
 Audit
 see Financial Statements 176

 Baptism
 sacramental practices statement, report

on 449
see also Worship
Bible Study 93
Bibles
presentation of NRSV bibles 578
Bishop of This Church
see ELCA Bishop
Bishops, ELCA Synodical
acknowledgment of retiring synodical
bishops 356
see also Women Bishops
Bishops of ELCA Predecessor Churches
Crumley, The Rev. James R. 322
Herzfeld, The Rev. Will L. 355
Marshall, The Rev. Robert J. 353
Preus, The Rev. David W. 103
recognition of
Mrs. Fredrik A. (Dagny) Schiotz 355
Board of Pensions 403, 482, 484
CA95.5.39: response to synodical memorial
on equalized health-care expense 403
CA95.5.40: response to synodical memorial
on marriage-counseling coverage 405
CA95.5.41: response to synodical memorial
on expansion of Aetna roster 407
CA95.5.47: response to synodical memorial
on insurance coverage for abortion 415
CA95.6.53: commendation of
Board of Pensions 484
CA95.6.53: offering for Special Needs
Retirement Fund 484
CA95.6.54: elections to Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees 566
CA95.7.60: elections to Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees 623
introduction of president and board
chair 482
Budget
Budget Proposal 14, 60, 61
Budget Proposal, 1996-1997 463
CA95.5.38: response to synodical
memorial on budget and staffing of
churchwide units 401
CA95.6.51: 1996-1997 budget proposals,
adoption of 465
deadline for submission of proposed
amendments 14
first reading 60
“Mission Support Alternative Formula
and Process” 441

presentation by executive for administration	61
Cabinet of Executives	
CA95.7.69: use of inclusive geographical maps	662
Calendar of Commemorations	
CA95.5.34: response to synodical memorial on calendar of commemorations	388
Campaign Finance Reform	
CA95.7.67: U.S. election campaign finance reform	655
Candidacy Process	
CA95.5.27: response to synodical memorial on the candidacy process	379
Central America	
synodical memorial on U.S. Army School of the Americas	144
synodical memorials on Guatemala	147
Central States Synod	
response to synodical memorials on interim ministry	68
response to synodical memorials on social statements (human sexuality)	604
response to synodical memorials on urban ministry	587
response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of	637
Chaplains, Military	
greetings from	621
Chilstrom, Bishop Herbert W.	
CA95.7.76: acclamation of Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom	690
presentation of Servus Dei Medal to	91
presentations to	52
report of	41
Church Council	
CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	565
CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	622
report of	55
Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	
CA95.6.54: Elections to Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	565
CA95.7.60: Elections to Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	622
Churchwide Assemblies, Triennial	466
CA95.6.52: Motion Defeated Triennial Churchwide Assemblies	474
recommendation of the Church Council for	467
Churchwide Studies or Emphases	
CA95.5.48: response to synodical	

memorials on future churchwide studies or emphases	418	
Clergy		
see Ordained Ministers		
Commemorations		
CA95.5.34: response to synodical memorial on calendar of commemorations	388	
Commission for Multicultural Ministries		
board chairs and executive directors, introduction of	329	
CA95.2.4: response to synodical memorials on HIV/AIDS	89	
CA95.3.5: response to synodical memorials on extremist groups	144	
CA95.7.70: Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage	664	
Commission for Women		
board chairs and executive directors, introduction of	329	
CA95.2.4: response to synodical memorials on HIV/AIDS	89	
Commissioning		
CA95.7.61: Amendment of ELCA 10.31.a.9); †S6.03.a.4); †S8.12.d.	628	
Committee of Reference and Counsel		
see Reference and Counsel Committee		
Committee on Appeals		
CA95.6.54: Elections to Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	566	
Committee on Discipline	623	
CA95.6.54: Elections to Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	567	
CA95.7.60: Elections to Church Council, Churchwide Boards, and Committees	623	
Committees of the Churchwide Assembly	35	
Agenda Committee	37	
Committee of Reference and Counsel	36, 711	
Credentials Committee	36	
Elections Committee	36	
Local Arrangements Committee	37	
Memorials Committee	36, 711	
Minutes Committee	36	
Nominating Committee	36, 711	
Staff Planning Committee	37	
Worship Committee	37	
Conference of Bishops		
CA95.2.3: response to synodical memorials on interim ministry	75	
CA95.3.8: synodical memorial on women bishops; women as advisory members declined	156	

CA95.5.31: response to synodical memorial on changes to the discipline process	386
CA95.7.73: Study of Human Sexuality	679
Congregations	
CA95.5.37: response to synodical memorial on amendment of Model Constitution for Congregations	399
received, consolidated, disbanded, merged, or withdrawn, 1993-1994	527
statistics, 1992 and 1993 compared	536, 546
statistics, 1993 and 1994 compared	537
statistics, congregational and personnel, 1989-1994	533
Congregations, Discipline of	
CA95.5.29: response to synodical memorial on discipline	381
CA95.7.74: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches, Sierra Pacific Synod	690
Consecration	
CA95.7.61: Amendment of ELCA 10.31.a.9); †S6.03.a.4); †S8.12.d.	628
Constitution for Synods	
addition of †S6.03.a.4)	623
addition of †S8.12.d.	623
Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions	
addition of †S6.03.a.4)	623
addition of †S8.12.d.	623
amendment of ELCA 10.31.a.9)	623
C13.04.: proposed amendment of	629, 637, 644, 645, 647
CA95.4.15: amendments to	277
CA95.4.16: amendments to	278
CA95.4.21: amendments to ELCA governing documents implementing Study of Ministry	298
CA95.4.22: misc. amendments to Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions	299
CA95.6.52: motion defeated— triennial churchwide assemblies	468
CA95.7.64: amendment of C13.04. (Mutual Ministry Committee)	645
deadline for submission of emendations to proposed amendments	13
Model Constitution for Congregations	645
representational principles	269, 275
Study of Ministry, implementing amendments	297
Credentials Committee	
Exhibit A: Members of the Churchwide Assembly	697
determination of a quorum	11

membership of 36
report of 11, 35, 41, 91, 105, 159, 252, 257, 619
roll of assembly members 35
Crumley, The Rev. James R.
recognition of former bishops of
ELCA predecessor churches 322
Cuba
CA95.7.63: response to synodical
 memorial on aid to Cuba 642, 644

Deaconesses
additions to roster of, 1993-1994 527
CA95.7.61: consecration of 628
removals from roster of, 1993-1994 527
statistics, congregational and
 personnel, 1989-1994 536, 546
Delaware-Maryland Synod
response to synodical memorial
 on foundation endowment
 for evangelism 412, 413
response to synodical memorials on
 interim ministry 73
response to synodical memorial on
 representational principles 396
Dental Insurance Coverage 402, 403, 406, 413
Department for Communication
CA95.6.55: Final Report of the Study of Theological Education 574
commendation of 488
department directors, introduction of 329
Department for Ecumenical Affairs
department directors, introduction of 329
Department for Human Resources
department directors, introduction of 329
Department for Research and Evaluation
department directors, introduction of 329
Development Fund for Africa
CA95.7.66: Africa Development
 Foundation 651
Diaconal Ministers
CA95.7.61: consecration of 628
Disaster Damage Regulations
CA95.5.42: response to synodical
 memorial on Federal Disaster
 Damage Regulations 408
Disabilities, Persons with
Americans with Disabilities Act 281
CA95.4.17: persons with disabilities,
 commitment to reaffirmed 282

Lutheran Youth Organization,
 recommendations from 281
Discipline 379-383, 386, 623, 690
CA95.5.29: response to synodical
 memorial on
 discipline of congregations 382
CA95.5.30: response to synodical
 memorial on removal of a pastor 383
response to synodical memorial
 on proposed changes in the
 discipline process 386
response to synodical memorial on
 discipline 380, 381
see also Committee on Discipline
Discipline of Congregations
CA95.7.74: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches,
 Sierra Pacific Synod 690
Division for Church in Society
board chairs and executive directors,
 introductions 290
CA95.2.4: response to synodical
 memorials on HIV/AIDS 89
CA95.3.5: response to synodical
 memorials on extremist groups 144
CA95.3.10: referral on Habitat for Humanity International, covenant 252
CA95.5.24: referral on
 social statement on peace 358
CA95.5.42: response to synodical
 memorial on Federal Disaster
 Damage Regulations 408
CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees 566
CA95.6.59: response to synodical
 memorials on social statements
 (human sexuality) 607
CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees 623
CA95.7.71: study of human sexuality;
 referral to Division for
 Church in Society 670
Division for Congregational Ministries
board chairs and executive directors,
 introductions 290
CA95.2.4: response to synodical
 memorials on HIV/AIDS 88, 89
CA95.3.5: response to synodical
 memorials on extremist groups 144
CA95.3.12: referral on
 ministry of the baptized 255
CA95.4.18: post-high school youth,

outreach to	285
CA95.5.24: referral on	
social statement on peace	358
CA95.5.34: response to synodical	
memorial on calendar of	
commemorations	388
CA95.5.43: response to synodical	
memorial on worship resources	409
CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	566
CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	622
Division for Global Mission	
board chairs and executive directors,	
introductions	290
CA95.2.4: response to synodical	
memorials on HIV/AIDS	89
CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	566
CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	623
CA95.7.63: response to synodical	
memorial on aid to Cuba	643
review of	427
Division for Higher Education and Schools	
board chairs and executive directors,	
introductions	290
CA95.2.4: response to synodical	
memorials on HIV/AIDS	89
CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	566
CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	622
Division for Ministry	
board chairs and executive directors,	
introductions	290
CA95.2.3: Response to synodical	
memorials on interim ministry	75
CA95.2.4: response to synodical	
memorials on HIV/AIDS	89
CA95.3.12: referral on	
ministry of the baptized	255
CA95.5.27: response to synodical	
memorial on the candidacy process	379
CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	566
CA95.6.55: final report of the Study of Theological Education	569
CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	622
ministry of the baptized, report on	254
Study of Ministry, report on the	310
Study of Theological Education,	
report on	330
Division for Outreach	390
board chairs and executive directors,	
introductions	290

CA95.5.35: response to synodical memorial on Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities	390
CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	566
CA95.6.58: response to synodical memorials on urban ministry	600
CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees	622
East-Central Synod of Wisconsin response to synodical memorials on interim ministry	69
Eastern North Dakota Synod response to synodical memorials on social statements (human sexuality)	602
CA95.6.58: response to synodical memorials on urban ministry	600
response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of	637
East-Central Synod of Wisconsin response to synodical memorials on interim ministry	69
Ecumenical Greetings and Introductions	447
African Methodist Episcopal Church	579
Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., The	448
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	289
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone	291
greetings from ecumenical guests	556
Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, The	345
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.	576
Orthodox Church in America	579
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	448
Reformed Church in America	547
Roman Catholic Church	558
United Church of Christ	557
United Methodist Church	579
World Council of Churches	575
Ecumenical Matters report on	560, 564
see also Department for Ecumenical Affairs	
ELCA Bishop address to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly (text)	42
CA95.4.19: nominees for the office of bishop, appreciation to	291
CA95.5.44: response to synodical memorial on family farms	411
CA95.5.48: response to synodical memorials on future churchwide studies or emphases	418

CA95.7.73: Study of Human Sexuality	679
CA95.7.76: acclamation of	
Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom	690
presentations to	
Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom	52
report of	41
see also Elections	
ELCA Foundation	
CA95.5.46: response to synodical	
memorial on foundation	
endowment for evangelism	413
greetings from	485
ELCA Secretary	341, 488
CA95.4.23: election of ELCA secretary	341
CA95.5.45: response to synodical	
memorial on roster language	412
CA95.5.48: response to synodical	
memorials on future churchwide	
studies or emphases	418
CA95.7.78: acclamation of Secretary	
Lowell G. Almen	692
report of	488
referral on	
ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund	482
ELCA Treasurer	175
CA95.7.79: acclamation of	
Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe	693
report of	175
ELCA Vice President	
address to the	
1995 Churchwide Assembly (text)	56
CA95.4.20: election of	
ELCA vice president	296
CA95.7.77: acclamation of	
Vice President Kathy J. Magnus	691
report of	54
Election Campaign Finance Reform	
CA95.7.67: U.S. Election Campaign	
Finance Reform	655
Elections	
bishop, addresses by nominees	105
bishop, appreciation to nominees for the	
office of bishop (CA95.4.19)	291
bishop, election of (CA95.4.13)	265
bishop, fifth ballot cast and report of	265
bishop, first ballot cast	39
bishop, fourth ballot cast	252
bishop, nominees respond to questions	160

bishop, report of first ballot	53
bishop, report of second ballot	95
bishop, report of third ballot	138
bishop, second ballot cast	64
bishop, third ballot cast	137
Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees	297
Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees, first ballot cast	289
Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees, report of first ballot (CA95.6.54)	622
Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees, report of second ballot (CA95.7.60)	622
Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees, second ballot cast	567
editor of The Lutheran magazine	579
election process for churchwide officers	12
Elections Committee, Exhibit B: Report of the	698
Nominating Committee, report of	90
secretary, election of ELCA (CA95.4.23)	341
secretary, first ballot cast	296
secretary, report of first ballot	331
vice president, election of (CA95.4.20)	296
vice president, first ballot cast	253
vice president, posting of ballot results (CA95.3.11)	254
vice president, report of first ballot	258
vice president, report of second ballot	295
vice president, second ballot cast	279
vice president, third ballot cast	279
Elections Committee membership of	36
Exhibit B: Report of the Elections Committee	698
Ellwanger, The Rev. Joseph W. Ellwanger address by nominees for ELCA bishop	107
Emphases CA95.5.48: response to synodical memorials on future churchwide studies or emphases	426
Energy Audits response to synodical memorial on energy audits	378
Environmental Concerns	378
CA95.5.26.a: response to synodical memorial on care of creation	376

Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., The
greetings from 448

Equalized Health-Care Expenses
CA95.5.39: response to synodical
 memorial on equalized
 health-care expense 403

Eucharist
sacramental practices statement,
 report on 449
see also Worship

Evangelical Church of the
 Lutheran Confession in Cuba
CA95.7.63: response to synodical memorial
 on aid to Cuba 644

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
greetings from 289

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone
greetings from 291

Evangelism
CA95.5.46: response to synodical
 memorial on foundation
 endowment for evangelism 413

Executive for Administration
presentation of budget proposal 61
expenses 402, 403

Extremist Groups
synodical memorials on 139

“Faithful Leaders for a Changing World . . .”
CA95.6.55: final report of the
 Study of Theological Education 573

Farms
CA95.5.44: response to synodical
 memorial on family farms 411

Feast of Victory Lutheran Church, Acme, Mich.
stained glass window presented to 343

Federal Disaster Damage Regulations
CA95.5.42: Response to synodical
 memorial on Federal Disaster
 Damage Regulations 408

Finance
“Mission Support Alternative
 Formula and Process” 441
see also Budget; ELCA Treasurer

Financial Statements
ELCA 1992-1993 176
ELCA 1993-1994 177
Mission Investment Fund 1992-1993 217

Mission Investment Fund 1993-1994 232
First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches, Sierra Pacific Synod 685
CA95.7.74: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches 690
Florida-Bahamas Synod
response to synodical
 memorial on federal disaster
 damage regulations 407, 408
“For Peace in God’s World” 113
text of social statement on peace 359
see also Peace, Social Statement on
Foss, The Rev. Richard J.
address by nominees for ELCA bishop 112
nominees for ELCA bishop respond to
 questions 168
Foundation
see ELCA Foundation
Future Churchwide Studies or Emphases
CA95.5.48: response to synodical
 memorials on future churchwide
 studies or emphases 418

Gay and Lesbian Persons
see Homosexuality
Geographical Maps
CA95.7.69: use of inclusive
 geographical maps 662
Greater Milwaukee Synod
response to synodical memorial on
 urban ministry 591
Grumm, Christine Helen
Servus Dei Medal presented to 293
Guatemala
synodical memorials on 147

Habitat for Humanity International 250, 252
synodical memorial on Habitat
 for Humanity covenant 250
Handicapped Persons
see Disabilities
Hatred
response to synodical memorials on
 extremist groups 139
Health Insurance
CA95.5.39: response to synodical
 memorial on equalized
 health-care expense 403
CA95.5.40: response to synodical
 memorial on marriage-

counseling coverage 405

CA95.5.41: response to synodical
memorial on expansion of Aetna roster 407

Herzfeld, The Rev. Will L.
recognition of former bishops of
ELCA predecessor churches 355

Holy Communion
sacramental practices statement,
report on 449
see also Worship

Homosexuality

CA95.6.50: response to synodical
memorial on welcoming gay
and lesbian people 452

CA95.7.72: Motion G: Study of
Human Sexuality 674

CA95.7.73: Study of Human Sexuality 679

CA95.7.74: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches,
Sierra Pacific Synod 686

Human Rights

CA95.7.62: violence against women 634

CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
Coalition for Reproductive Choice,
proposed reconsideration of 675

CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
Coalition for Reproductive Choice 659

Motion C: Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice 656
violence against women,
resolution on 475, 630, 634
see also Peace and Justice Issues

Human Sexuality

CA95.6.59: response to synodical
memorials on social statements
(human sexuality) 607

CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
Coalition for Reproductive Choice,
proposed reconsideration of 675

CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
Coalition for Reproductive Choice 659

CA95.7.71: Study of Human Sexuality;
referral to Division for Church in
Society 670

CA95.7.72: Motion G: Study of
Human Sexuality 674

CA95.7.73: Study of Human Sexuality 679

Motion C: Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice 656

Motion F: Study of Human Sexuality 616, 665

Motion G: Study of Human Sexuality 671

Motion H: Study of Human Sexuality 675

Hunger

see World Hunger Appeal

IHS Studio, Inc., Fredericksburg, Tex.

stained glass window presented to

Feast of Victory Lutheran Church,

Acme, Mich. 343

Inclusivity 269

CA95.4.14: resolution on

ELCA representational principles 275

Indiana-Kentucky Synod

response to synodical memorial on

multicultural welcoming video 156

response to synodical memorial

on roster language 411, 412

response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of 637

response to synodical memorials

on social statements

(human sexuality) 605, 606

“Inquiry” Process, Report on the 101, 138

Insurance Coverage

CA95.5.39: response to synodical

memorial on equalized

health-care expense 403

CA95.5.40: response to synodical

memorial on marriage-counseling

coverage 405

CA95.5.41: response to synodical

memorial on expansion

of Aetna roster 407

CA95.5.47: response to synodical

memorial on insurance

coverage for abortion 415

Justice

see Peace and Justice Issues; Women

Larson, The Rev. April C. Ullring

address by nominees for ELCA bishop 108

nominees for ELCA bishop

respond to questions 171

Lay Roster

CA95.5.45: response to synodical

memorial on roster language 412

see also Office of the Secretary;

Rosters and Statistics

Lesbian and Gay Persons

see Homosexuality

Liberia, Lutheran Church of

prayers on behalf of 567
 Local Arrangements Committee
 membership and recognition of 37
 Lord's Supper
 sacramental practices statement,
 report on 449
 see also Worship
 Lower Susquehanna Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 insurance coverage for abortions 414
 Lutheran Church in America
 Crumley, The Rev. James R. 328
 recognition of former bishops of
 ELCA predecessor churches 353
 Lutheran Church of Liberia 567
 Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, The
 greetings from 345
 Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
 greetings from 348
 referral on social statement on peace (CA95.5.24) 358
 Lutheran Laity Movement for Stewardship
 greetings from 620
 Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM)
 greetings from 486
 Motion I: Promise-Keepers 679
 Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs
 CA95.7.63: response to synodical
 memorial on aid to Cuba 644
 CA95.7.67: U.S. election campaign
 finance reform 655
 synodical memorials on Guatemala 150
 Lutheran Office for World Community
 CA95.7.63: Response to synodical
 memorial on Aid to Cuba 644
 Lutheran World Federation
 greetings from 350
 referral on Social Statement on Peace (CA95.5.24) 358
 Lutheran World Relief
 greetings from 439
 referral on social statement on peace (CA95.5.24) 358
 Lutheran Youth Organization
 CA95.4.17: persons with disabilities,
 commitment to reaffirmed 282
 CA95.4.18: post-high school youth,
 outreach to 285
 greetings from 280
 presentation by 465
 recommendations from 281

Magnus, Vice President Kathy J.
address to the
 1995 Churchwide Assembly (text) 56
CA95.4.20: election of
 ELCA vice president 296
CA95.7.77: acclamation of
 Vice President Kathy J. Magnus 691
report of 54
Maps
CA95.7.69: use of inclusive
 geographical maps 662
Marriage-Counseling Coverage
CA95.5.40: response to synodical
 memorial on marriage-
 counseling coverage 405
McAuliffe, Richard L.
CA95.7.79: acclamation of
 Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe 693
report of 175
McCoid, The Rev. Donald J.
address by nominees for ELCA bishop 109
Medical-Dental Plan
CA95.5.39: response to synodical
 memorial on equalized
 health-care expense 403
CA95.5.40: response to synodical
 memorial on marriage-
 counseling coverage 405
CA95.5.41: response to synodical
 memorial on expansion
 of Aetna roster 407
CA95.5.47: response to synodical
 memorial on insurance
 coverage for abortion 415
Memorials Committee
membership of 36
report of 65, 139, 250, 374, 452, 586, 637, 660
Memorials, Synodical
Category 1: Habitat for Humanity 233, 250
Category 2: Guatemala 147
Category 3: HIV/AIDS 75, 88
Category 4: Environment Part 1,
 Care of Creation 374
Category 5: Social Statements
 (Human Sexuality) 600, 660
Category 5: Social Statements (Human Sexuality),
 proposed reconsideration of 660
Category 6: Urban Ministry 586, 637

Category 6: Urban Ministry, proposed reconsideration of	637
Category 7: Candidacy Process	378
Category 8: Interim Ministry	65, 75
Category 9: Discipline Part 1, Proposed Amendment on Disciplinary Action	379
Category 9: Discipline Part 3, Removal of a Pastor	382
Category 9: Discipline Part 4, Proposed Changes in the Discipline Procedures	383
Category 10: Women Bishops	151
Category 11: Calendar of Commemorations	387
Category 12: Governance Part 1, Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities	388
Category 12: Governance Part 2, Synodical–Churchwide Relationships	390
Category 12: Governance Part 3, Representational Principles	391
Category 12: Governance Part 4, Voice and Vote for Retired Associates in Ministry	398
Category 12: Governance Part 5, Model Constitution for Congregations	398
Category 13: Budget and Staffing of Churchwide Units	400
Category 14: ELCA Medical Dental Plan, Part 3, Policy on Abortion	413
Category 14: ELCA Medical-Dental Plan, Part 1, Equalized Health-Care	402
Category 14: ELCA Medical-Dental Plan, Part 2, Marriage Counseling	403
Category 14: ELCA Medical-Dental Plan, Part 4, Expansion of Aetna	406
Category 15, Part 2: Aid to Cuba	638
Category 15: Advocacy with the U.S. Government, Part 3, Federal Disaster Damage Regulations	407
Category 15: U.S. Government, Part 1, U.S. Army School of the Americas	144
Category 16: Welcoming Gay and Lesbian People	452
Category 17: Worship Resources	409
Category 19: Family Farms	410
Category 19: Multicultural Welcoming Video	156
Category 20: Extremist Groups	139
Category 21: Future Churchwide Studies or Emphases	416
Category 22: Roster Language	411
Category 23: Foundation Endowment for Evangelism	412
Mental Health	
CA95.5.40: response to synodical memorial on marriage-	

counseling coverage 405
 Metropolitan Chicago Synod
 response to synodical
 memorial on aid to Cuba 638, 642
 response to synodical memorial on budget and staffing of churchwide units 400, 401
 response to synodical memorial on
 marriage-counseling coverage 403, 405
 response to synodical memorial
 on proposed changes
 in the discipline process 383, 386
 response to synodical memorial on
 ELCA representational principles 391
 response to synodical
 memorials on urban ministry 589
 response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of 637
 response to synodical memorials on
 social statements (human sexuality) 605
 Metropolitan New York Synod
 response to synodical
 memorials on HIV/AIDS 77
 Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod
 response to synodical
 memorials on Guatemala 147
 response to synodical
 memorials on interim ministry 73
 response to synodical memorial on
 welcoming gay and lesbian people 464
 Middle Eastern Heritage 662
 CA95.7.70: Association of Lutherans of
 Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage 664
 Military Chaplains
 greetings from 621
 Ministry of the Baptized
 CA95.3.12: ministry of the baptized,
 report and recommendation on 255
 report on 254
 Minneapolis Area Synod
 response to synodical memorials
 on future churchwide
 studies or emphases 416, 426
 response to synodical memorials
 on urban ministry 586, 637
 response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of 637
 synodical memorials on women bishops 151
 Minutes Committee
 membership of 36
 Mission Investment Fund 197, 216
 Financial Statements 1992-1993 217

Financial Statements 1993-1994	232
Mission Prayers	266, 285, 564, 579
Exhibit C: Mission Prayers (texts)	714
“Mission Support—Alternative Formula and Process” presentation on	441
received and approved (CA95.6.49)	443
text of	443
Model Constitution for Congregations CA95.5.37: response to synodical memorial on amendment of	
Model Constitution for Congregations	399
CA95.7.63: Response to synodical memorial on aid to Cuba	645
CA95.7.65: amendment of C13.04. (Mutual Ministry Committee)	647
proposed amendment of C13.04.	629, 637, 644, 645, 647
Montana Synod response to synodical memorials on extremist groups	139
Multicultural Concerns	269
CA95.4.14: resolution ELCA representational principles	275
Multicultural Welcoming Video response to synodical memorial on	156
Mutual Ministry Committee CA95.7.64: amendment of C13.04. (Mutual Ministry Committee)	645
CA95.7.65: Amendment of C13.04. (Mutual Ministry Committee)	647
proposed amendment of C13.04.	629, 637, 644, 645, 647
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. greetings from	576
National Youth Gathering video	285
New England Synod response to synodical memorial on calendar of commemorations	387
response to synodical memorials on future churchwide studies or emphases	417
response to synodical memorials on HIV/AIDS	76
response to synodical memorials on interim ministry	71
New Jersey Synod	

response to synodical memorial on
 expansion of Aetna roster 406, 407
 response to synodical memorials on
 urban ministry 594
 response to synodical memorials on HIV/AIDS 75
 response to synodical memorials on
 interim ministry 70
 Nominating Committee 36, 90
 CA95.6.54: elections to Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees 566
 CA95.7.60: elections to Church Council, churchwide boards, and committees 623
 membership of 36
 report of 90
 Nominations and Elections
 churchwide officers, election process for 12
 deadline for submission of nominations 12
 see also Elections
 Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 removal of a pastor 382
 Northeastern Iowa Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 synodical–churchwide relationship 390
 response to synodical memorials
 on urban ministry,
 proposed reconsideration of 637
 response to synodical memorials on
 social statements (human sexuality) 605
 Northeastern Minnesota Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 U.S. Army School of the Americas 144
 response to synodical memorials on
 interim ministry 66
 Northeastern Ohio Synod
 response to synodical memorials
 on future churchwide
 studies or emphases 417
 response to synodical memorials on
 interim ministry 70
 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
 response to synodical memorials on HIV/AIDS 78
 response to synodical memorials on
 interim ministry 71
 Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
 response to synodical memorial on
 ELCA representational principles 393
 response to synodical memorials on
 interim ministry 68
 Northwest Washington Synod

response to synodical memorial on
 voting privileges for retired, rostered laypersons 398
response to synodical memorial on
worship resources 409
Northwestern Ohio Synod
response to synodical memorial on
 insurance coverage for abortions 414
Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod
response to synodical memorials on
 extremist groups 140
response to synodical memorials on
 interim ministry 72
response to synodical memorial on
 ELCA representational principles 395

Office of the Secretary

associates in ministry, additions to
 roster of ELCA-certified, 1993-1994 521
associates in ministry, removals from
 roster of ELCA-certified, 1993-1994 522
congregations received, consolidated,
 disbanded, merged, or withdrawn 527
deaconesses, additions to roster of,
 1993-1994 527
deaconesses, removals from roster of,
 1993-1994 527
ordained ministers, additions to
 roster of, 1993-1994 494
ordained ministers, removals from
 roster of, 1993-1994 509
report of the secretary 488
statistics, 1989-1994 533
statistics, 1992 and 1993 compared 536, 546
statistics, 1993 and 1994 compared 537
statistics, congregational and personnel,
 1989-1994 533

Officers, ELCA Corporate

election process for 12

Ordained Ministers

additions to roster of, 1993-1994 494
removals from roster of, 1993-1994 509
statistics, congregational and personnel,
 1989-1994 534

Order of Business 38

CA95.1.2: approval of Order of Business 39

Ordination of Lutheran Women,
 25th Anniversary of the 96

Orthodox Church of America

introduction of ecumenical guests 579

Outreach

CA95.5.46: response to synodical
 memorial on foundation endowment
 for evangelism 413

see also Division for Outreach

Parliamentarian

introduction of 37

Peace and Justice Issues

memorial on U.S. Army School of the Americas 144

synodical memorials on Guatemala 147

Peace, Social Statement on 356

amendment of proposed 265

CA95.5.24: social statement on peace,
 adoption of 357, 358

deadline for submission of proposed
 amendments to 13

first presentation 113

“For Peace in God’s World,” text of 359

recommendation of Church Council 115

text of proposed document 114

Pension

see Board of Pensions;
 Special Needs Retirement Fund

Planning, Churchwide

“Inquiry” Process, Report on the 101, 138

Post High-School Youth

CA95.4.18: post-high school youth,
 outreach to 285

Lutheran Youth Organization,
 recommendation on 282

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

greetings from 448

Promise-Keepers 679

Proportionate Share

see Mission Support

Publishing House of the Evangelical
 Lutheran Church in America

board chair and acting president,
 introduction of 329

CA95.6.54: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees 566

CA95.7.60: elections to church council, churchwide boards, and committees 623

presentation of NRSV bibles 578

Quilt Project 428

Quorum

determination of 11

Quotas

see Representational Principles

Reference and Counsel Committee

membership of 36

Motion A: Africa Development Foundation/Fund 648

Motion B: U.S. Election Campaign

Finance Reform 652

Motion C: Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice 656, 675

Motion D: Use of Inclusive

Geographical Maps 662

Motions D-W, en bloc referral

to Church Council defeated 661

Motion E: Association of Lutherans of

Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage 662

Motion F: Study of

Human Sexuality 616, 665

Motion G: Study of Human Sexuality 671

Motion H: Study of Human Sexuality 675

Motion I: ELCA Lutheran Men in

Mission and Promise-Keepers 679

Motion J: Minutes of the Churchwide Assembly (unfinished business

referred to Church Council)

Motion K: Amendment of C13.04. 645

Motion L: Title of ELCA Bishop

(unfinished business

referred to Church Council)

Motion M: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches,

Sierra Pacific Synod 680

Motion N: Proposed New Bylaw 9.21.02.

on Ordination and Service of

Homosexual Persons (unfinished

business referred to Church Council)

Motion O: Vision for Mission Funding of

50 Additional Missionaries (unfinished

business referred to Church Council)

Motion P: Reduction in Size of Division Boards to Nine Members (unfinished

business referred to Church Council)

Motion Q: Inclusion of Implementing Resolutions in Future Social Statements (unfinished business referred to

Church Council)

Motion R: Equalized Pensions (unfinished business referred to Church Council)

Motion S: Acclamation of

Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom 690

Motion T: Acclamation of

Vice President Kathy J. Magnus 691

Motion U: Acclamation of

Secretary Lowell G. Almen 692

Motion V: Acclamation of Treasurer Richard L. McAuliffe	693
Motion W: A General Thanksgiving report of	693
(see also Committee of Reference and Counsel)	
Reformed Church in America greetings from	547
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice	656
CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, proposed reconsideration of	675
CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice	659
Removal of a Pastor response to synodical memorial on removal of a pastor	383
Representational Principles	269
CA95.4.14: Resolution on ELCA Representational Principles	275
CA95.5.35: response to synodical memorials on ELCA representational principles	397
Reproductive Choice CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, proposed reconsideration of	675
CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice	659
Retired Associates in Ministry CA95.5.36: response to synodical memorial on voting privileges for	398
Retirement Fund, Special Needs	482
CA95.6.53: offering for Special Needs Retirement Fund	484
Retirements acknowledgment of retiring synodical bishops	356
Rocky Mountain Synod synodical memorial on Habitat for Humanity covenant	250
Roll Exhibit A: Members of the Churchwide Assembly	697
Roman Catholic Church greetings from	558
Roster Language CA95.5.45: Response to synodical memorial on Roster Language	412

Rosters and Statistics	
associates in ministry, additions to	
roster of ELCA-certified, 1993-1994	521
associates in ministry, removals	
from roster of ELCA-certified,	
1993-1994	522
congregations received, consolidated,	
disbanded, merged, or withdrawn	527
deaconesses, additions to	
roster of, 1993-1994	527
deaconesses, removals from	
roster of, 1993-1994	527
ordained ministers, additions to	
roster of, 1993-1994	494
ordained ministers, removals from	
roster of, 1993-1994	509
report of the secretary	488
statistics, 1989-1994	533
statistics, 1992 and 1993 compared	536, 546
statistics, 1993 and 1994 compared	537
statistics, congregational and	
personnel, 1989-1994	533
Rules of Organization and Procedure	12
CA95.1.1: adoption of	
Rules of Organization and Procedure	14
Rural Concerns	
CA95.5.44: response to synodical	
memorial on family farms	411
Sacramental Practices Statement	
report on	449
Saint Paul Area Synod	
response to synodical memorial on	
equalized health-care expenses	402
response to synodical memorials on	
interim ministry	67
synodical memorials on women bishops	151
Schiotz, Mrs. Fredrik A. (Dagny)	
recognition of former bishops of	
ELCA predecessor churches	355
Seminaries	
see Study of Theological Education	573
Servus Dei Medal	
Aker, George Edwin,	
presentation to	294, 342
Chilstrom, Bishop Herbert W.,	
presentation to	91
Grumm, Christine Helen,	
presentation to	293

Sexuality
 see Human Sexuality

Sierra Pacific Synod
 CA95.7.74: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches 685-690
 response to synodical memorial on
 discipline 379, 381
 response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of 637
 response to synodical memorials on social statements (human sexuality) 600, 660
 Social Statements 614
 response to synodical memorials on
 social statements (human sexuality) 600, 660
 review of process for development of 614
 social statement on peace 113

South Dakota Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 family farms 410, 411
 response to synodical memorials
 on urban ministry,
 proposed reconsideration of 637
 response to synodical memorials on
 social statement (human sexuality) 603

Southeast Michigan Synod
 response to synodical memorial
 on the candidacy process 378, 379, 381

Southeastern Iowa Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 insurance coverage for abortions 413, 415

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 welcoming gay and lesbian people 452
 response to synodical memorials on HIV/AIDS 79

Southeastern Synod
 response to synodical memorial on
 calendar of commemorations 387

Southwestern Minnesota Synod
 response to synodical
 memorial on discipline 381

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod
 response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of 637
 response to synodical memorials on
 social statement (human sexuality) 606

Southwestern Washington Synod
 response to synodical
 memorials on interim ministry 65, 75

Special Needs Retirement Fund 482
 CA95.6.53: offering for Special
 Needs Retirement Fund 484

St. Francis and First United Lutheran

Churches, Sierra Pacific Synod 685
CA95.7.74: First United and St. Francis Lutheran Churches 690
Staff Planning Committee
membership of 37
Staffing of Churchwide Units
CA95.5.38: response to synodical
 memorial on budget and
 staffing of churchwide units 401
Stained Glass Window
presented to Feast of Victory
 Lutheran Church, Acme, Mich. 343
Statistics
see Rosters and Statistics
Studies
CA95.5.48: response to synodical
 memorials on future churchwide
 studies or emphases 426
Study of Human Sexuality 671
CA95.7.72: Motion G: Study of
 Human Sexuality 674
CA95.7.73: Motion H: Study of
 Human Sexuality 679
see also Human Sexuality
Study of Ministry
CA95.4.21: amendments to
 ELCA governing documents
 implementing the Study of Ministry 298
report on 321
Study of Theological Education
CA95.6.55: final report of the
 Study of Theological Education 569
final report of 568
report on 330
Synodical–Churchwide Relationships
CA95.5.34: response to synodical
 memorial on synodical–
 churchwide relationships 391

The Lutheran
CA95.6.56: election of editor of
 The Lutheran magazine 579
Theological Education, Study of 568, 573
report on 330
Tiede, The Rev. David L.
address by nominees for ELCA bishop 106
Treasurer
see ELCA Treasurer
Trexler, Rev. Edgar R.

CA95.6.56: election of editor of
 The Lutheran Magazine 579
 Triennial Churchwide Assemblies 466
 CA95.6.52: motion defeated—triennial
 churchwide assemblies 468
 recommendation of the Church Council 467
 U.S. Army School of the Americas
 synodical memorials on 144
 U.S. Election Campaign Finance Reform 652
 CA95.7.67: U.S. election campaign
 finance reform 655
 U.S. Government
 CA95.5.42: response to synodical
 memorial on Federal Disaster
 Damage Regulations 408
 U.S. Government, Part 1,
 U.S. Army School of the Americas
 Americans with Disabilities Act 281
 referral on social statement on peace (CA95.5.24) 359
 synodical memorials on 144
 United Church of Christ
 greetings from 557
 United Methodist Church
 introduction of ecumenical guests 579
 Upsala College
 recognition of 342
 Urban Initiative 580
 CA95.6.57: “Urban Initiative” received; and report of implementation requested 583
 text of report 583
 Urban Ministry
 CA95.6.58: response to synodical
 memorials on urban ministry 600
 response to synodical memorials on
 urban ministry 586, 637
 response to synodical memorials on
 urban ministry, reconsideration of 637

 Vice President
 see ELCA Vice President
 Video
 National Youth Gathering 285
 synodical memorial on
 multicultural welcoming video 156
 Violence against Women,
 Resolution on 475, 630
 CA95.7.62: violence against women 634
 Vision for Mission Fund
 CA95.5.46: response to synodical

memorial on foundation
 endowment for evangelism 413
 Voting Privileges for
 Retired Associates in Ministry
 CA95.5.36: response to synodical
 memorial on 398

 West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod
 response to memorial on proposed
 changes in the discipline process 384
 Western Iowa Synod
 response to synodical memorial
 on synodically authorized
 worshiping communities 388
 response to synodical memorial on
 energy audits 376
 Western North Dakota Synod
 response to synodical memorials on urban ministry, proposed reconsideration of 637
 response to synodical memorials on
 social statement (human sexuality) 601
 Window, Stained Glass
 presented to Feast of Victory Lutheran Church, Acme, Mich. 343
 Women
 CA95.7.62: violence against women 634
 CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
 Coalition for Reproductive Choice,
 proposed reconsideration of 675
 CA95.7.68: not adopted—Religious
 Coalition for Reproductive Choice 659
 Motion C: Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice 656
 resolution on violence against 475, 630
 Women Bishops
 synodical memorials on women bishops 151
 CA95.3.8: women as advisory members
 of Conference of Bishops declined 156
 Women of the
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 greetings from 481
 Women, 25th Anniversary of the
 Ordination of Lutheran 96
 statistics, congregational and
 personnel, 1989-1994 534
 World Council of Churches 359, 575
 greetings from 575
 referral on social statement on
 peace (CA95.5.24) 359
 World Hunger Appeal
 presentation on 438

referral on social statement on
peace (CA95.5.24) 358

World Hunger Program
see World Hunger Appeal

Worship Committee,
1995 Churchwide Assembly
membership of 37

Worship Concerns
CA95.5.34: response to synodical
memorial on calendar
of commemorations 388

sacramental practices statement,
report on 449

Worship Resources
CA95.5.43: response to synodical
memorial on worship resources 409

Worshiping Communities
CA95.5.35: response to synodical
memorial on Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities 390

Youth
CA95.4.18: outreach to post-high
school youth 285

Lutheran Youth Organization,
greetings from 280, 281

Lutheran Youth Organization,
presentation by 465

Lutheran Youth Organization
recommendation on post
high-school youth 282