

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN AMERICA**

Church Council

MINUTES

April 9-11, 2010

**Prepared by the
Office of the Secretary**

LIST OF ACTIONS

CC10.04.01	Adoption of the agenda	4
CC10.04.02	Approval of Church Council and Executive Committee meeting minutes	5
CC10.04.03	Re-election of Pr. Larson as executive director of the Church in Society unit	17
CC10.04.04	Approval of revised spending authorizations for fiscal year 2010	21
CC10.04.05	Acknowledgment of 2010 mission-support plans	23
CC10.04.06	Acknowledgment of 2011 mission-support plans	25
CC10.04.07	Election of Mr. Bauder to the Board of Trustees of the Endowment Fund of the ELCA	31
CC10.04.08	Approval of revisions to “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline”	33
CC10.04.09	Adoption of revisions to “Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers”	39
CC10.04.10	Adoption of revisions to “Vision and Expectations: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers”	51
CC10.04.11	Adoption of revisions to the Candidacy Manual	66
CC10.04.12	Approval of revisions to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program	74
CC10.04.13	Authorization for the rite of “Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers”	81
CC10.04.14	Receipt of the report on learning and development opportunities for ELCA churchwide staff	82
CC10.04.15	Affirmation of the current time line for development of a social statement on genetics	83
CC10.04.16	Receipt of the report in response to Motion F of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly	90
CC10.04.17	Receipt of the response to the Churchwide Assembly motion related to wills and living trusts	93
CC10.04.18	Election of Mr. Hahn to the Board of Trustees of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers	94
CC10.04.19	Designation of Pittsburgh as the site for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly	94
CC10.04.20	Approval of <i>en bloc</i> items	95
CC10.04.21	Responses to synodical resolutions and churchwide assembly actions	95
CC10.04.21a	Ministry Policies	96
CC10.04.21b	Benefits for Domestic Partners	97
CC10.04.21c	Northeastern Iowa Synod Council rescinding two resolutions	100
CC10.04.21d	Windstorm Insurance Crisis	102
CC10.04.22	Responses to referrals from the Church Council to churchwide units in response to actions of the Churchwide Assembly	102
CC10.04.22a	Lutheran Disaster Response	109
CC10.04.22b	Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness	114
CC10.04.23	Election of Mr. Timmer to the ELCA Audit Committee	115
CC10.04.24	Setting the Summer WebEx meeting of the Church Council	115
CC10.04.25	Authorization for <i>The Lutheran</i> magazine appeal to rostered leaders	116
CC10.04.26	Approval of amendments to the bylaws of the Board of Pensions	116
CC10.04.27	Acknowledgment of the Parish Nurse Association as an independent Lutheran organization	118
CC10.04.28	Approval of the constitution and bylaws of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg	119
CC10.04.29	Elections to the boards of certain social ministry organizations	121
CC10.04.30	Elections to the boards of certain seminaries	122

TOPICAL INDEX

2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly	
Response to Motion F	87
2010 Income Estimate and Expenditure Authorization	21
2010 Synod Mission-Support Plans	
Revisions to	22
2011 Synod Mission-Support Plans	24
2013 Churchwide Assembly	
Site for the	94

A

<i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee	
Introduction to process	11
Work of the	14
Adjournment	124
Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness	113
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	113
Agenda	
Adoption of	4
Alaska Synod (1A)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Allegheny Synod (8C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Archives	68
Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Augsburg Fortress, Publishers	
Elections	91, 94
Update from	75, 76

B

Bible Study	
Pr. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl	2, 27
Board of Pensions	
Approval of Restated Bylaws	116
Benefits for Domestic Partners	96
Revisions to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program	73
Bound Conscience	
Response to Motion F of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly	87

C

Candidacy	
Primer on	11
Candidacy Manual	
Consideration of Revisions to	63
Caribbean Synod (9F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Central States Synod (4B)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL
April 9–11, 2010

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 2

Central/Southern Illinois Synod (5C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Church Council Summer WebEx Meeting	
Approval of	115
Church in Society	
Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness	113
Election of Executive Director	17
Lutheran Disaster Response	103
Social Statement Development	82
Update on Haiti Disaster Response	86
Churchwide Assembly Referrals Directed to Church Council	
Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness	113
Lutheran Disaster Response	103
Conference of Bishops	
Recommendation on Rite of Reception	76
Report of the	68
Converted to Mission	
Mini-retreat	86
D	
Debriefing and Evaluation	123
“Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline”	
Consideration of Revisions to	32
Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Development Services	
Elections	31
Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society	72
Wills and Living Trusts	91
Dwelling in the Word	
Ms. Judith Barlow-Roberts	74
Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth	17
Mr. John R. Emery	31
Bp. Murray D. Finck	87
Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger	10
Ms. Myrna J. Sheie	122
E	
East-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5I)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Ecumenical Journey	94

ELCIC National Bishop	
Greeting from the	9
Elections	91
Augsburg Fortress Board of Directors	91
Boards of Certain Seminaries	121
Boards of Certain Social Ministry Organizations	121
Endowment Fund, Development Services, Foundation	31
Report on	93
<i>En Bloc</i> Approval of Certain Items	95
Acknowledgment of Independent Lutheran Organizations	118
Approval of a Church Council Summer WebEx Meeting	115
Approval of a Request from The Lutheran Magazine	115
Approval of Amendments to Seminary Governing Documents	119
Approval of Restated Bylaws of the Board of Pensions	116
Election of Audit Committee Member	114
Elections to Boards of Certain Seminaries	121
Elections to Boards of Certain Social Ministry Organizations	121
Responses to Churchwide Assembly Referrals Directed to Church Co	102
Synodical Resolutions Directed to the Church Council	95
Endowment Fund	
Elections	31
Evaluation and Debriefing	123
Executive for Administration	
Report of the	27
Executive Session	16
F	
Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Foundation	
Elections	31
Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society	72
Wills and Living Trusts	91
G	
Genetics	
Update on Draft Social Statement on	85
Global Mission	
Update on Haiti Disaster Response	86
Grand Canyon Synod (2D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Greeting	
ELCIC National Bishop	9

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 4

H

Human Resources	
Learning and Development Opportunities for Churchwide Staff	81
Haiti Disaster Response	
Update on	86

I

Independent Lutheran Organizations	
Parish Nurse Association	118
Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25

J

Joys and Concerns	31, 122
-------------------	---------

K

Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society	
Consideration of	91
Introduction to	72

L

La Crosse Area Synod (5L)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Learning and Development Opportunities for Churchwide Staff	81
Living into the Future Together (LIFT)	
Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA	28
Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Lutheran Disaster Response	106
Lutheran Disaster Response	
Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D)	106
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)	103
Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A)	104
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)	103
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)	105
System Vision	110
Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E)	107
West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)	107
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service	
Elections	121
Lutheran Medical Center	
Elections	121
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago	
Elections	122
Lutheran Services in America	
Elections	121

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg	
Amendments to Seminary Governing Documents	119
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia	
Elections	122
Lutheran World Federation	
Update from the North American Desk	83

M

Metropolitan New York Synod (7C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Mini-Retreat	
Update	86
Ministry Policies	
Consideration of Revisions to	32
Overview of Revisions to	12
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness	113
Minutes	
Approval of	4
Mission Support	
2011 Synod Plans	24
Primer on	19
Revisions to 2010 Synod Plans	22
Montana Synod (1F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Motion E: Wills and Living Trusts	
Consideration of Resolution on	31, 91
Motion F	
Response to Motion F of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly	87

N

Nebraska Synod (4A)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
New England Synod (7B)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
New Jersey Synod (7A)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
North/West Lower Michigan Synod (6B)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL
April 9–11, 2010**

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 6

Northeastern Minnesota Synod (3E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Northeastern Ohio Synod (6E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Lutheran Disaster Response	103
Northern Great Lakes Synod (5G)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Northern Illinois Synod (5B)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Northwest Washington Synod (1B)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Northwestern Ohio Synod (6D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Lutheran Disaster Response	104
O	
Office of the Presiding Bishop	
Rite of Reception	76
Office of the Secretary	
Candidacy Manual	66
“Vision and Expectations”	39, 51
Windstorm Insurance Crisis	102
Office of the Treasurer	
Windstorm Insurance Crisis	102
Oregon Synod (1E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
P	
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary	
Elections	122
Pacifica Synod (2C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Pension and Other Benefits Program	
Revisions to the ELCA Board of Pensions	73

Planning and Evaluation Committee	
Report of the	30
Presiding Bishop	
Report of the	5
Primer on Candidacy	11
Primer on Mission Support	19
Process Observation	67, 123
Introduction to	25
 R	
Racial Justice Working Group	
Process Observation	25, 67, 85, 123
Rite for Reception onto the Roster of Ordained Ministers	76
Rocky Mountain Synod (2E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
 S	
Saint Paul Area Synod (3H)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Secretary	
Report of the	68
Seminaries	
Elections to Boards	121
Seminary Governing Documents	
Approval of Amendments to	119
Sierra Pacific Synod (2A)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Slovak Zion Synod (7G)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Social Ministry Organizations	
Elections to Boards of	121
Social Statement Development	82
Social Statement on Genetics	
Update on Draft	85
South Carolina Synod (9C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
South Dakota Synod (3C)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Southeastern Minnesota Synod (3I)	
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25

Topical Index for Minutes, Page 8

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Lutheran Disaster Response	103
Southeastern Synod (9D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Southern Ohio Synod (6F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Lutheran Disaster Response	105
Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Summer WebEx Church Council Meeting	
Approval of	115
Synodical Resolutions Directed to the Church Council	
Benefits for Domestic Partners	96
Ministry Policies	96
Northeastern Iowa Synod Council	98
Windstorm Insurance Crisis	100

T

Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
The ELCA: Converted to Mission	
Mini-retreat	86
<i>The Lutheran Magazine</i>	
Approval of a Request from	115
Treasurer	
Report of the	17
Synod Mission-Support Plans	22

U

Unfinished Agenda Items	122
Consideration of	122
Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Lutheran Disaster Response	107
Upstate New York Synod (7D)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23

V

Vice President	
Report of the	10

Virginia Synod (9A)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
“Vision and Expectations” (Clergy Roster)	
Consideration of Revisions to	37
“Vision and Expectations” (Lay Rosters)	
Consideration of Revisions to	50
Vocation and Education	
Acknowledgment of Independent Lutheran Organizations	118
Candidacy Manual	66
“Vision and Expectations”	39, 51
W	
West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
Lutheran Disaster Response	107
Western Iowa Synod (5E)	
2010 Mission-Support Plans	23
2011 Mission-Support Plans	25
Wills and Living Trusts	
Consideration of Resolution on	91

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES
April 9-11, 2010
Lutheran Center
Chicago, Illinois**

The sixty-fourth meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was convened in the Council Room of the Lutheran Center at Chicago, Illinois. On Thursday, April 8, 2010, the *ad hoc* committee met at 5:00 P.M. On Friday morning, April 9, 2010, the Executive Committee met, followed by a session of the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). After lunch, the Budget and Finance, Legal and Constitutional Review, Planning and Evaluation, and Program and Services Committees conducted separate meetings. The Church Council gathered Friday at 5:30 P.M. for a service of Holy Communion in the Lutheran Center Chapel. The Rev. Felipe Lozada-Montañez, bishop of the Caribbean Synod, served as presiding minister; the Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede preached; Ms. Susan W. McArver was the assisting minister; and Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy served as lector. The Board Development Committee met Saturday, April 10, 2010, prior to Morning Prayer.

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

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

Voting Members

Officers:

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

Church Council:

Pr. David P. Anderson
Ms. Judith E. Barlow-Roberts
Mr. Baron Blanchard
Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke
Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson
Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth
Pr. Rachel L. Connelly
Mr. John R. Emery
Pr. Amsalu T. Geleta
Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy
Mr. Mark S. Helmke
Ms. Louise A. Hemstead
Mr. William B. Horne II
Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger
Mr. Mark E. Johnson
Pr. Susan Langhauser
Pr. Steven P. Loy

Pr. Heather S. Lubold
Ms. Susan W. McArver
Pr. Raymond A. Miller
Mr. John S. Munday
Mr. Mark W. Myers
Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus
Pr. J. Pablo Obregon
Mr. Ivan A. Perez
Ms. Lynette M. Reitz
Ms. Sandra Schlesinger
Pr. Michael J. Schmidt
Mr. Blaire P. Smith
Pr. Jeffrey “Jeff” B. Sorenson
Pr. Kathryn A. Tiede
Mr. David Truland
Pr. Philip R. Wold

Representatives of the Conference of Bishops

Bp. Allan C. Bjornberg
Bp. Michael L. Burk
Bp. Murray D. Finck
Bp. Callon W. Holloway Jr. (*excused*)

Bp. Ralph E. Jones
Bp. Gerald L. Mansholt
Bp. Margaret G. Payne
Bp. Harold L. Usgaard

Bp. Martin D. Wells

Bp. Herman R. Yoos III (*excused*)
Represented by Bp. Felipe Lozada-Montañez

Advisory Members

Youth:

Ms. Arielle Mastellar (*excused*)

Mr. Kyle Teague (*excused*)

Advisors:

Pr. Chi Shih Chen, president, Asian and Pacific Islander Association

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

Represented by Ms. Sylvia Danielson, Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA

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

Mr. Kent L. Henning, colleges and universities (*excused*)

Pr. David J. Keller, Lutheran Services in America

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

Ms. Katherine Long, president, European American Association (*excused*)

Represented by Ms. Catherine Crimi, European American Association

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

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

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

Pr. Mark R. Ramseth, ELCA seminaries

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

Mr. Alfred Sagar, chair, Multicultural Ministries program committee

Mr. Kai S. Swanson, chair, Vocation and Education program committee (*excused*)

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

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

Ms. Beth Wrenn, president, Women of the ELCA

Resource Persons

Office of the Presiding Bishop:

Pr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration

Pr. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative and the HIV and AIDS strategy

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

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

Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, executive for governance and institutional relations

Section Executives and Staff:

Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, executive for research and evaluation

Pr. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations

Pr. Darrell D. Morton, assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries (*excused*)

Pr. A. Craig Settlage, director for mission support

Ms. Else B. Thompson, executive for human resources

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

Office of the Secretary:

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

Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel

Mr. Frank F. Imhoff, director for official documentation

Ms. Mary Beth Nowak, executive assistant to the secretary

Mr. David A. Ullrich, associate general counsel

Office of the Treasurer:

Section Executives and Staff:

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

Program Unit Executives:

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

Service Unit Executives:

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

Committee on Appeals:

Pr. A. Donald Main, chair

Press:

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

Ecumenical Guests:

Bp. Susan C. Johnson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
Ms. Lelanda Lee, The Episcopal Church
Pr. Mary Ann Neevel, United Church of Christ (*excused*)
Pr. Teresita C. Valeriano, North American representative, Lutheran World Federation
Moravian Church in America [position vacant]
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [position vacant]
Reformed Church in America [position vacant]
The United Methodist Church [position vacant]

**Saturday, April 10, 2010
Plenary Session I**

The first plenary session of the sixty-fourth meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was called to order by Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and chair of the Church Council, at 8:21 A.M. The session began with Morning Prayer, which was led by Mr. Mark S. Helmke.

Vice President Peña indicated that several staff members and advisors were excused, and he welcomed substitute members who were present. The chair thanked those who had led worship and morning prayer prior to the council meeting. He introduced visitors to the meeting, including those representing Lutheran Coalition for Renewal (CORE), Lutherans Concerned/North America, and Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries.

The vice president pointed out that council members would be using different microphones during this meeting than in previous meetings, and Mr. Steve Caputo gave brief instructions on how to use the microphones to address the chair.

Vice President Peña outlined the locations of revised documents, exhibits, and schedules that would be used during the meeting. He discussed the periods of time on the agenda for “Church Council Joys and Concerns,” and he presented those members and advisors who would serve as the “Prayer Team” during the meeting.

The chair and Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, reminded members of several deadlines during the meeting.

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

Background:

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

Church Council Action:

Vice President Peña called attention to the first item on the agenda, the adoption of the Agenda.

Moved;

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

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

VOTED:

CC10.04.01 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.

The chair declared the motion adopted, and he introduced the next agenda item.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES
(Agenda I.H.)**

Background:

The minutes of the November 13–15, 2009, meeting of the Church Council had been distributed to council members electronically on NetCommunity.

The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings on November 12–14, 2009, and January 11, 2010, were distributed electronically to members.

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

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña noted that the minutes of the council's Executive Committee meeting of February 23, 2010, were not distributed and actions of that meeting would be ratified later.

Moved;

Seconded: To approve the minutes of the November 13–15, 2009, meeting of the Church Council; and
To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the November 12–14, 2009, and January 11, 2010, meetings.

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

VOTED:

**CC10.04.02 To approve the minutes of the November 13–15, 2009, meeting of the Church Council; and
To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the November 12–14, 2009, and January 11, 2010, meetings.**

Vice President Peña declared the motion approved.

Secretary Swartling thanked the Rev. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson for offering a correction that had been incorporated into the minutes. The secretary encouraged members to read the minutes and submit any corrections.

The vice president called on the presiding bishop for his report.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

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

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, read 1 Peter 1:3 and reported:

"The question is being asked often these days: Who are we as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America? The answer is clear: We are a people of new birth, of living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

"Where is the Word of God in the life and witness of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America? It's right where Scripture points us. The Word of God is the Word made flesh in Jesus the Christ, crucified and risen savior of the world.

"Where is the Word of God in the life of this church? It's in the living voice of the Gospel. It's in the proclamation 'Christ is risen,' as we so powerfully heard it yesterday from Pastor Kathryn Tiede. It's in the glorious announcement 'Christ is risen; Christ is risen indeed,' as it rang out from over 10,000 pulpits last Sunday.

"It is in the presence of the risen Christ, as Christ came to thousands, hundreds of thousands of worshipers as they received Christ in faith through the means of grace.

"Oh, yes, sisters and brothers, the Word of God is alive in this church because Christ is risen, and, through that living Word of God that is both law and gospel, we encounter the truth about ourselves—that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. But we also encounter the liberating Word of God that on account of Christ we are forgiven, and we are reconciled not only to God but to one another, and this living Word of God frees us. It frees us for lives of faith. It sets us free to proclaim the risen Christ. It sets us free to serve our neighbor. It sets us free to strive for justice and peace. It sets us free to be about the ministry of reconciliation.

“The Word of God is alive in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America because we are people of faith, and, as Luther said, ‘Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that the believer would stake his [or her] life on it a thousand times.’ Yes, we are a people living by faith.

“God brings this life of confident trust into being through our ears. Think of your ears as the birth canal of faith, for through God’s Word that comes through your ears or sometimes through one’s hands, as one sees those hands, God is speaking to you God’s Word of promised salvation, proclaimed by the prophets and apostles of old. God is speaking to you a Word of forgiveness embodied in Jesus Christ.

“Let us be clear. The Scriptures have their authority among us because they author. They serve God’s authoring of this life of faith in us. This is what it means to be a Book of Faith church—not that our faith is finally in a book, but we are a church in which the Scriptures, as Luther said, preach and inculcate the life of Jesus Christ in us. In and by faith, Jesus Christ crucified and risen becomes our new birth—becomes the biography, the narrative, the script, the life story—that we are living out together in confident joy and hope and the freedom of the Gospel.

“Let it be clear that, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we join Lutherans all over the world who affirm that the central message of Scripture is the good news of God’s love and saving work in Jesus Christ and that the Scriptures are properly used in proclaiming this message of faith. Therein lies our unity.

“Yesterday, with people all over the world, we remembered the life, witness, and martyrdom of German theologian and pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who wrote in *Life Together*: ‘We belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ.’ ‘What does this mean?’ Bonhoeffer asked. It means first that a Christian needs others because of Jesus Christ; it means second that a Christian comes to others only through Jesus Christ; and it means third that, in Jesus Christ, we have been chosen from eternity, accepted in time, and united for eternity.

“Therefore, sisters and brothers, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we define ourselves first on the basis of our relatedness in Christ rather than on what sets us apart and who we are against. It’s too easy in a polarized and contentious culture to create identity on the basis of what and whom one opposes rather than on the basis of whom we welcome and to whom we belong.

“In the Nicene Creed we boldly confess we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. The ELCA policy statement on ecumenism is absolutely clear, adopted in that early Churchwide Assembly in 1991, saying, ‘The unity of the church, as it is proclaimed in the Scriptures, is a gift and goal of God in Christ Jesus. Ecumenism,’ we say, ‘is the joyous experience of the unity of Christ’s people and the serious task of expressing that unity visibly and structurally to advance the proclamation of the Gospel for the blessing of humankind.’

“It’s because of that commitment, and it’s because we, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, define ourselves first on the basis of our relatedness in Christ that we undertook an ecumenical journey in February. Deborah Chenoweth, Susan Langhauser, Steve Loy—members of the council—were invaluable participants, and we hope to find time to share some of their reflections tomorrow.

“From His Grace Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, and His All Holiness Bartholomew, the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church, and His Holiness Pope Benedict—we heard from each of them heartfelt words of gratitude for our deepening relationships, and we heard clear public words of commitment to our ongoing dialogues.

“In London, Istanbul, Rome, and Geneva, we had very honest and open conversations about the 2009 Churchwide Assembly actions on human sexuality. Our differences were not minimized, but neither did they become occasions for diminishing our mutual commitment to making visible the unity that is in Christ, nor did they become occasions for distancing ourselves from one another, rather for renewing our commitment to go deeper into understanding each other.

“Because we of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America define ourselves first on the basis of our relatedness in Christ, therefore, when one part of the body of Christ suffers, we all suffer together. This week I have sent a personal letter to Pope Benedict expressing our commitment to pray for him, to pray for the Catholic Church, to pray for all victims of sexual abuse. I said, ‘Together we beseech the Lord to pour out the Spirit of healing and peace upon those who suffer the affects of abuse.’ Friends, the scourge of sexual abuse by clergy must not be tolerated by any one or any church. And we must give primary concern to those who have suffered abuse and all of those concentric circles of suffering which emanate from such abuse and finally encircle all of us.

“Because, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we define ourselves first on the basis of our relatedness in Christ through faith, every time a congregation votes to leave this church, or a leader resigns from our roster, we are

diminished. Our witness to the gift of unity in Christ within our diversity is diminished. Our capacity to be engaged in God's mission for the sake of the Gospel and the life of the world is diminished. And I believe such actions must cause all of us—those leaving and those of us remaining—to ask: 'Is this what it means to be faithful stewards of God's ministry and message of reconciliation through Christ Jesus our Lord?'

"And yet when individuals or congregations leave the ELCA, let us remember that we are still brothers and sisters through Christ's death and resurrection. And therefore, let us pledge to one another to heed Luther's words in the meaning of the eighth commandment: come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.

"Because Christ is risen, we, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, are committed to planting the church, not uprooting it. That's what it means to be an Easter people, living in the power and promise of Christ's resurrection. We are sent in the power of the Holy Spirit with the promise of the Gospel to plant the church, and plant the church we have been doing, and plant the church we will continue to do.

"Forty-one new starts have already been approved for 2010 by the review table made up of EOCM (Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission) staff, synod bishops, MIF (Mission Investment Fund) staff and directors for evangelical mission.

"And planting the church these days takes evangelical imagination. There's no one way to do it any longer, and we're not doing it one way. Congregations are planting congregations. Synodically authorized ministries are becoming birthed into congregations. We have entrepreneurial leaders out there planting the church. We have immigrant people gathering in cells for prayer, and those cells are growing through prayer and encountering the Word into worshipping communities.

"Yes, the ELCA is committed to planting the church, not uprooting it. And that means that we take very seriously that all the baptized are evangelists, proclaiming the good news of God in Christ through word and deed. Everyday evangelists will be the story you hear through this year's Synod Assembly video.

"As the ELCA, we are not uprooting the church, but congregations are re-rooting the church in their communities. Directors for evangelical mission are now convening mission tables in every synod. Congregational lay and rostered leaders are coming together to renew their skills and their commitment to listening—listening to God, listening to the neighbors around their church, listening to the gifts the Spirit has given the members of the church, listening and responding to the Spirit's call and command to be congregations engaged in evangelical mission, re-rooting in communities, and growing in faith practices.

"This is what it means to be an Easter people—a people of new birth, a people of living hope, planting and living, evangelical, faithful, inclusive church. And I believe that's what led the majority of members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to recommend the adoption of ministry policy changes that we will finalize this weekend.

"Fellow ELCA leaders and members, let our priorities, let our energies and our resources in coming months be toward the furthering of God's mission for the life of the world and not for the preservation of our denomination. Being ambassadors, proclaiming the risen Christ, participating in God's mission of restoring life and community is the work to which God calls us, and it is the work we are doing with our hands.

"ELCA members, in a depressed economy, with an uncertain future, gave over \$9 million so that we can join hands with the people of Haiti, restoring community, preserving their rich culture, and building a new, viable, sustainable Haitian economy. And because of ELCA stewardship of mission-support dollars, we can provide the organizational infrastructure so that every one of those dollars given for Haiti relief goes to relief and development.

"It is with global partners that we are engaged in God's mission. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rwanda was born in exile during the Rwandan genocide. It is now one of the fastest growing Lutheran churches in the world, and, because of the ELCA's commitment of accompaniment and because of your gifts channeled through church-to-church grants, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, through that accompaniment and grants, now supports schools. And we together support that church's outreach ministry, and an ELCA missionary and youth engaged in the peace movement.

"For a moment, I want you to image, in your head, a globe—better yet, image the ELCA emblem of the globe with the cross—and we're going to do a quick geography lesson here. Because of accompaniment, an ELCA global mission grant was sent to the Basel Christian Church in Malaysia. Are you there in your mental map? Why? So the Basel

Christian Church in Malaysia could do mission work in northern Madagascar. Did you just move with me? Among whom? Not the Malagasy people but the growing Chinese community in northern Madagascar.

“That’s what it means to be engaged in God’s mission *with* a global church. It is for the purpose of God’s mission, proclaiming the Gospel, and restoring community that we make grants. It’s not to coerce companion churches into some kind of loyalty to us.

“It is out of our shared commitment that mission means proclaiming to the whole world the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. Mission means joining with others, responding to the suffering of our neighbors. Mission means building sustainable communities and restoring communities after natural disasters. Mission means joining hands so that no child in the world will need to be born HIV-positive and so that by 2015 in Africa malaria will be contained.

“In March, I joined 40 high-level religious leaders from all over the world. We gathered for two days in the Netherlands with representatives of government, the Global Fund, and networks of people living with HIV.

“Think about what I said. In a world so defined by religious extremists and the divisions between religious communities, we came together as 40 high-level religious leaders—Christian, Muslim, Jew, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Bahá’í—coming together to publicly commit ourselves and our communities to end the discrimination and stigmatization of people living with HIV and AIDS—a discrimination and stigmatization that so often is marked by behaviors in our own religious communities.

“And we came together to publicly commit to work for holistic prevention and universal access to treatment and care and support. We publicly called for universal respect for the human rights for all people living with HIV and at risk of HIV infection. And, surprising to me, at the end of those two days, we came forward individually and signed a public pledge of commitment that every 18 months we would check in with one another about how we are doing, holding each other accountable for those commitments.

“Dr. Christoph Benn, a name I hope you get to know, began his comments to us, ‘As I am a Lutheran Christian’—a physician, he served a hospital in Tanzania for many years and now is one of the highest leaders of the Global Fund, which on behalf of governments and others distributes billions, billions of dollars all over the world in response to HIV, AIDS, malaria, and TB. And do you know what Dr. Benn said to those gathering of 40 high-level religious leaders? He said, ‘If you want an example of how to do this, look at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. They understand what it means to be a church committed to both HIV and AIDS eradication and to malaria. They understand what it means to walk along side of companion churches in Africa, letting them take the lead in the response. And they know what it means to partner with governments and those living with HIV and AIDS and malaria and with ecumenical advocacy in alliance. Friends, this is how a global leader sees you and us.

“Mission means working tirelessly for a lasting and just peace in places of conflict.

“Earlier this week, I joined 60 Christian leaders with President Obama in the White House, for his Easter breakfast. Out of that small group there were three ELCA leaders—Jill Schumann, president and CEO of Lutheran Services in America, the Rev. David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, and myself. President Obama began his comments by saying, ‘In this room, I have recently gathered Muslims for the breaking of the fast. I have gathered Jews for the celebration of the Seder and the Passover. And this morning I say to you, welcome, sisters and brothers in Christ.’ And then he said, ‘We glory in the promise of redemption, in the resurrection. As Christians, we believe that redemption can be delivered by faith in Jesus Christ. Redemption,’ he said, ‘makes life, however fleeting here on earth, resound with eternal hope.’

“And in my brief comments and conversation with President Obama, I assured him of our commitment and prayers and challenged him to keep on working for a just and lasting peace between Israel and Palestine. With 23 other Christian leaders, I signed a letter to President Obama supporting his efforts to halt settlement construction in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Palestinian territories.

“We’ve communicated recently to Dr. Jill Biden our appreciation for her recent visit to Augusta Victoria Hospital. And we celebrate a very significant grant from USAID to Augusta Victoria, the Lutheran hospital on the Mount of Olives, so that they can purchase critical cancer screening equipment.

“As the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are defined by our confession of faith and by our commitment to be engaged in God’s mission for the life of the world and for the restoring of community.

“Let us, as the ELCA, descendants of a once immigrant people and of those who were slaves, become a church with and for the new immigrants in our community and a church resolved in our commitment to confront all systems of power and privilege in the church and in the world. Twenty-three of our 41 new starts are among immigrant populations. Lay African immigrants are already initiating six of those 41 new starts.

“And being an immigrant church for and with immigrant people means we will be a church advocating for just, fair immigration reform. At the president’s breakfast, I was seated next to Homeland Security Secretary [Janet] Napolitano. I was able to say to her, because she oversees FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency], I said, ‘Secretary, please know, we as Lutherans are going to be there for the long haul, after natural disasters, until communities are completely rebuilt and restored.’ And then we spoke of the need for fair and just immigration reform.

“In a letter circulated by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and signed by many of our bishops, we advocated for such comprehensive reform that would bring millions of undocumented immigrants out of the shadows of fear and provide a path for citizenship, because true reform must protect family unity. It must ensure just and equitable treatment of all people in this culture.

“Friends, by God’s great mercy, God has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It’s that promise that ELCA military chaplains carry with them into battle in Iraq and Afghanistan and to the bed sides of wounded warriors.

“It’s to proclaim that good news of Jesus Christ risen from the dead that our eight ELCA seminaries are preparing evangelical leaders for a missional church.

“It’s the new birth, the living hope in Christ that’s going to be shared with little campers who are going to go on weekends, terrified of leaving Mom and Dad, at outdoor ministry sites all over this church this summer. And in August, college and university students, communicators, campus ministry staff, and chaplains are going to gather here in Chicago under the theme ‘Follow Me: Sharing the Gospel in a 2.0 World.’

“Professor Tim Wengert, speaking recently to the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force on the topic ‘The ELCA: Serving the Gospel for Tomorrow,’ began, ‘As the ELCA, we always need to remember our remarkable strengths—social ministry and advocacy unparalleled among our own predecessors, an ecumenical spirit equal to no other church in the United States and probably the world, a system of seminaries and candidacy that’s the envy of American churches, strong connections to a worldwide communion in the Lutheran World Federation—and perhaps our greatest strength is our faithful, confessional commitment, echoed in our constitution, underscored in seminary training, and supported by the continued widespread use of Luther’s Small Catechism. Then, he said, whatever changes we may embark upon, they will doubtless not undermine our heritage but rather strengthen it. We are the evangelical Lutheran church in America, perhaps, he said, the only one.

“I am often asked these days, ‘Bishop Hanson, how are you feeling about the ELCA’s future?’ My response to them, as I hope you have heard it in my response to you, is: I am feeling confident hope. How could it be otherwise? Because, by God’s great mercy, God has given us a new birth, a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Thanks be to God. Amen.”

The council responded with applause.

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

GREETING FROM THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA NATIONAL BISHOP (Agenda VI.B.)

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson, national bishop of the ELCIC, reported that the ELCIC’s human sexuality task force is working toward a social statement for that church’s assembly to consider in 2011, and the first draft will become available on April 15, 2010. She invited the council’s prayers for that process.

Bp. Johnson said the ELCIC had planned to bring recommendations regarding “structural renewal” to its 2011 assembly, but some of the recommendations include constitutional changes that require several readings. The process will be slower than planned, but the ELCIC is working to reshape its size, governance, and structure to best be “a church in mission for others.”

Bp. Johnson noted that the ELCIC is in full communion with one church—the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC). She added that the ELCIC is in conversation with the ACC about moving the ELCIC offices from Winnipeg into the same building that houses the ACC offices in Ottawa.

“Covenant People in Mission for Others” will be the theme of the ELCIC’s National Assembly in 2011, Bp. Johnson announced. That assembly will explore its role as a Canadian church and develop relationships with aboriginal brothers and sisters.

Bp. Johnson stated that she has noticed a “slow drift” in the past 50 years toward what she called “Christianity lite.” Seduced by a consumer culture and a variety of competing interests, it is becoming more and more difficult to call church members into discipleship. In the next few weeks, the ELCIC will move into a call for spiritual renewal: regular attendance in worship, Bible reading and study, service in community, stewardship and tithing, and a commitment to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Bp. Johnson cited St. Augustine: “Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are Anger and Courage—Anger that things are the way they are and Courage to make them the way they ought to be.” The ELCA and ELCIC are experiencing much anger and much courage, she noted, but she expressed a concern that some of the anger is not rooted in hope. She prayed that the two churches “proclaim hope, and use anger and courage appropriately to further the Gospel.”

Vice President Peña thanked Bp. Johnson for her greeting, and the council added its applause.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger to reflect on “Dwelling in the Word.”

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

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

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

Vice President Peña read John 20:11–18 and recalled several film adaptations of Easter and other biblical stories. Easter is a reminder of why the Church exists, he said. Council members are called to care for the entire church, putting the good of all ahead of personal opinions and feelings. They are called to share God’s love and grace with those in need and to spread the good news of Easter, he added. Then he led the council in prayer.

Vice President Peña drew attention to his written report, especially the news that his wife Diane and he are expecting a grandson.

The Conference of Bishops meeting in March 2010 was an example for the whole church in how gifted leaders who may disagree can still converse calmly and wisely, the chair reported.

Vice President Peña said he had asked the bishops to invite Church Council members to their Synod Assemblies, and he encouraged the council members to attend. He requested that the bishop or the churchwide representative introduce the council members to the assembly and involve them in some way.

A primer on mission support later in the council meeting will better equip the council members in understanding the importance of mission support in the relationships among this church’s three expressions, he said. As a member of this church’s board of directors, council members should be willing and able to discuss mission support at Synod Assemblies.

Vice President Peña discussed invitations that council members may receive to speak with special-interest groups. While members are free to talk with whomever they wish, he cautioned the members against possibly compromising their objectivity. Council members are elected to represent this whole church, he reminded them, and they must use care in what they say and the impressions they may give.

Vice President Peña reported on a recent trip to Washington, D.C., for a United Nations Foundation forum related to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. “Malaria is preventable and treatable, yet over one million people—mostly pregnant women, their unborn children, children under the age of five—die needlessly every year . . . one death every 30 seconds.”

he said. People in the wealthiest nations are unaware of this crisis and assume malaria has been eradicated, the vice president stated. The good news is that it can be eradicated, specifically through the efforts of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative.

As a member of the Rotary Club, Vice President Peña took pride in relating that club had worked with the United Nations Foundation to help eradicate polio.

Members of the council will be asked to participate in the Lutheran Malaria Initiative in the coming months, he said. In the meanwhile, he asked that they keep those suffering from malaria and those working to treat it in their prayers.

Vice President Peña concluded his report with words of gratitude for the churchwide staff.

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

PRIMER ON CANDIDACY

(Agenda V.A.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Part 6)

Background:

The Board Development Committee planned the primer to include information on the interconnections between the documents for consideration at this meeting: “Vision and Expectations,” the Candidacy Manual, and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.”

Primers and Bible studies for the remainder of the biennium have been scheduled:

- April 2010: Primer on ELCA call and candidacy; Bible study by Pr. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl
- November 2010: Primer on advocacy; possible primer on ecclesiology and polity; Bible study
- April 2011: Primer on budget and financial management; primer on Church Council roles and responsibilities at the Churchwide Assembly; Bible study by Pr. Dee Pederson, chair of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT); Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, to introduce the primer on candidacy. Pr. Olson said the ELCA has a system “to call forth and support faithful, wise and courageous leaders.” He introduced the Rev. Gregory J. Villalón, associate executive director for leadership development in the Vocation and Education unit, to present the primer.

Pr. Villalón outlined the purpose of the primer and of the candidacy process—a complex process of discernment, entrance, endorsement, theological education, and decision along five tracks: degree and non-degree tracks in preparation for ordained ministry, and three distinct tracks in preparation for each of the lay rosters.

Entrance signals a readiness to begin seminary education, he said. Endorsement initiates field experience, and theological education is followed by an approval process that signals a readiness for service. There are interviews and outcomes along the process, he added.

Candidacy is a process of discernment for the candidates and this church, Pr. Villalón stated. God’s call is discerned through entrance, an application essay, an initial interview, psychological and career counseling, the support of a local congregation, a background check, meetings with a synod candidacy committee, seminary education, clinical pastoral education, field experience, essays, faculty input, internship evaluations, faculty approval, academic reports, an approval interview, and assignment.

INTRODUCTION TO THE *AD HOC* COMMITTEE PROCESS

(Agenda III.B.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Parts 1–5; Exhibit R, Part 2)

Background:

Action items related to meetings of the *ad hoc* committee are detailed below. Additional items or revised actions were distributed following the committee’s April 8, 2010, meeting.

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña said the 2009 Churchwide Assembly launched a process to amend four documents that establish and define this church's ministry policies. He indicated where the proposed revised documents and related background information were located in the council's materials. Action on the revisions is scheduled for the meeting's fourth plenary.

The chair introduced the Rev. Steven P. Loy, co-chair with Mr. Mark S. Helmke of the committee.

OVERVIEW OF REVISIONS TO MINISTRY POLICIES
(Agenda III.B.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Parts 2a-5)

Background:

Revisions of Ministry Policies

The 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly took action to allow service in rostered ministry by people who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. The assembly directed that necessary changes in policy be made and that any additional guidelines be developed. It further directed that provision be made within this church to respect diverse, faith-based commitments on this matter.

ELCA Ministry Policies

The ELCA has four rosters for public ministry: ordained pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers. The policies that guide preparation for public ministry are organized in the following official documents:

1. "Vision and Expectations" (for pastors): This document is a statement of expectations and hopes and an invitation for reflection and consideration of those who seek to serve in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament.
2. "Vision and Expectations" (for associates in ministry, deaconesses, diaconal ministers): This document is for those called to serve in an ELCA rostered ministry of Word and Service and serves as an invitation for reflection and consideration by those who seek to enter such service.
3. "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline": This document describes the grounds for which rostered clergy and lay persons may be subject to discipline according to the practice of this church.
4. "Candidacy Manual": This manual contains the policies and procedures that guide the process of discerning and preparing for calls to public ministry and the steps by which this church moves toward approval of candidates for call.
5. "Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters": This manual is a selection of policy documents related to aspects of rostered ministry and includes, among others, the ecclesiastical endorsement of chaplains, military chaplaincy, reinstatement to the rosters, interim ministry, and retirement.

Summary of Churchwide Assembly actions related to ministry policies

The 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly considered the recommendations related to ministry policies during plenary sessions on Friday, August 21, 2009. At the beginning of Plenary Session Eight, voting members approved the following change to the Order of Business pertaining to the order in which the resolutions of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies would be considered [CA09.95.22]: "To consider and vote on separately the four resolutions of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies in this order: Resolution 3, Resolution 1, Resolution 2, and Resolution 4."

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly voted on the former Resolution 3, as amended, of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies during Plenary Session Eight [CA09.05.23]:

RESOLVED, that in the implementation of any resolutions on ministry policies, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all.

In the same plenary session, the assembly also voted on the former Resolution 1 of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies [CA09.05.24]:

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

During Plenary Session Nine, the assembly approved the former Resolution 2 of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies [CA09.05.26]:

RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.

Also in that session, voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly approved former Resolution 4 of the Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as amended [CA09.05.27]:

WHEREAS, guided by the Holy Spirit, this church raises up, calls, supports, and maintains rosters of ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for public ministry in service of the mission of Christ and seeks faithfully to discern in each situation what will best serve that mission; and

WHEREAS, this church maintains these four rosters according to policies and procedures that are developed and applied according to the specifications of chapters 7 and 20 of its *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions*; and

WHEREAS, this church has a polity, processes, and procedures that trust designated individuals and bodies to use churchwide standards to make decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a specific ELCA ministry; and

WHEREAS, some members, congregations, candidacy committees, and synods of the ELCA have discerned gifts and skills for rostered ministry in some people who are or contemplate being in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and have indicated their conviction that rostering and calling such people would serve the mission and ministry of this church; and

WHEREAS, other members, congregations, candidacy committees, and synods of the ELCA acknowledge those gifts and skills for ministry, but believe that this church must maintain an expectation of celibacy for any gay or lesbian person, whether or not that person is in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, and thus believe that this church cannot call or roster people in such relationships; and

WHEREAS, the Church of Christ sometimes has been surprised by the actions of the Spirit, as is reported in the book of Acts when the inclusion of Gentiles was affirmed; and

WHEREAS, public accountability of rostered leaders in the ELCA is essential to nurturing the trust that is necessary for effective ministry; and

WHEREAS, although there is no generally recognized civil or ecclesial status that corresponds to heterosexual marriage for publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this assembly has committed itself to find ways to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, present ELCA policies prohibit the rostered service of any and all people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, but this assembly has committed itself to find a way for people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members to commit themselves to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree regarding decisions on the call and rostering of individuals in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, in this church and with churches ecumenically and globally; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to eliminate the prohibition of rostered service by members who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church should not call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization could hold people publicly accountable in their relationships who are in or contemplate being in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and who seek to be on the rosters of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee on Appeals be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to “Definition and Guidelines for Discipline” and the Vocation and Education program unit be directed to draft, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council is directed to approve, appropriate amendments to the “Vision and Expectations” documents and the Candidacy Manual to accomplish the intent of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that additional policies be developed, as necessary, so that those whom this church holds responsible for making decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a particular specific ELCA ministry may discern, and have guidance in discerning, the fitness for ministry of a member living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this church continue to trust its established processes and those to whom it has given the responsibility to discern who should and should not be rostered or called to public ministry in this church.

Process for fulfilling the Churchwide Assembly actions

The amendment process follows procedures mandated in the bylaws of this church, beginning with drafting by the appropriate churchwide units (Office of the Secretary and Vocation and Education) and by the Committee on Appeals, consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and consideration by the Church Council. The drafting and the consultation processes began following the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Iterations of both “Vision and Expectations” and the Candidacy Manual were posted on the ELCA Web site for public review and response. Suggestions were considered as part of the revision process.

Work of the Ad Hoc Committee

At its November 2009 meeting, the Church Council approved a protocol to guide consideration by the council of proposed revisions to ELCA ministry policies in response to action by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The protocol addresses factors including time line (October 2009–April 2010), participants, process, and documents and assigns overall responsibility to the collaboration of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee and the Program and Services Committee. The protocol is printed in Exhibit R, Part 2.

The protocol provided in Exhibit R, Part 2 is based on the *ad hoc* committee process that has guided consideration by Churchwide Assemblies of ELCA social statements. The report and recommendations of the *ad hoc* committee had been distributed following its meeting on April 8, 2010. In accordance with the protocol, the committee received, reviewed, and recommended responses to the amendments proposed by members of the Church Council to the four ministry policies documents by the deadline on March 29, 2010.

The Church Council’s consideration of the documents may proceed in the following manner:

- The documents will be considered individually, page-by-page.
- *Ad hoc* committee recommendations will be considered first.
- Consideration of additional amendments that were not submitted by the deadline must be authorized by the body.
- When all amendments have been considered, a final vote will be taken.

Church Council Discussion:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy told the council that he would provide an overview, and the Rev. A. Donald Main and the Rev. Stanley N. Olson would discuss the documents. Pr. Loy described the *ad hoc* committee, which prepared and recommended revisions to ministry policies in four documents: “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” “Vision and Expectations” (for Clergy and Lay Rosters), and the Candidacy Manual.

Pr. Loy reported on the process and time line the committee used to develop the revisions. The committee’s written report notes the input it received and the way that input diminished as the process continued, leading the committee to believe it was on the right track, he said.

Pr. Main chairs the Committee on Appeals, and he described the committee and presented its recommendations regarding “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.” The document established “Definitions and Guidelines” first in 1989, and the only previous time it was revised was in 1993.

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly called on the Committee on Appeals to revise “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline,” taking into account the changes adopted regarding the rostering of people who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.

The committee began in September 2009 and prepared initial revisions for the fall meeting of the Conference of Bishops and the November 2009 meeting of the Church Council. It received feedback from those bodies and various churchwide staff members and developed a revised draft for the Bishops Academy to consider in January 2010.

The Committee on Appeals met in February 2010 and drafted a “revised standard version” of the document, Main said. The Conference of Bishops reviewed that version in March 2010 and made suggestions that the committee incorporated into the revisions the Church Council is considering at this meeting.

Pr. Olson added that the four documents have different roles, but their revisions were coordinated to employ similar language when possible. The Vocation and Education unit was responsible for recommending assembly-mandated revisions to “Vision and Expectations” (for Clergy and for Lay Rosters) and to the Candidacy Manual.

The assembly’s fourth resolution on ministry policies expressed trust in the existing systems and individuals responsible for calling forth and supporting this church’s leaders, Pr. Olson pointed out. Therefore, the revisions do not spell out every possible situation but lay out broad principles and detailed guidelines.

The revised Candidacy Manual incorporated sections the Church Council approved earlier on reinstatement and on receiving application of a pastor from another Lutheran church or Christian tradition, Pr. Olson explained. The manual’s chapter for the Deaconess Community was changed extensively to reflect current practice, he said.

If the revisions are adopted, next steps will include orientation regarding the changes for candidacy committees and staff. The process will continue to be monitored for the possible need for further revisions, Pr. Olson added.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reminded the council that this was an overview of the revisions, and council action is scheduled for the fourth plenary session. He asked the council members for their questions.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger noted that marriage happens at a distinct moment in time, but a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship becomes publicly accountable in a wide variety of manners. He asked how that would be determined in this church.

Pr. Olson indicated that the issue had been discussed, and it probably would be something entrusted to the individuals responsible for the candidacy and discipline processes.

The Rev. Harold L. Usgaard, bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, added that the Board of Pensions had developed an affidavit to be signed with a date to verify the relationship for pension and insurance purposes.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke asked whether decisions regarding discipline have been or could be challenged in a court of law.

Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel, answered that there had been only one attempt to stop the proceedings of a discipline committee, but the court had thrown out that request on the basis of the First Amendment. The courts will avoid involvement in internal church matters, he said.

There being no other questions or discussion, Vice President Peña indicated that the next agenda items would be considered in executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

(Agenda III.A.1)

The Church Council entered into executive session at 10:22 A.M. for the purposes of electing a unit executive director and receiving a legal update.

RECESS

The first plenary session of the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 10:41 A.M.

**Saturday, April 10, 2010
Plenary Session II**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called Plenary Session Two to order at 11:01 A.M. and declared the followed motion approved.

VOTED:

CC10.04.03

To re-elect the Rev. Rebecca Larson to a four-year term as executive director of the program unit for Church in Society beginning October 14, 2010.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth to reflect on “Dwelling in the Word.” The chair thanked Ms. Chenoweth and asked for the report of the treasurer.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

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

Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, drew the members’ attention to printed reports and charts related to her oral report.

The treasurer called 2009 a “challenging year,” because the economy had a negative impact on all expressions and institutions of this church. Disagreements over actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly compounded that impact. So, the Office of the Treasurer continuously reviewed income to ensure that spending was within income, she said.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton reported that the ELCA received \$76.5 million (total revenue) and spent \$72.6 million (expenses) in fiscal year 2009, resulting in net revenue of \$3.9 million. Total revenue was down almost \$6.9 million from the previous year and \$260,000 less than what was budgeted for 2009. Expenses were down \$7.6 million from 2008 and \$4.2 million below the 2009 spending plan.

Because there is a delay in collecting income figures, the treasurer said it is difficult for this church to project income, and it is possible to close the year with an operating deficit. The Church Council approved policies to create an operating reserve to help manage that liquidity; and that liquidity makes it possible to have restricted and designated funds available and to make related payments without delay, she added.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton recalled the difficult decisions the Church Council made to reduce the 2010 budget. Had there not been net positive results at the close of 2009, the ELCA would not be able to make up for any deficit in the 2010 budget and further reductions would be necessary, she said.

Budget planning is based on estimated income and not on the prior year’s results, “where we might be able to achieve some operating efficiencies that are not necessarily recurring and cannot carry into the next year’s plan,” the treasurer explained.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton outlined this church’s cash-management policy. The target balance represents restricted and designated funds plus a one-month operating reserve. Many nonprofit organizations maintain a six-month operating reserve, but the smaller reserve allows the ELCA to release funds as expeditiously as possible for the work of this church, she said.

The total designated and restricted fund balance from January 2009 through projections to January 2011 closely match the actual cash balance for that period, the treasurer reported. Some capital expenditures require additional cash beyond the current operating budget, she said. From December through January each year, the reserve is able to cover the designated and restricted funds, helping this church begin each year positively.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton presented data on cash and short-term investments in categories of designated, general restricted, disaster response, and World Hunger funds, with slight increases in investments in all of those categories this year. Unrestricted funds include a number of fixed assets that are not involved in the ELCA’s cash-management policy, she added.

A summary of 2009 current fund revenue for this church indicated that mission support was \$59.7 million, about \$2.3 million less than budgeted and down from the previous year by almost 9 percent or \$5.6 million, the treasurer reported. The ELCA received more than \$3.6 million in missionary sponsorship, \$155,000 less than budgeted and down \$128,000 from 2008. More than \$4 million in bequest and trust income, almost \$1 million behind the record year of 2008, was nearly \$1.6 million more than budgeted for 2009, helping this church cover the year's shortfall in mission-support income, she said. Investment income also was positive at \$700,000 more than budgeted. Endowment income for churchwide ministries was close to projections, with a favorable variance from budget due to additions to principals throughout the year and a negative variance from the previous year due to adjustments in the market value of those funds as well as a decrease in the distribution paid out, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton stated. The Mission Investment Fund provides about \$1.5 million toward the cost of new ministry starts, and this year the fund showed positive variances of \$125,000 because it moved from a quarterly payment to a monthly payment. The Vision for Mission churchwide appeal gathered more than \$1 million in 2009, but \$3,400 less than in 2008. A category of "other," including rent and miscellaneous gifts, came in at about \$310,000 below what was expected for 2009, the treasurer added.

Because the cash-management policy maintains a one-month operating reserve, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton said, this church works diligently to adjust constantly its expenses to income. There was some overspending in the first two years of the ELCA's history, but since then expenses have tracked closely with income. Adjusted for inflation, income and expenses in 2009 are at about 50 percent of what they were in 1989, she said.

Even in this year of significant decreases in mission support, the treasurer remarked, mission support accounts for 79.1 percent of the ELCA's current fund revenue. All but one of the 65 synods were down in their mission support this year, and the remaining synod increased its mission support by less than \$2,000, she stated.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton indicated the churchwide organization received less than 90 percent of what was originally submitted in the synods' mission-support plans for 2009. The synods and the Office of the Treasurer were aware that income was falling, and consistent communication with synods throughout the year made it possible for the churchwide organization to adjust spending accordingly.

Looking at the history of income categories with potential for increase, the treasurer noted that missionary sponsorship has been between \$3.5 million and \$4 million for decades. This church cannot increase its budget based on two years of strong bequest and trust income because there are too many fluctuations in that category, she said. Investment income is also not stable enough to budget, and the Office of the Treasurer estimates investment returns on a monthly basis. Endowment income is a category often expected to increase over time; however, recent adjustments in the market value have not helped. Treasurer Jackson-Skelton pointed out that the endowment distribution level has stabilized at 4.25 percent, and this category could see slight increases in the future. There have been fluctuations in giving to the Vision for Mission appeal, but contributions have leveled off in recent years.

When funds for World Hunger are included, the total for 2009 revenue is \$96.1 million, the treasurer indicated, and mission support is 62.1 percent and World Hunger is 20.3 percent of the total operating budget. World Hunger income has grown from more than \$10 million in 1989 to about \$20 million. In 2009 World Hunger income exceeded its budget of \$18.7 million, and the overage was added to the \$18.7 million budgeted for 2010. Direct giving to World Hunger and bequest income were up from the previous year. Decreases in congregational giving to World Hunger in recent years have been offset by individual donors becoming acquainted with the program primarily through disaster response, she said.

Contributions to disaster response were down until the final month of the year, when an earthquake struck Haiti, and there was a very generous response from this church, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton stated. The report of \$4.5 million received for Haiti Earthquake Relief is only through January 31, 2010, and the response has grown to about \$9 million total. About \$1.5 million in undesignated gifts to disaster response have helped this church respond to disasters that often go unnoticed in the media, she added. Other donations were made toward such U.S. disasters as hurricanes and floods.

Giving to the ELCA Disaster Appeal has varied according to the severity of disasters in a given year, the treasurer stated. The September 11 terrorist attack prompted an increase in giving to the appeal in 2001, she said. The Southeast Asia tsunami of December 2004 and several Gulf Coast hurricanes motivated donors in 2005.

A majority of expenditures, including World Hunger disbursements, are made by the ELCA's major program units, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton explained. Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission accounted for 20.7 percent of

expenditures, with Global Mission at nearly 30 percent, Vocation and Education at 11.5 percent, Multicultural Ministries at 1.3 percent, and Church in Society at 8.1 percent. Most of the funds flow through the programmatic work of this church, she said.

More money was disbursed through grants than any other type of expenditure for the ELCA in 2009, the treasurer reported, followed by expenditures for staff and missionary compensation. The greatest amount of grant money goes to the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), much of which comes from the World Hunger Program. The next greatest amount of grant money goes toward congregational support, and she emphasized that much of the mission support received from congregations goes back to help congregations. Other grant money goes to support global companion ministries, seminaries, Lutheran World Relief, social ministry organizations, synods and regions, and campus ministries.

Regarding the 2010 budget, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton discussed recommended changes to authorized spending as well as changes to synods' mission-support plans from 2008 to 2010. All 65 synods are adjusting the amount of money they had planned to share with the churchwide organization through mission support in 2010, she indicated. This year 19 synods are decreasing the percentage of their mission support, compared to nine synods in 2009 and six synods in 2008. Thirty synods made no change in their percentage of sharing, and 16 are increasing their percentage despite the difficult economy, she added.

Since the November 2009 meeting of the Church Council, when the council acted on several changes to mission-support plans, the Office of the Treasurer received changes from 61 synods, the treasurer reported. Another synod may have submitted a change that morning, she added. Two synods increased their percentage of sharing since November, but in both cases the dollar amounts in mission support decreased, she said. Sixteen synods are decreasing their percentages, and another 43 synods are estimating changes in the dollar amounts of their mission support.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton said the total decrease in mission-support planning since November is \$9,164,350. The 2010 spending plan will not be revised by that amount because the changes in mission support were anticipated and assumed in the budget proposal the council approved in November.

The synods' mission-support plans for 2010 varied in amounts and percentages from the actual mission support of 2009, the treasurer reported. Twenty-one synods increased and 44 decreased the amounts being shared with the churchwide organization. Sixteen increased and 19 decreased their percentages of sharing, while percentages were level for 30 synods.

This church must consider the changes in mission-support plans and actual receipts amid a fluctuating economy to set its budget, Treasurer Jackson-Skelton said. The 2010 budget is based on \$55.1 million in mission-support income or 96 percent of the original mission-support plans. The treasurer credited synods for a more accurate level of planning and for working closely with congregations to update their plans. Mission support is still very difficult to estimate, she added, and the ELCA must have a contingency plan ready and be prepared for any adjustment in income.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton concluded her report by introducing the Rev. A. Craig Settlage, director for mission support.

PRIMER ON MISSION SUPPORT (Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Part 5a)

The Rev. A. Craig Settlage, director for mission support, presented the council with a primer on mission support and the Church Council's related responsibilities. He gave a brief history of mission support, beginning when the Commission for a New Lutheran Church (CNLC) developed the concept and set guidelines that 60 percent of the contributions that synods receive from congregations should be forwarded to the churchwide organization. After consultations with synod transition teams in 1986, the CNLC changed the sharing ratio to 55 percent for the churchwide organization and 45 percent remaining with the synods, and that ratio was affirmed by the ELCA's Constituting Convention in 1987, he said. The 1989 Churchwide Assembly acknowledged that this design for sharing could be difficult for some synods and recommended that consultations on funding continue between synods and the churchwide organization.

At the request of the Conference of Bishops in 2005, the council constituted the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding, which prepared the report, "Mission Flowing from God's Abundance," with recommendations for the 2007

Churchwide Assembly, Pr. Settlage stated. That report indicated that almost 13 percent of total giving in 1965 was received as churchwide support, and by 2008 that percentage had dropped below 3 percent, he said. While total giving in congregations has increased steadily, congregations have kept 94.1 percent of it in recent years.

Sharing of mission support from congregations between synods and the churchwide organization has been nearly equal since 2003, Pr. Settlage reported, with 50.51 percent going to the churchwide organization in 2009. The revised mission-support plans for 2010 give 49.27 percent to the churchwide organization—the first time that mission-support sharing has dropped below 50 percent. Just over 5 percent of total giving in congregations is passed on to synods in total mission support, he added.

Since the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, the ELCA has been implementing the Blue Ribbon Committee report's recommendations, Pr. Settlage said. The report affirmed the mission-support structure of this church with the goal of sharing 55 percent for churchwide ministries and 45 percent for synod ministries. The introduction of a director for evangelical mission in each synod integrates mission, new and renewed congregations, and mission support in the synods, enhancing each synod's capacity to grow mission support in the congregations, he explained.

Pr. Settlage outlined several of the recommendations in the Blue Ribbon Committee's report that will be implemented:

- Six pilot synods identified to develop plans for mission support;
- Stewardship theological education enhanced in seminaries and first-call settings;
- Communication on mission interpretation increased;
- Conference of Bishops involved in fuller discussion of mission support; and
- Stewardship modeled through one-on-one conversations.

Pr. Settlage concluded that this church is aware of its economic realities, and its efforts to confront them are giving the ELCA a deeper understanding of what its members do together to carry out God's mission, a renewed commitment to grow in stewardship, and an appreciation for the stories of ministry in congregations, in synods, and through the churchwide organization around the world.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton and Pr. Settlage for their reports and asked the council for questions.

Pr. Loy stated that the multifaceted, downward spiral in funding is not unique to the churchwide organization. In recent history various institutions of the church have begun their own fund raising, and ELCA members consider their donations to camps and seminaries, for example, to be mission support for this church. He said he thought this type of donation was an important trend that the ELCA had not included in its analysis of funding streams. Current mission support may be similar to the mission support reported before contributions started going directly from congregations to institutions, without passing through the mission-support structure, he suggested. Some congregations consider missionary sponsorship, Mission Partners, and designated gifts to other churchwide ministries to be "local benevolence," and those contributions may be increasing while contributions as "mission support" are declining.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson responded that the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force would be looking into such trends.

The Rev. Philip R. Wold asked whether the reported figure of 94.1 percent of congregational giving retained in congregations meant that the remaining 5.9 percent included local benevolence.

Pr. Settlage answered that the 5.9 percent figure does not include local benevolence.

Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep noted that congregational operating expenses, which does not include local benevolence, has climbed from 80 percent to over 90 percent of total giving. There has been an increase in local benevolence in congregations, but the greatest increase in congregational budgeting is in operating expenses.

The Rev. Martin D. Wells, bishop of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, said the book being used in the "mini-retreat" following the council meeting includes a study of decline in funding—a trend that began in 1965.

There being no further questions or discussion, Vice President Peña asked for the Budget and Finance Committee report.

2010 INCOME ESTIMATE AND EXPENDITURE AUTHORIZATION

(Agenda III.D.1; Exhibit F, Parts 5a–5b)

Background:

During the past month, the churchwide organization has been in the process of closing the books for the 2009 fiscal year, receiving adjusted mission-support plans from synods for 2010, and altering its 2010 income budget to reflect both the 2009 financial results and the adjusted plans from synods. At the time of preparing the adjusted income estimates, 54 synods had adjusted their mission-support plans for a net decrease of nearly \$7.6 million from their prior plans. This level of revision was within the range estimated last fall when the initial 2010 spending authorization was prepared; therefore, no further adjustment was anticipated at the spring council meeting.

Other income adjustments were identified. Vision for Mission, with a renewed focus and effort, is estimated to increase \$200,000. Discussions with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans have allowed this church to reinstate the amount previously reduced, \$200,000. Improved market value of endowment funds at the end of fiscal 2009 allows the ELCA to increase the estimated endowment distributions by \$83,550. Decreases in missionary sponsorship support over the past few years result in lowering the ELCA's estimate from this source by \$100,000. As a result of the adjustments, the churchwide organization may increase its current fund spending plans by \$277,200 to a new total of \$69,300,000.

No change was anticipated in the World Hunger Appeal 2010 budget of \$18,700,000. A shift between sources due to recent trends is anticipated, however, with gifts through direct giving from individuals and congregations increasing \$700,000, endowment distributions increasing \$100,000, and gifts from congregations through synods decreasing \$800,000. Planned expenditures of World Hunger fund balances in excess of required reserves, resulting from positive variances in both 2009 income and expense, total \$1,631,516, and bring total anticipated expenditures in fiscal 2010 to \$20,331,516.

Increases for depreciation expenses caused by major investments in computer systems and building improvements were the largest portion of increased expenditures with other increases addressing increased insurance costs and other needs identified since last fall. The adjustments were funded by a combination of the increased income estimate, re-allocations from the Strategic Initiative Fund, and reduced allocations to the Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, for the committee's report. Ms. Niedringhaus indicated that the committee had reviewed the financial information presented to the council and received a primer on various investment categories. She credited the treasurer and the executive for administration of this church for making smooth contingency planning and budget adjustments, and she suggested that similar work is being done in ELCA synods.

Ms. Niedringhaus moved the committee's first recommendation.

Moved: To approve a revised current fund spending authorization for fiscal year 2010 of \$69,300,000;
To approve a revised total World Hunger spending authorization for fiscal year 2010 of \$20,33,516.

Vice President Peña asked the council for discussion.

The Rev. David P. Anderson noted that a "1" was missing from the thousand position in the dollar figure for the World Hunger spending authorization.

With no other discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote and declared the motion adopted.

VOTED:

CC10.04.04

To approve a revised current fund spending authorization for fiscal year 2010 of \$69,300,000;

To approve a revised total World Hunger spending authorization for fiscal year 2010 of \$20,331,516.

REVISIONS TO 2010 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS
(Agenda III.D.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit F, Parts 5a–5b)

Background:

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

Revisions in synod plans following the November 2009 meeting of the Church Council were received and reviewed by the Conference of Bishops at its March 2010 meeting. It forwarded recommendations for the changes.

Church Council Action:

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus explained that revisions to synod mission-support plans require extensive work unique to each of the 65 synods and cannot fairly represent the circumstances of each synod. Total dollars in mission support were down in all synods, but percentages are used in setting goals and in the recommended Church Council action.

Ms. Niedringhaus noted that the action acknowledges the sadness surrounding some of the decisions that were made and expresses gratitude for the leaders who made those tough decisions. The categories are a snapshot and do not take into account the history of stewardship in each synod.

The proposed action calls for more consultations and planning among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to address the long-term future of funding in this church, she added.

Ms. Niedringhaus moved the recommended resolution.

Moved:

To acknowledge with sadness that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease in the percentage of sharing of 2010 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage each synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that each synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission-support sharing: Eastern Washington-Idaho; Montana; Pacifica; Grand Canyon; Central States; Arkansas-Oklahoma; Southwestern Texas; Western Iowa; North/West Lower Michigan; Southern Ohio; Upstate New York; Southeastern Pennsylvania; Lower Susquehanna; West Virginia-Western Maryland; Virginia; South Carolina; and Carribean synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synod to increase the percentage of sharing of 2010 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Northeastern Iowa Synod;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2010 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Alaska; Northwest Washington; Oregon; Sierra Pacific; Rocky Mountain; Eastern North Dakota; South Dakota; Northwestern Minnesota; Northeastern Minnesota; Southwestern Minnesota; Minneapolis Area; Saint Paul Area; Southeastern Minnesota; Nebraska; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast; Northern Illinois; Central/Southern Illinois; Southeastern Iowa; Northern Great Lakes; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area; Indiana-Kentucky; Northwestern Ohio; Northeastern Ohio; New Jersey; New England; Metropolitan New York; Slovak Zion; Allegheny; Northeastern Pennsylvania; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Southwestern Pennsylvania; Upper Susquehanna; Delaware-Maryland; Metropolitan Washington, D.C.; Southeastern; and Florida-Bahamas synods; and

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to encourage synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen the financial support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Rev. Raymond A. Miller reported that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council voted to maintain rather than reduce its percentage of mission support and requested that “Southeastern Pennsylvania” be moved from the first paragraph to the third paragraph of the resolution.

The Rev. Philip R. Wold told the council that he thought the same was true of the Montana Synod.

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

VOTED:

CC10.04.05

To acknowledge with sadness that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease in the percentage of sharing of 2010 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage each synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that each synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission-support sharing: Eastern Washington-Idaho; Pacifica; Grand Canyon; Central States; Arkansas-Oklahoma; Southwestern Texas; Western Iowa; North/West Lower Michigan; Southern Ohio; Upstate New York; Lower Susquehanna; West Virginia-Western Maryland; Virginia; South Carolina; and Carribean synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synod to increase the percentage of sharing of 2010 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Northeastern Iowa Synod;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2010 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Alaska; Northwest Washington; Oregon; Montana; Sierra Pacific; Rocky Mountain; Eastern North Dakota; South Dakota; Northwestern Minnesota; Northeastern Minnesota; Southwestern Minnesota; Minneapolis Area; Saint Paul Area; Southeastern Minnesota; Nebraska; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast; Northern Illinois; Central/Southern Illinois; Southeastern Iowa; Northern Great Lakes; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area; Indiana-Kentucky; Northwestern Ohio; Northeastern Ohio; New Jersey; New England; Metropolitan New York; Slovak Zion; Allegheny; Northeastern Pennsylvania; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Southeastern Pennsylvania; Southwestern Pennsylvania; Upper Susquehanna; Delaware-Maryland; Metropolitan Washington, D.C.; Southeastern; and Florida-Bahamas synods; and

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to encourage synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen the financial support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The chair declared the motion adopted, and he introduced the next agenda item.

2011 SYNOD MISSION-SUPPORT PLANS

(Agenda III.D.3)

Background:

Given the continuing strain on congregational income flowing to synods, synods are in the process of adjusting their 2010 mission-support plans and are working to create or revise their 2011 plans in anticipation of their Synod Assemblies. To date, 32 synods have submitted their mission-support plans for 2011.

Church Council Action:

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus noted that the committee's recommendation involved a partial list of synods. Its final paragraph includes a request that the other synods submit their mission-support plans prior to their assemblies. She moved the committee's resolution.

Moved:

To acknowledge with sadness that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage each synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that each synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission-support sharing: Eastern Washington-Idaho; Montana; Grand Canyon; Central States; Arkansas-Oklahoma; Western Iowa; North/West Lower Michigan; Southwestern Pennsylvania; Lower Susquehanna; and Virginia synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to increase the percentage of sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: South Dakota; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Metropolitan New York; and Northeastern Pennsylvania synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Eastern North Dakota; Northeastern Minnesota; Southwestern Minnesota; Southeastern Minnesota; Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast; Central/Southern Illinois; Southeastern Iowa; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area; Indiana-Kentucky; Northwestern Ohio; Northeastern Ohio; New England; Allegheny; Southeastern; and Florida-Bahamas synods;

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to encourage synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen the financial support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To request that all synods to submit their 2011 mission-support plans prior to their 2010 Synod Assemblies.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña opened discussion on the motion.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, spoke on behalf of the Conference of Bishops regarding the previous action and this motion. He expressed appreciation for "deeper conversation" with the Budget and Finance Committee around mission-support planning. Mission support is something that cannot be separated from the rest of the work of the Church Council, Bp. Burk said. The council's decisions have the potential of stimulating more mission support or raising new challenges for the bishops to be more aggressive advocates for this church.

Ms. Niedringhaus added that challenges also can be viewed as opportunities, and conversations around mission support have been opportunities for the committee, bishops, and churchwide staff to collaborate.

There being no other discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote and declared the following motion adopted.

VOTED:
CC10.04.06

To acknowledge with sadness that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage each synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that each synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission-support sharing: Eastern Washington-Idaho; Montana; Grand Canyon; Central States; Arkansas-Oklahoma; Western Iowa; North/West Lower Michigan; Southwestern Pennsylvania; Lower Susquehanna; and Virginia synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to increase the percentage of sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: South Dakota; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Metropolitan New York; and Northeastern Pennsylvania synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2011 mission-support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Eastern North Dakota; Northeastern Minnesota; Southwestern Minnesota; Southeastern Minnesota; Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast; Central/Southern Illinois; Southeastern Iowa; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area; Indiana-Kentucky; Northwestern Ohio; Northeastern Ohio; New England; Allegheny; Southeastern; and Florida-Bahamas synods;

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to encourage synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen the financial support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To request that all synods submit their 2011 mission-support plans prior to their 2010 Synod Assemblies.

INTRODUCTION TO RACIAL JUSTICE PROCESS OBSERVATION
(Agenda V.A.3)

Background:

Process observation continued at the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council and was led by the current members of the Racial Justice Working Group: Mr. Baron Blanchard, Ms. Arielle Mastellar, Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, and Ms. Lynette M. Reitz. Four additional members joined the Racial Justice Working Group at this meeting: Mr. Ivan A. Perez, Ms. Judith E. Barlow-Roberts, Mr. David Truland, and Ms. Deborah Wilson.

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña introduced Ms. Lynette M. Reitz, convener of the racial justice working group.

Ms. Reitz asked that members, advisors, and visitors complete evaluation forms. The revised form is shorter and more “user friendly,” she said, and collects information regarding the whole meeting. Although the form indicates a Sunday deadline, it can be returned at any time. The form is not available online.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Peña thanked Ms. Reitz, announced that Church Council nominations and elections would be postponed until after lunch, and asked for other announcements.

Secretary David D. Swartling gave the members details regarding lunch. The theological conversation group met during the recess. The secretary reviewed the schedule and logistical information for the remainder of the day. He reminded the members of pending deadlines for removal of items from *en bloc* consideration and for introduction of new business.

Vice President Peña told advisors that they have voice at the meeting, and he welcomed their input during council discussions.

TABLE GRACE

Vice President Peña called on the Rev. Susan Langhauser, who led those present in table grace.

RECESS

The April 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 12:00 P.M.

UNIT LUNCHESES

Church Council members and advisors had lunch with executive staff of the Communication Services, Development Services, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, *The Lutheran*, Mission Investment Fund, and Women of the ELCA units.

Saturday, April 10, 2010
Plenary Session III

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called Plenary Session Three to order at 1:32 P.M. and introduced the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative and the HIV and AIDS strategy, who led the Bible study.

BIBLE STUDY

The Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl distributed copies of Acts 9:1–22, Romans 10:14–17, and Luke 24:28–35. “New Life” was the first of the three themes she addressed. “Sharing the Good News” and “Community in Christ” were the other themes she spoke to through Bible readings and through tales and photos from her recent trip to Africa.

After a brief study of Acts 9, Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl led council members in a discussion around three questions:

- What new life are you holding?
- What new life are we holding?
- What new life is evident in the world?

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl asked the women to read aloud verses 14 and 15 of Romans 10 and the men to read aloud verses 16 and 17. She invited small-group conversation around three other questions:

- Who brings the Gospel to life for you?
- Who brings the Gospel to life in the faith community?
- Through whom is God bringing the Gospel to the world?

Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl examined the “Community in Christ” portrayed in Luke 24 and in the children she met in Africa. She returned to the previous themes of “Sharing the Good News” and “New Life” to conclude.

Vice President Peña thanked Pr. DeGroot-Nesdahl for her reflections.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE FOR ADMINISTRATION
(Agenda II.C.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit E, Part 1)

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

Pr. Bullock shared the story of a young husband who learned through the death of his wife that God has the last word. “God’s promise to us is one of new life,” she said.

Pr. Bullock said much of her report would concern the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force, but she would begin with an overview of the work of the churchwide organization.

In 2009 the Office of the Presiding Bishop introduced two strategic priorities for the next biennium that flow out of the Plan for Mission. The churchwide organization will work collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies and institutions, and other partners to:

- Accompany congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission; and
- Build capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.

Budget reductions since those priorities were established have left a smaller churchwide organization with a different capacity for mission, Pr. Bullock said. However, the commitment to ministry is unchanged, and expectations are evolving. The churchwide organization and its partners must imagine together what ministry will look like in the future, she remarked.

Pr. Bullock recalled the comments of the treasurer regarding contingency planning, adding that collaboration with the Executive Committee and liaison bishops will continue in case further reductions are necessary. She applauded churchwide staff members for finding ways to “strategically disengage” from some tasks to focus on priorities.

Pr. Bullock invited council members to view the unit reports in the agenda’s Exhibit A and Exhibit J for a “snapshot” of the missional activities of the churchwide organization.

Returning to her main topic, Pr. Bullock reported that in April 2009 the Church Council called for a study and evaluation of this church's organization, its governance, and the interrelationships among its expressions. The Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force was created in response to changes in the world, the religious landscape, domestic and global relationships, and this church's giving patterns, she said. "The world and the environment have changed, but we are very much an interdependent church body."

This study of "the ELCA's ecology" gets its name from Mr. Craig Dykstra, vice president for religion at the Lilly Endowment, who used the image "ecology" to describe the unique nature of this church's "ecology of interdependent ecosystems" amid the U.S. religious landscape, she stated.

Pr. Bullock showed the members a diagram representing the various entities in this church's ecology—three expressions, seminaries, colleges, universities, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, schools, young adult and family ministries, social ministry organizations in Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran World Relief, companion synods, global partners, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Disaster Response, six full-communion partners, the Lutheran World Federation, the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and other ecumenical and interreligious partners.

The Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force is exploring this ecology, Pr. Bullock said, and planning in the churchwide organization is being done in relation to the work of this task force. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod are represented by advisors to the task force, she added.

LIVING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER (LIFT): RENEWING THE ECOLOGY OF THE ELCA (Agenda VI.E.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit E, Part 3)

Background:

At its November 2009 meeting, the Church Council approved the charter for the Ecology Study Task Force, the purpose of which is "to recognize the evolving societal and economic changes of the twenty years since the formation of this church, and to evaluate the organization, governance, and interrelationships among this church's expressions in the light of those changes. The intended result of the Ecology Study Task Force's work is a report and recommendations that will position this church for the future and explore new possibilities for participating in God's mission."

The task force will bring a report and recommendations to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council for referral to the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Discussion:

The Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, introduced the Rev. Diane "Dee" H. Pederson, chair of the Ecology Study Task Force, to discuss the work of the task force around seven major areas: identity, opportunities for the future, the changing context of this church, interrelationships of church expressions, partnerships, financial resources, and structure and governance.

Pr. Pederson said the task force members are organized into work groups focused on communication and those seven major areas. The work groups have framed their work further by identity, mission, relationships, and sustainability. Sustainability includes mission funding, governance, and structure, she reported.

The task force is guided in its work by two overarching questions:

- What is God calling this church to be and to do in the future?
- What changes are in order to help us respond most faithfully?

Pr. Pederson reported that, at a recent task force meeting, the Rev. Timothy J. Wengert, Ministerium of Pennsylvania Professor of Reformation History at The Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia and co-editor of the *Book of Concord*, gave a talk about the identity of the ELCA. He said three characteristics must this church's future: its commitment to the Bible, the centrality of worship, and the witness to the Gospel as guided by the Lutheran Confessions.

She said that Pr. Wengert reminded the task force that the sixteenth-century reformers were doing theology by conversation. So, the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force has undertaken a churchwide conversation about the ELCA's ecology, convinced that its recommendations will be shaped

by the methods used to generate them, she stated. The task force will be intentional about its own transparency and about inviting others into conversation, using the various media available to it. Many of the 2010 Synod Assemblies have scheduled such conversations.

Pr. Pederson introduced Mr. Kenneth W. Inskip, executive for research and evaluation, to discuss the process for developing the questions that will propel those conversations and churchwide communication.

Mr. Inskip reported that, to engage the greatest number of people in the initial stages of conversation, much of the focus is on the two questions above that guide the work of the task force. The entry point for involvement in the conversation is <http://liftelca.org/>—the LIFT Web site, he said.

The task force is open to receive comments electronically, and it has questions available to help congregational councils join in the conversation and respond to the task force, Mr. Inskip pointed out. A questionnaire and online questions are means for pastors and other individuals to be involved in the study of the ELCA's ecology.

Mr. Inskip said that a random sample of congregations will be engaged to answer the discussion questions. Each of the synod bishops will identify five congregations in her or his synod to be more closely involved in the process and provide feedback. Some specific groups (such as college presidents, Lutheran Men in Mission, and South Carolina youth) have already participated in the conversations, he added.

Pr. Pederson introduced the Rev. H. Karl Reko, project coordinator, to share an overview of the task force's processes.

Pr. Reko outlined the three phases of the LIFT projects: identifying the issues and the questions that speak to those issues; conversations and data gathering; and analysis of the data and drafting a report with recommendations. The Church Council will decide at its April 2011 meeting whether the report is ready to be transmitted to the Churchwide Assembly, he said. The assembly will decide whether to implement any recommendations from the Church Council, he added.

Pr. Pederson invited the members of the meeting to be involved in the conversation.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked for any questions.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke asked how any recommended constitutional changes would be managed.

Pr. Pederson responded that one of the work groups is studying structure and governance, and the ELCA constitution will guide the handling of changes.

Secretary David D. Swartling added that it is likely the Church Council will consider possible changes to the constitution for action in November 2010.

The Rev. Harold L. Usgaard, bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, inquired about planning conversations at Synod Assemblies.

Pr. Pederson replied that Pr. Reko has shared a template with the churchwide representatives attending Synod Assemblies outlining methods to conduct conversations during Synod Assemblies. Some of those conversations may be formal, during plenary sessions, or informal, over lunch, she said. Some may be during workshops or with synod councils.

Mr. Inskip added that the churchwide representatives have been asked to be in contact with the respective bishops to plan those conversations. It is not too late to start planning conversations in Synod Assemblies, he said.

There being no further questions, Mr. Inskip requested that all participants engage in small-group discussion, answering two questions:

- What do you believe are the most important questions LIFT should address?
- What thoughts or ideas do you have about how the governance of this church could be improved?

After about 20 minutes in small-group discussion, Mr. Inskip stated that this church is "a complex ecology facing complex issues" and asked several of the groups to report on their conversations regarding the first question.

The Rev. Susan Langhauser said her group had discussed the lack of clarity in ELCA congregations about the governance of this church, how the Church Council works, and how assembly voting members are selected.

Mr. John R. Emery reported that his group talked about the need to better articulate in ELCA congregations the common mission of Lutherans in this church. He stated that he has heard wonderful speeches about the mission and ministry of this church in his role as a Church Council member, but he regretted that such explanations are not heard in his congregation.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger said his group asked what work of this church is essential, at which expression of this church it is best done, and how it is connected to all the people.

Mr. Mark W. Myers reported that his group had discussed the role of the pastor as gatekeeper in the congregation; the pastor's actions will determine how much the congregation members know about this church. The conversation included the idea that Church Council meetings could be streamed on the Internet to make them more transparent. He said another thought was that jargon used in meetings is a barrier to clear communication. Mr. Myers added that letters he has received indicate a misunderstanding of the council's authority.

Mr. William B. Horne II stated that his group formulated the question: What does it take to become a fully informed member of the ELCA? If this church is expecting its members to act, how is it equipping them to respond?

The Rev. Jeff B. Sorenson said his group discussed the notion of inviting one voting member from each congregation to make decisions in a Churchwide Assembly and have as much fun as a Youth Gathering.

The Rev. David P. Anderson brought a question from his group: Are there new ways to organize or "look at" the local church other than as a congregation?

Mr. Ivan A. Perez reported that his group discussed how this church might live toward—not just talk about—its goal of being more inclusive and give more value to what the immigrant community offers it.

On the second question about improving this church's governance, Pr. Hunsinger stated that Synod Assemblies were the focus of his group's discussion. How can the purposes of synod and Churchwide Assemblies be communicated better? How can assemblies promote ministry better? "Is the frequency of assemblies proper for mission and ministry needs?" he asked.

Mr. Perez said his group discussed this church's willingness to change current structures, including the number of synods, and consider strengthening existing congregations rather than planting new ones.

Ms. Lynette M. Reitz reported that her group talked about this church's lack of attention to the socio-economic status of those invited or expected to participate in assemblies and other meetings.

Mr. Horne raised a question from his group's discussion: Are synod bishops and vice presidents integrated appropriately into this church's decision-making processes? He said the group considered their influence to be greater than an organizational chart may indicate.

There being no other reports from the small-group discussions, Mr. Inskeep invited the members to continue their conversations and to send comments electronically to the research and evaluation unit.

Pr. Pederson thanked the Church Council, the task force, and resource people for their thoughts and prayers.

Pr. Pederson and Mr. Inskeep collected written reports from the small groups.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked everyone who participated in the presentation and discussion.

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

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

Pr. Langhauser explained that the committee took no actions at its April 9, 2010, meeting. The committee was to review the Global Mission unit at this meeting, she reported, but the research and evaluation unit was involved in the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA project, so that review period has been extended.

The committee heard a report from the Global Mission unit, she reported. The committee also participated in a presentation and discussion on LIFT.

Pr. Langhauser said the committee received updates on the Blue Ribbon Committee for Mission Funding, including a primer on mission support, and on the Communal Discernment Task Force.

Vice President Peña thanked Pr. Langhauser for her report.

CHURCH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

(Agenda III.A.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit C)

Background:

Between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council has the responsibility to elect people to fill terms on churchwide boards, steering committees of churchwide commissions, and certain advisory committees. The Executive Committee of the Church Council functions as the Nominating Committee for the Church Council.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David S. Swartling, who introduced the action to elect a lay member to a term to end in 2016 on the Board of Trustees of the Endowment Fund of the ELCA and Advisory Committee for Development Services and ELCA Foundation. Secretary Swartling noted that Mr. John Bauder, Tampa, Fla. (9E), was the only nominee.

Vice President Peña asked for additional nominations from the floor.

With no other nominations, Secretary Swartling asked that Mr. Bauder be elected by show of hands.

Vice President Peña called for a vote by show of hands and declared the following motion adopted.

VOTED:

CC10.04.07

To elect Mr. John Bauder, Tampa, Fla. (9E), to a term to end in 2016 on the Board of Trustees of the Endowment Fund of the ELCA and Advisory Committee for Development Services and ELCA Foundation.

CHURCH COUNCIL JOYS AND CONCERNS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited several council members to voice their joys or concerns.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. John R. Emery to reflect on “Dwelling in the Word.”

PRAYER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked that the Rev. Jeff B. Sorenson close the plenary session with prayer.

RECESS

The third plenary session of the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 3:21 P.M.

Saturday, April 10, 2010
Plenary Session IV

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called Plenary Session Four to order at 4:04 P.M.

CONSIDERATION OF REVISIONS TO MINISTRY POLICIES

(Agenda III.B.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Parts 1-5; Exhibit R, Part 2)

Background:

During Plenary Session One of the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council, the Rev. Steven P. Loy provided an overview of the *ad hoc* committee's report and recommended revisions to ministry policies in four documents: "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline," "Vision and Expectations" (for Clergy and Lay Rosters), and the Candidacy Manual. The Rev. A. Donald Main, chair of the Committee on Appeals, and the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, also discussed those documents and the recommended revisions.

Revisions to "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline"

(Agenda III.B.1a; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Parts 2a–2b)

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña described the locations of pertinent documents for the following discussion on ministry policy revisions. He outlined the process for considering the revisions and called on Mr. Mark S. Helmke, who co-convened the *ad hoc* committee with Pr. Loy.

Mr. Helmke moved the first action recommended by the committee, noting that no additional amendments were proposed for "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline."

Moved:

To approve, as provided in bylaw 20.71.11. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the revised version of "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" as established by the Committee on Appeals; and

To authorize the presiding bishop and secretary of this church, in consultation with the Committee on Appeals, to make any necessary editorial corrections.

Vice President Peña called for discussion.

Mr. Baron Blanchard asked why the revised document, when referring to ideals of marriage, replaces the word "Christian" with the words "this church's."

The Rev. A. Donald Main replied by referring to "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" as a uniquely juridical document of the ELCA, outlining actions and behaviors that can result in discipline. The document does not and should not explain the teachings of this church, he said. The social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, describes this church's teachings on the ideals of marriage, which are more focused than the numerous ideals for marriage expressed by Christians throughout the world, Pr. Main explained. The committee considered "this church's" to be clearer and provide a more precise understanding than "Christian."

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called on the Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger, who led the council in prayer.

At the request of Vice President Peña, Secretary David D. Swartling read the motion.

The vice president asked for the vote.

Secretary Swartling gave council members the opportunity to record abstentions.

Pr. Hunsinger abstained from the vote.

The chair declared the motion adopted.

VOTED:
CC10.04.08

To approve, as provided in bylaw 20.71.11. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the revised version of “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline” as established by the Committee on Appeals [printed below]; and

To authorize the presiding bishop and secretary of this church, in consultation with the Committee on Appeals, to make any necessary editorial corrections.

Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline of Ordained Ministers

As an expression of its life in the gospel of Jesus Christ, this church embraces disciplinary processes of counseling, admonition, and correction, with the objective of forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing.

Simultaneously, out of deep concern for effective extension of the gospel, this church remains alert to the high calling of discipleship in Jesus Christ. The ordained ministers of this church, as persons charged with special responsibility for the proclamation of the Gospel, are to seek to reflect the new life in Christ, avoiding that which would make them stumbling blocks to others. To that end, this church recognizes that there is behavior that is deemed to be incompatible with ordained ministry, and that calls for disciplinary action.

The following definitions and guidelines do not set forth the high expectations this church has of its ordained ministers. (A document of such expectations has been developed by the Vocation and Education program unit for this church.) The normative expectations of this church for its ordained ministers focus upon faithful and effective exercise of ministerial leadership. In all matters of morality and personal ethics, this church expects its ordained ministers to be exemplary in conduct.

These definitions and guidelines describe the grounds for which ordained ministers may be subject to discipline according to the practice of this church. Their purpose is juridical: to assist in the processes of consultation, discipline, and appeals.

Grounds for discipline of ordained ministers are as follows:

- A. **Preaching or teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church** is grounds for discipline of ordained ministers. A summary of the faith confessed by this church is found in Chapters 2 and 3 of this church’s constitution.
- B. **Conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office** is grounds for discipline of ordained ministers. These guidelines define and describe kinds of behavior which are incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
 1. **Confidential Communications:** Ordained ministers must respect privileged and confidential communication and may not disclose such communication, except with the express permission of the person who has confided it or if the person is perceived to intend great harm to self or others.
 2. **Integrity:** Ordained ministers must be honest and forthright in their dealings with others while protecting privileged and confidential communications. Dishonesty, deception, duplicity, or the manipulation of others for personal benefit or gain is incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
 3. **Professional Attention to Duties:** An ordained minister of this church has made commitments through ordination and through acceptance of a letter of call. Continued neglect of or indifference toward such duties constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.

4. **Relationship to Family:** This church is committed to the sanctity of marriage and the enhancement of family life. Ordained ministers of this church are expected to uphold this church's ideals of marriage, family, and relationship in their public ministry as well as in private life. Spouse or same-gender partner and children, if any, are to be regarded with love, respect, and commitment. Departure from this standard may be considered conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office. Such departure might include any of the following:
 - a. Separation, divorce, or termination of same-gender relationship that occurs without consultation with the synodical bishop's office and appropriate implementation of such consultation;
 - b. Desertion or abandonment of spouse, same-gender partner, or children;
 - c. Abuse of spouse, same-gender partner, or children;
 - d. Repeated failure to meet legally determined family support obligations.
 5. **Sexual Matters:** The expectation of this church is that an ordained minister is to lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed. In keeping with this expectation, chastity and abstinence are required outside of marriage or outside publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, and chastity and fidelity are required within marriage or within such same-gender relationships. Adultery, infidelity, casual sexual relationships, promiscuity, the sexual abuse of another, or the misuse of the pastoral relationship for sexual activity constitute conduct that is incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
 6. **Addiction and Substance Abuse:** Any addictive behavior that impairs the ability of an ordained minister to perform effectively the duties of the office or the misuse of alcohol, drugs, medications, sex, gambling, or pornography is incompatible with the office of pastoral ministry. The approach of this church to such a problem may be to insist upon effective treatment or to initiate immediate discipline. Refusal to accept treatment or failure to abide by the terms of such treatment is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
 7. **Fiscal Responsibilities:** Ordained ministers of this church are expected to conduct their fiscal affairs in accordance with ethical and legal requirements. Among those fiscal activities which may be considered conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office are:
 - a. Indifference to or avoidance of legitimate and neglected personal debts;
 - b. Embezzlement of money or improper appropriation of the property of others;
 - c. Using the ministerial office improperly for personal financial advantage.
 8. **Membership in Certain Organizations:** This church has specifically declared in 7.47.01. that discipline may be administered to any of its ordained ministers who belong to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess in its teaching and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church.
 9. **Conviction of a Felony:** The society in which this church ministers has placed a high premium upon the role of law in regulating the rights and duties of individuals to promote the common good. This includes laws which define certain conduct as felonies. Pleading guilty to, or being convicted of, a felony is grounds for discipline as conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office but may not be grounds for discipline in those instances where the violation of law was to protest or to test a perceived unjust law or as an expression of civil disobedience.
- C. **Willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for the office of Word and Sacrament** is grounds for discipline of ordained

ministers. Such functions and standards established by this church are found in Section 7.20. through 7.47.01. of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

- D. Willful disregard of the constitution or bylaws of this church** is grounds for discipline of ordained ministers.

Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline of Associates in Ministry, Members of the Deaconess Community, and Diaconal Ministers

As an expression of its life in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, this church embraces disciplinary processes of counseling, admonition, and correction, with the objective of forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing.

Simultaneously, out of deep concern for effective extension of the Gospel, this church remains alert to the high calling of discipleship in Jesus Christ. The individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church, as persons charged with special responsibility for the Gospel in the ministries to which they are called, are to seek to reflect the new life in Christ, avoiding that which would make them stumbling blocks to others. To that end, this church recognizes that there is behavior that is deemed to be incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church and that calls for disciplinary action.

The following definitions and guidelines do not set forth the high expectations this church has of individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church. (A document of such expectations has been developed by the Vocation and Education program unit for this church.) The normative expectations of this church for individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church focus upon faithful and effective exercise of their leadership. In all matters of morality and personal ethics, this church expects individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church to be exemplary in conduct.

These definitions and guidelines describe the grounds for which individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church may be subject to discipline according to the practice of this church. Their purpose is juridical: to assist in the processes of consultation, discipline, and appeals.

Grounds for discipline of individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church (commissioned associates in ministry, consecrated deaconesses, and consecrated diaconal ministers) are as follows:

- A. Confessing or teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church** is grounds for discipline of individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church. A summary of the faith confessed by this church is found in Chapters 2 and 3 of this church's constitution.
- B. Conduct incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church** is grounds for discipline of individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church. These guidelines define and describe kinds of behavior which are incompatible with the standards for these rostered ministries.
- 1. Professional Attention to Duties:** An individual on the official rosters of laypersons of this church has made commitments through the appropriate liturgical rite and through acceptance of a letter of call. Continued neglect of or indifference toward such duties constitutes conduct incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church.
 - 2. Integrity:** Individuals on the official rosters of laypersons must be honest and forthright in their dealings with others. Dishonesty, deception, duplicity, or the manipulation of others for personal benefit or gain is incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church.

- 3. Relationship to Family:** This church is committed to the sanctity of marriage and the enhancement of family life. Individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church are expected to uphold this church's ideals of marriage, family, and relationship in their public ministry as well as in private life. Spouse or same-gender partner and children, if any, are to be regarded with love, respect, and commitment. Departure from this standard may be considered conduct incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church. Such departure might include any of the following:

 - a. Separation, divorce, or termination of same-gender relationship that occurs without consultation with the synodical bishop's office and appropriate implementation of such consultation;
 - b. Desertion or abandonment of spouse, same-gender partner, or children;
 - c. Abuse of spouse, same-gender partner, or children;
 - d. Repeated failure to meet legally determined family support obligations.
- 4. Sexual Matters:** The expectation of this church is that an individual on an official roster of laypersons is to lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed. In keeping with this expectation, chastity and abstinence are required outside of marriage or outside publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, and chastity and fidelity are required within marriage or within such same-gender relationships. Adultery, infidelity, casual sexual relationships, promiscuity, the sexual abuse of another, or the misuse of ministry relationships for sexual activity constitutes conduct that is incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church.
- 5. Addiction and Substance Abuse:** Any addictive behavior that impairs the ability of an individual on an official roster of laypersons of this church to perform effectively the duties of the office or the misuse of alcohol, drugs, medications, sex, gambling, or pornography is incompatible with the office of lay ministry. The approach of this church to such a problem may be to insist upon effective treatment or to initiate immediate discipline. Refusal to accept treatment or failure to abide by the terms of such treatment is conduct incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church.
- 6. Fiscal Responsibilities:** Individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church are expected to conduct their fiscal affairs in accordance with ethical and legal requirements. Among those fiscal activities which may be considered conduct incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries of this church are:

 - a. Indifference to or avoidance of legitimate and neglected personal debts;
 - b. Embezzlement of money or improper appropriation of the property of others;
 - c. Using one's position improperly for personal financial advantage.
- 7. Conviction of a Felony:** The society in which this church ministers has placed a high premium upon the role of law in regulating the rights and duties of individuals to promote the common good. This includes laws which define certain conduct as felonies. Pleading guilty to, or being convicted of, a felony is grounds for discipline as conduct incompatible with the standards for the rostered ministries but may not be grounds for discipline in those instances where the violation of law was to protest or to test a perceived unjust law or as an expression of civil disobedience.
- C. Willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for the rostered ministries of this church** is grounds for discipline of individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church. Such functions and standards established by this church are found in Section 7.52. through 7.53. of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- D. Willful disregard of the constitution or bylaws of this church** is grounds for discipline of individuals on the official rosters of laypersons of this church.

Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline of Congregations

- A. **Departing from the faith confessed by this church** is grounds for discipline of a congregation of this church. A summary of the faith confessed by this church is found in Chapters 2 and 3 of this church's constitution.
- B. **Willfully disregarding or violating any of the criteria for recognition as congregations of this church** is grounds for discipline of a congregation of this church. These criteria are set forth in 9.21. and 9.22. of this church's constitution.
- C. **Willfully disregarding or violating the provisions of the constitution or bylaws of this church** is grounds for discipline of a congregation of this church.

Revisions to "Vision and Expectations" (Clergy Roster)

(Agenda III.B.1b; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Parts 1 and 3a)

Church Council Action:

Mr. Mark S. Helmke moved the action recommended by the *ad hoc* committee regarding "Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." He noted that the committee had received one proposed amendment regarding state law recognition of same-gender relationships, but the committee had declined to endorse that amendment and gave its rationale in its written report.

Moved:

To adopt the revised version of "Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America"; and

To authorize the Vocation and Education unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to make any necessary editorial corrections.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for discussion and asked whether the council wanted to review the document line by line.

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede referred to sections regarding "sexual matters" in "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" and in the "Vision and Expectations" documents, and noted that chastity and abstinence are required outside of marriage or outside publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. She questioned the meaning of "abstinence" in this context, specifically abstinence from which types of sexual intimacy.

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, replied that the language of "abstinence" was part of the previous documents, and now the concept is being applied to people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. He admitted that the language was imperfect and open to debate, but it was used trusting the judgment of those making more specific decisions.

The Rev. A. Donald Main, chair of the Committee on Appeals, responded that in "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" the Committee on Appeals defined abstinence as abstinence from sexual intercourse.

Pr. Tiede explained that, as a single pastor in a dating relationship, she wondered if these expectations are different from this church's previous expectations of her.

Pr. Olson suggested that other language in the document may be helpful in determining appropriate relationships.

The Rev. Jeff B. Sorenson referred to a portion of footnote 4 in the document:

Public accountability for an ordained minister in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship includes recognition and support of the relationship in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides, or other means of documenting the status of the relationship and protecting the well-being of the partner and any dependents.

He noted that, in describing accountability, it includes "or other means of documenting the status of the relationship." He asked whether the "other means" was an alternative if legal recognition is not available.

Pr. Olson replied that "other means" did offer an alternative if legal recognition is not available. The candidacy manual explained this in more detail, he added, suggesting the candidate seek the recognition that is available.

Pr. Sorenson asked whether that clarity could be added to the “Vision and Expectations” documents by inserting “or if unavailable” in footnote 4 to avoid offering a rostered leader an option other than legal recognition, when legal recognition is available.

Pr. Olson responded that “or if unavailable” may clarify the words that are already in the footnote. The candidacy manual states “. . . if there is no legal status recognition of civil union . . .,” he said.

Mr. Phillip H. Harris added that the “if available” clause preceded the “or” and a comma separated them, suggesting the “if unavailable” is already implied.

Secretary David D. Swartling stated that amendments offered after the set deadline for amendments must be made by first amending the process, which would require approval by two-thirds of the members or a majority of those present. He calculated that 19 votes would be needed to amend the process.

Pr. Sorenson moved that the council consider the amendment.

Moved;

Seconded: That the Church Council amend its process for receiving proposed amendments to ministry policy revisions to allow an amendment to footnote 4 of “Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” which was received after the established deadline.

There being no discussion on the motion, Vice President Peña called for a show of hands, counted 19 votes in favor of the motion, and declared that the motion carried.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: **That the Church Council amend its process for receiving proposed amendments to ministry policy revisions to allow an amendment to footnote 4 of “Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” which was received after the established deadline.**

Pr. Sorenson offered an amendment to footnote 4 of “Vision and Expectations.”

Moved;

Seconded: *To amend the last sentence of footnote 4 in “Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” by insertion:*
Public accountability for an ordained minister in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship includes recognition and support of the relationship in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides or, if unavailable, other means of documenting the status of the relationship and protecting the well-being of the partner and any dependents.

Vice President Peña called for discussion of the amendment.

Pr. Sorenson said he thought the amendment would clarify the meaning of the footnote. He added that it may be stated more clearly in the Candidacy Manual, but “Vision and Expectations” would more appropriately address the status of leaders already on rosters, and the two documents should be consistent.

Pr. Tiede spoke in favor of the amendment. She related the possibility of being asked by a man and a woman to perform a religious wedding without a legal marriage, adding that she would deny such a request. Pastors need as much clarity as possible should they be approached with a similar request by two people of the same gender, she said. With the amendment, this church’s documents would say what to do if state law recognizes same-gender relationships and what to do if state law does not recognize same-gender relationships.

Pr. Olson expressed the opinion that the amendment would clarify the intent of the document’s writers.

There being no further questions or comments, Vice President Peña called for a vote on the amendment.

Moved;
Seconded
Carried:

To amend the last sentence of footnote 4 in “Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” by insertion:

Public accountability for an ordained minister in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship includes recognition and support of the relationship in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides or, if unavailable, other means of documenting the status of the relationship and protecting the well-being of the partner and any dependents.

Vice President Peña declared the amendment passed.

Ms. Judith Barlow-Roberts asked the chair to record her opposition to the amendment.

Vice President Peña called for discussion on the main motion with the document as amended.

Mr. Mark W. Myers said he thought the action of 2009 Churchwide Assembly gave the council the task of determining how this church would document a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship. He questioned whether the council would leave that task to the Conference of Bishops.

Ms. Susan W. McArver asked whether public accountability was to be outlined in the Candidacy Manual.

Pr. Olson stated that the “Vision and Expectations” document must stand on its own, and cited the paragraph before the amended paragraph in footnote 4: “‘Public accountability’ means that the two parties to the relationship openly acknowledge the relationship, have a demonstrable commitment to the relationship as monogamous and lifelong, and have a willingness to seek and accept the aid of individuals and the community in sustaining the relationship and the well-being of both parties and any dependents.” In an environment where laws vary, Pr. Olson said this definition addressed the specific need for this church to seek public accountability.

Mr. Myers challenged the adequacy of that definition.

Pr. Loy pointed out that the Board of Pension addressed public accountability with an affidavit of relationship, and he expressed the view that such an affidavit may become more than a witness to establish pension and health benefits.

Pr. Olson drew attention to the proposed Candidacy Manual, which refers to insurance documents, however the Board of Pensions affidavit may not apply to all rostered leaders. While not completely satisfactory, such an affidavit may prove to be a “demonstrable commitment.” A man and woman may be able to demonstrate their commitment with a marriage license, he said, but that may be the minimum for marriage. Pr. Olson expressed the hope that this church’s work may lead the culture to understand what makes a same-gender relationship publicly accountable.

There being no further discussion on that point, Vice President Peña asked the council whether there was a request to review the document page by page. There being no such request, he called on Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke, who led the council in prayer.

Vice President Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling, who read the motion.

Vice President Peña called for the vote.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger abstained from the vote.

The chair declared the motion adopted.

VOTED:

CC10.04.09

To adopt the revised version of “Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” (as amended); and

To authorize the Vocation and Education unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to make any necessary editorial corrections.

Vision and Expectations¹

Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of the ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons.

An ordained minister of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness of faith, aptness to preach, teach and witness, and whose educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. A minister shall comply with the constitution of this church.

Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, provisions 7.21. and 7.22.

Ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Together with the whole people of God they are part of the ministry of the baptized. Ordained ministers are called to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to the needs of a changing world. They are called to give leadership to the congregations and other ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In this document the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to state its vision and expectations for ordained ministers of this church. This document should not be understood as a juridical standard. Neither is it intended to suggest unrealistic or impossible expectations for those who serve on the roster of ordained ministers. Instead, it seeks to express the high value and importance that the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament has in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is offered for those who are already on the roster of ordained ministers of this church as a statement of expectations and hopes for the shape of ordained ministry as well as an invitation for reflection and consideration to those who seek to serve in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The four questions that are addressed to candidates in the Rite of Ordination (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009, pp. 187-199) serve as the framework for this document. The liturgical rite itself is not the basis for this document, but the setting in which this church's understanding of its expectations for ordained ministers are described.

¹ The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, at its October 1990 meeting, adopted *Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as a statement of this church, amended it at its April 2010 meeting, and authorized its distribution to the congregations, ordained ministers, candidacy committees and seminaries of this church.

I. THE CALL TO ORDAINED MINISTRY

Before almighty God, to whom you must give account, and in the presence of this congregation, I ask: Will you assume this office, believing that the Church's call is God's call to the ministry of Word and Sacrament?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that the Holy Spirit “calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith” (Small Catechism, Article 3). It is the Spirit that provides the church with those persons who are enabled by God to lead the church in carrying out the ministry and mission of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This church confesses that the office of ordained ministry, “the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments” (Augsburg Confession, Article V), has been instituted by God. Individuals are ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament because they have been called by God. This church believes that the call comes to individuals from God both personally and through the church.

Persons experience the call to ordained ministry through a variety of ways. Fundamental to each is the personal experience of God's justifying act in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the awareness of the gospel in one's life, and the response to that gospel, that lead some to seek to serve in the public ministry of the church. This call may include the example and encouragement of others, the personal assessment of an individual's own interests and abilities, and response to the needs of the world. In whatever way the call to seek ordination may come to an individual, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that such a sense of call must be tested over a period of time, shaped by theological study, and finally confirmed in the church's call to serve as a pastor. It is the Holy Spirit who enables the church to discern a person's gifts and abilities for ordained ministry.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America prepares and approves candidates for the ordained ministry by setting standards, by providing for theological education through the seminaries of this church, and by evaluating a person's qualifications for service by a Candidacy Committee. Upon approval for ordination, a person is eligible to receive a letter of call to serve in the ordained ministry of this church.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America therefore understands the call to the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament to mean that:

- Ordained ministers, called by God through the church, are accountable to the Word of God for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- Ordained ministers are called by God through the church and are not self-chosen or self-appointed;
- Ordained ministers are called by God through the church for a ministry of servanthood, and not for the exercise of domination or coercive power; and
- Ordained ministry is a privilege granted by God through the call of the church and is not a right of the individual.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects each of its ordained ministers to understand and accept the call to serve the church's ministry of Word and Sacrament as a call from God, and

to believe that the Spirit sustains and upholds those who are ordained so they may fulfill their calling to the ordained ministry.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross so that he might draw the whole world to himself. To those who look upon the cross, grant your wisdom, healing, and eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Prayer for Holy Cross Day, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

II. FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHURCH'S CONFESSION

The church in which you are to be ordained confesses that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God and are the norm of its faith and life. We accept, teach, and confess the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds. We also acknowledge that the Lutheran Confessions are true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures. Will you therefore preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and these creeds and confessions?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

It is essential for an ordained minister to be able to understand and faithfully interpret the Scriptures and the Christian tradition. In this question the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America asks that its ordained ministers assume responsibility for upholding this church's doctrinal tradition through faithful preaching and teaching. All who have been ordained and who serve as pastors in this church are expected to accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Scripture, Creed and Confessions

The Scriptures reveal God's redemptive actions, including the message of law and gospel, judgment and mercy, "beginning with the Word in Creation, continuing in the history of Israel and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ" (ELCA Constitution, 2.02.). Ordained ministers of this church are to confess and teach the authoritative and normative character of the Scriptures "as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.). The ecumenical creeds are to be taught as true declarations of the faith of this church. The Lutheran Confessions are to be acknowledged as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures.

In identifying specific documents as normative for preaching and teaching, this church expects its ordained ministers to understand that the faith of the church is corporate, not individualistic; catholic, not sectarian; orthodox, not heretical. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects that its ordained ministers teach nothing "that departs from the Scriptures or the catholic church" (Conclusion to the Augsburg Confession).

Doctrinal Tradition

Christians enter into the catholic faith through baptism in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Ordained ministers of this church are called to continue in this catholic faith, preaching and teaching it within the doctrinal tradition of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Ordained ministers express this tradition when they are:

Evangelical

The gospel is the good news that the decisive turning point in human history occurred in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The evangelical witness is that in Christ, God has acted to bring forgiveness to sinners, liberation for the oppressed, reconciliation for the estranged, and the promise of salvation. It is the gospel that is the power of God to create and sustain the church for God's mission in the world. Ordained ministers of this church are expected to proclaim in word and deed God's saving gospel of justification by grace through faith, and so equip the baptized for their ministry in daily life.

Faithful

The church's scriptures, creeds, and confessions identify the grounding and goals of the church's hope: Jesus Christ. The church expects its ordained ministers to be committed to Jesus who is the Christ, the Savior of the world, the Lord of the Church.

Reforming

The church's past is characterized not only by the faithful witness of the saints, but by sin, error, and the betrayal of its mission. The gospel frees the church for genuine repentance and confession, for renewal and reform. Ordained ministers are expected to acknowledge the church's past and present failures and to lead the church in its repentance and renewal.

Pastoral

Leadership in the church is to be shaped by Jesus' own ministry of serving. This church, therefore, expects its ordained ministers to resist the temptation to seek power over people whether by force or manipulation and, instead, to lead God's people as servants. Such servant leadership is not one of weakness or timidity, but of strength and boldness.

Ecumenical

The church is called to "maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). This church expects its ordained ministers to manifest the unity given to the people of God by leading the church in that common witness to the gospel that expresses the unity which the Spirit gives. Ordained ministers are encouraged to participate in ecumenical activities, including prayer and worship, and to witness to the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all" (Ephesians 4:5 and 6).

Ethical

The church witnesses to the gospel not only in its proclamation but also by how it lives and acts. The church expects its ordained ministers to lead and teach the church through example by lives that give expression to the gospel. Ordained ministers are called to represent in their personal lives the new life that is given to all Christians in baptism and to be examples of a life that is consistent with the Word of God.

Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. Inspire all pastors to proclaim your Word diligently and your people to receive it willingly, that finally we may receive the crown of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer of the Day, Installation of a Pastor, *Occasional Services for the Assembly*

III. THE ORDAINED MINISTER AS PERSON AND EXAMPLE

Will you be diligent in your study of the Holy Scriptures and faithful in your use of the means of grace? Will you pray for God's people, nourish them with the word and sacraments, and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

The ordained minister is called with all Christians to “lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ” (Philippians 1:27). It is Christ’s own self-giving on the cross that is the example for Christian life for all believers.

Because ordained ministers are also recipients of God’s gracious gift in Christ Jesus, they are called to use their gifts and abilities to enable others to understand themselves as recipients of that same grace and to live as God’s people in the world. In their life and conduct ordained ministers are to witness to the crucified and risen Jesus Christ. Therefore, ordained ministers will seek to use their gifts in lives worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Ordained ministers fulfill the calling of the pastoral office not only by what they do in carrying out certain tasks, but also in who they are. They officially proclaim and witness in their person to the gospel of Christ. Pastoral identity is not one of moral or spiritual perfection. It is, instead, the living out of the good news that one is justified by God’s grace and thus called to live out that grace in daily life. The ordained minister is not simply a professional trained in skills to perform a task, but is one sent by the church to lead the community of faith through the ministry of word and sacrament. The ordained minister enables and equips others for in their lives as Christians and for their ministry in the world by faithful preaching of the Word of God, through the administration of the sacraments, and by example.

Pastoral identity carries with it expectations and accountabilities that are determined by the whole church and not simply by a given congregation, synod, institution, or agency served by the ordained minister.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has high expectations for those who serve within the ordained ministry of this church. It does so because it recognizes that when offense is given by an ordained minister, the witness of the gospel may be impaired and the ability to carry out public ministry is threatened.

Yet sin and brokenness are realities in the lives of all people, including those who serve as ordained ministers. It is crucial for us all to remember that repentance and forgiveness are to be daily realities in the life of every baptized Christian. Neither perfection nor self-righteousness is asked of the ordained ministers of this church. When there is failure in the lives of those who serve in this office, this church seeks to provide counsel and understanding. When there are repentance and forgiveness, this church rejoices. Indeed, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that God not only calls but sustains those who are set apart for the ordained ministry of word and sacrament. It is with this recognition that this church can affirm that those who are set apart to the office of word and sacrament are to seek to embody those characteristics which are consistent with the pastoral office.

The ordained minister is to nourish the people of God through the word and sacraments. In order to do this, the ordained minister needs to develop and nurture a sound knowledge of the

Scriptures, both intellectually and devotionally. The ordained minister will seek regular opportunities for personal participation in the means of grace, including the renewal of baptismal grace in individual confession and absolution, and to celebrate and receive the sacrament of Holy Communion, thus receiving God's renewing, sustaining, empowering Spirit both personally and in the practice of ministry.

The ordained minister engages in daily prayer and encourages others in the practice of regular prayer.

The ordained minister must be a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. There the ordained minister is an integral part of a community of faith in which mutual support is given and in which care, forgiveness, and healing occur.

The ordained minister supports not only the work of the congregation, but also the synodical and churchwide ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This church expects its ordained ministers to work in a collegial relationship with one another and to share in mutual accountability with those in positions of leadership and oversight in this church. Ordained ministers will participate regularly in synodical and conference occasions for mutual support and enhancement of collegial ministry. The ordained ministers of this church are to seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community.

The ordained minister is concerned for the whole person. He or she welcomes and provides pastoral care for all. The minister provides for the care of those troubled with spiritual or emotional problems. This church expects that its ordained ministers will honor and respect privileged communication, particularly within the context of individual confession and absolution, and will not disclose such communication except with the express permission of the person who has confided it or if the person is perceived to intend great harm to self or others.

The ordained minister recognizes the importance of lifelong growth in learning. Such growth is intended to renew, extend, and deepen insight into the Scriptures and the doctrinal teaching of the church, and to enable one to respond to the insights and challenges of the world with greater awareness and a more faithful confession. In an increasingly complex and educated society, the development of an informed intellect and professional skills is crucial to competent ordained ministry. This church expects of its ordained ministers regular and disciplined time for personal study, study in the company of others, participation in programs of continuing education, and periodic times for extended study. Congregations and other entities of this church are expected to provide the ordained minister the time and assistance with the financial resources needed for such study.

The ordained minister needs to be an example of self-care, as well as caring for others. The significant demands of time and effort within the office of ordained ministry can lead one to neglect proper nutrition, exercise, and time for recreation. The congregation, or whatever agency or institution the ordained minister serves, should respect the need for the ordained minister to have adequate time for self-care. Caring for self also includes seeking counseling and/or medical care when there is evidence of physical or mental illness, substance abuse, eating disorders, or relational problems.

Holy Living

The ordained minister is to be an example of holy living so that the ordained minister's life does not become an impediment to the hearing of the gospel or a scandal to the community of faith. The qualities of such a life include the following:

Integrity and Trustworthiness

The ordained minister is expected to be honest and forthright in dealings with others while protecting privileged and confidential communications. The ordained minister should strive to develop a public reputation for integrity and to nurture trustworthy personal relationships. Ordained ministers must avoid conduct that is dishonest, deceptive, duplicitous, or manipulative of others for personal benefit or gain.

The ordained minister is expected to be fiscally responsible and is to be a faithful steward of time, talents, and possessions. The ordained minister is to be an example to the community of generous giving.

Trustworthiness in Relationships

In all relationships, an ordained minister is expected to honor his or her public promises, bear the burdens of others, and seek to build up the body of Christ.

In public ministry as well as in private life, the ordained minister is expected to develop and nurture appropriate relationships with others, acting in ways that build and sustain trust.

The ordained minister will respect and nurture friendships. Ordained ministers will support friendships among others and will welcome and nurture friendships for themselves but will avoid compromising the pastoral role in such relationships.

The ordained minister will strive to serve others and nurture trust by enhancing family life. Within the family, forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and mutual care are to be expressed. Children, if any, will be regarded with love, respect, and commitment. It is also expected that ordained ministers maintain responsible relationships with their parents and other immediate relatives.

The ordained minister is expected to respect and support single people, encouraging them in their appropriate and healthy relationships.

This church is committed to the sanctity of marriage². In public ministry as well as in private life, the ordained minister is expected to uphold an understanding of marriage that is biblically informed and consistent with the teachings of this church. In so doing, the ordained minister will respect and support those who are married, recognizing this church's strong continuing support for this holy estate. As the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* declares: "Marriage is a covenant of mutual promises, commitment, and hope authorized legally by the state and blessed by God. The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have recognized

² This "Vision and Expectations" document uses the terms "marriage," "marry," and "married" to refer to marriage between a man and a woman.

marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10:6-9. . . .³ The public promises of marriage are to be honored and trust is to be nurtured for the good of all.

This church acknowledges that its members hold various convictions about lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. Nonetheless, this church has committed itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize and support lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and to hold the partners publicly accountable for the relationship. It has committed itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church. It also has committed itself to make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church should not call or roster people in such relationships.⁴ The ordained minister is expected to respect the people who hold these various convictions.

Trustworthiness in Beginning, Sustaining, and Ending Marriages or Same-Gender Relationships
Should an ordained minister seek to marry, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought and the minister shall make the decision known among those he or she serves.

An ordained minister who is married is expected to keep his or her marriage inviolate until death, to cultivate love and respect for her or his their spouse, and to seek marital counseling when it is needed. It is recognized that due to human sin and brokenness, in some cases the marital relationship may have to be dissolved. Should an ordained minister and spouse separate or seek to divorce, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought. Similarly, should an ordained minister decide to marry following a divorce, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought.

Should an ordained minister seek to enter a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought and the minister shall make the decision known among those he or she serves.

An ordained minister in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship is expected to keep that relationship inviolate until death, to cultivate love and respect for his or

³ *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2009, p. 15

⁴ Action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly – CA09.05.23 , CA09.05.24, CA09.05.26, and CA09.05.27.
Because of these actions, this document includes this church’s vision and expectations for single people, married people, and people in “publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.” The terms in the latter descriptive phrase are intended to have their common meanings. “Lifelong” means that the two parties intend the relationship to last as long as they both shall live. “Monogamous” means that the relationship is between two people only and excludes the possibility of other partners. “Same-gender” means that the relationship is between two men or two women of legal age. “Public accountability” means that the two parties to the relationship openly acknowledge the relationship, have a demonstrable commitment to the relationship as monogamous and lifelong, and have a willingness to seek and accept the aid of individuals and community in sustaining the relationship and the well being of both parties and any dependents.

For an ordained minister, both church and community are part of the public within which he or she is accountable. Public accountability for a married ordained minister includes recognition and support of the marriage in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law marriage requirements. Public accountability for an ordained minister in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship includes recognition and support of the relationship in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides or, if unavailable, other means of documenting the status of the relationship and protecting the well-being of the partner and any dependents.

her same-gender partner, and to seek counseling with the partner when it is needed. It is recognized that in some cases, due to human sin and brokenness, such a relationship may have to be dissolved. Should an ordained minister and partner separate or seek to end their relationship, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought. Similarly, should an ordained minister, following the ending of a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, decide to enter another such relationship, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought.

Trustworthiness in Sexual Conduct

The expectations of this church regarding the sexual conduct of its ordained ministers are grounded in the understanding that human sexuality is a gift and trust from God. Ordained ministers are to live in such a way as to honor this gift and trust.

Ordained ministers are expected to reject sexual promiscuity, the manipulation of others for purposes of sexual gratification, and all attempts of sexual seduction and sexual harassment, including taking physical or emotional advantage of others.

This church's social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states: "Sexual intimacy, together with promises of fidelity and public accountability, nurtures bonds that allow people to thrive and provides a rich context for the care and support of children."⁵ It also states: "It is in marriage that the highest degrees of physical intimacy are matched with and protected by the highest levels of binding commitment, including legal protection. It is in marriage that public promises of lifetime commitment can create the foundation for trust, intimacy, and safety."⁶

Single ordained ministers are expected to live a chaste life, holy in body and spirit, honoring the single life, and working for the good of all.

A married ordained minister is expected to live in fidelity to his or her spouse, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a marriage relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful.

An ordained minister who is in a publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationship is expected to live in fidelity to his or her partner, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a publicly accountable relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful.

Almighty God, by our baptism into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you turn us from the old life of sin. Grant that we who are reborn to new life in him may live in righteousness and holiness all our days, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer for Daily Renewal, Evangelical Lutheran Worship

IV. FAITHFUL WITNESS

Will you give faithful witness to the world, that God's love may be known in all that you do?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

⁵ *Human Sexuality*, p. 15

⁶ *Human Sexuality*, p. 17

The charge to witness to the world is given to the church today as it was to the apostles of the early church. The content of that witness is God's revelation in Jesus Christ: God's creative self-disclosure as the Word made flesh; Jesus Christ victorious over death for the salvation of God's people; and the promise of everlasting life. The testimony of these acts of God's grace and forgiveness is expressed in both word and deed by ordained ministers through compassion, hospitality, patience, and forgiveness; through seeking peace and justice for all people; through care for God's creation; and through sharing one's faith through preaching, teaching, and personal witness. This witness is characterized by:

Evangelism

The apostolic witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ is at the heart of the church's mission. It is the proclamation of the message of salvation in Jesus Christ and reconciliation with God. This gospel is proclaimed through preaching the Word and administration of the Sacraments. Through its ordained ministers, this church affirms the critically important task of communicating this evangelical word to the world.

Compassion

Christians are called by God to participate in compassionate care for those in need. This church expects its ordained ministers to follow the example of Jesus and to lead the church in compassionate care of the suffering.

Confession

Ordained ministers are expected to enter into the church's act of confessing the Christian faith in our world. The church is called to such a confession because its present existence lies between the advent of God's Kingdom in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ and the promised certain consummation of the eschatological kingdom. This confession places this church and its ordained ministers in the struggle against sin, death, and the devil.

Hospitality

Just as Jesus received sinners and ate with them, the church is called to welcome the stranger and to open its life to those who are "outside" and alienated. This church expects its ordained ministers to be models of appropriate hospitality in their personal lives, to preside at the Eucharistic table where God welcomes sinners, and to lead the church in its witness to divine hospitality.

Peacemaking

The culmination of God's eschatological salvation will be the overcoming of every enmity and the reconciliation of the whole creation. Yet even in the present time, God's peace is a reality. This church expects its ordained ministers to be witnesses to and instruments of God's peace and reconciliation for the world.

Justice

The church is to witness to God's call for justice in every aspect of life, including testimony against injustice and oppression, whether personal or systemic. This church expects its ordained ministers to be committed to justice in the life of the church, in society, and in the world. The ordained minister is expected to oppose all forms of harassment and assault.

Stewardship of the Earth

The people of God are called to the care and redemption of all that God has made. This includes the need to speak on behalf of this earth, its environment and natural resources, and its inhabitants. This church expects that its ordained ministers will be exemplary stewards of the earth's resources, and that they will lead this church in the stewardship of God's creation.

Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for the Third Sunday after Epiphany, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

CONCLUSION

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirms that “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” (ELCA Constitution, 4.01.).

This church expects its ordained ministers to honor and equip the baptized for their ministry in the world. Such a ministry involves giving leadership in the church's witness to the world, exhibiting awareness of the global challenges of a multicultural, diverse society, and enabling the members of this church, through the faithful teaching and preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the sacraments, for their ministry in daily life.

At the same time the ordained ministers of this church can know that they are regarded as servants of Christ and messengers of the good news of God's salvation in Christ. As such they are honored for the ministry they bring to this church. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America prays for the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to those who serve this church in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Almighty and merciful God, you built your Church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and you instituted the office of the ministry of word and sacrament so that the apostolic and prophetic work might continue through the ages. Grant that those who are ordained may carry out ministry faithfully in the power of your Spirit; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Prayer of the Day, Ordination, *Occasional Services for the Assembly*

Revisions to “Vision and Expectations” (Lay Rosters)

(Agenda III.B.1c; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Parts 1 and 4a)

Church Council Action:

Mr. Mark S. Helmke moved the recommendation of the *ad hoc* committee regarding “Vision and Expectations: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Moved:

To adopt the revised version of “Vision and Expectations: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and

To authorize the Vocation and Education unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to make any necessary editorial corrections.

Mr. Helmke added that the committee had received a proposed amendment similar to one received for the previous document, regarding state law recognition of same-gender relationships, but the committee declined to make that

amendment and gave its rationale in its written report. He pointed out that footnote 6 in this document is parallel to the amended footnote 4 of the previous document.

The Rev. Jeff B. Sorenson moved that the Church Council amend its process to receive a proposed amendment after the deadline.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the council if there was any objection to considering the amendment. There being no objection, he ruled there was consensus to hear the motion.

Pr. Sorenson offered an amendment to footnote 6 of “Vision and Expectations.”

Moved;

Seconded:

To amend the last sentence of footnote 6 in “Vision and Expectations: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” by insertion:

Public accountability for an associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship includes recognition and support of the relationship in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides or, if unavailable, other means of documenting the status of the relationships and protecting the well-being of the partner and any dependents.

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

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

To amend the last sentence of footnote 6 in “Vision and Expectations: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” by insertion:

Public accountability for an associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship includes recognition and support of the relationship in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides or, if unavailable, other means of documenting the status of the relationships and protecting the well-being of the partner and any dependents.

Vice President Peña declared the amendment approved and called for discussion of the motion. There being no further discussion, he called on Mr. John R. Emery, who led the council in prayer.

The vice president asked Secretary David D. Swartling to read the motion.

Vice President Peña called for the vote.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger abstained from the vote.

The chair declared the motion adopted.

VOTED:

CC10.04.10

To adopt the revised version of “Vision and Expectations: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” (as amended); and

To authorize the Vocation and Education unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to make any necessary editorial corrections.

Vision and Expectations¹

Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church. It is within this context of ministry that this church calls some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church.

This church shall maintain a lay roster of associates in ministry of those commissioned—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all God’s people. Associates in ministry are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world as they serve in congregations and other ministry settings.

This church shall maintain a lay roster of the deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of those consecrated—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all God’s people. Deaconesses are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. They are to be theologically trained to serve in congregations and other ministry settings.

This church shall establish and maintain a lay roster of diaconal ministers of those consecrated—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for service on behalf of this church in positions of Word and service that exemplify the servant life and that seek to equip and motivate others to live it. Diaconal ministers are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. Such diaconal ministers shall seek in a great variety of ways to empower, equip, and support all the baptized people of God in the ministry of Jesus Christ and the mission of God in the world.

Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Provisions 7.11.; 7.51.03.; 7.51.04.; 7.51.05.

In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, consecrated deaconesses, consecrated diaconal ministers, and commissioned associates in ministry are called to public ministries of Word and service.² Together with the whole people of God they are part of the ministry of the baptized.

¹ The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, at its April 2010 meeting, adopted *Vision and Expectations: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as a statement of this church and authorized its distribution to the congregations, pastors, deaconesses, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, candidacy committees, and seminaries of this church. This document replaces *Vision and Expectations: Commissioned Associates in Ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* which was accepted by the Church Council at its December 1993 meeting.

² In this document, the phrases “commissioned and consecrated ministers” and “associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers” are used interchangeably to refer to those on the three Word and service rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

They work collegially with one another, with ordained ministers, and with all the baptized for the sake of the church and the world. These commissioned and consecrated ministers are called to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to the needs of a changing world. They are called to give leadership and service in congregations and other ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to facilitate and support the people of the church in their serving, and to serve in the world on behalf of Christ's church.

In this document the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to state its vision and expectations for commissioned and consecrated ministers of this church. This document should not be understood as a juridical standard.³ Nor is "Vision and Expectations" intended to suggest unrealistic or impossible expectations for those who serve on the rosters of commissioned and consecrated ministers. Instead, it seeks to express the high value and importance that public ministries of Word and service have in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is offered for those who are already on the rosters of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church as a statement of expectations and hopes for the shape of commissioned and consecrated ministry as well as an invitation for reflection and consideration to those who seek to serve in these ministries of Word and service in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The four questions that are addressed to candidates in the Rite of Consecration of Deaconesses and Diaconal Ministers and the Rite of Commissioning of Associates in Ministry (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, 2009, pp. 200-212, 213-223) serve as the framework here. The liturgical rites themselves are not the basis for this document but are the setting in which this church's understanding of its expectations for associates in ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers are described.

I. THE CALL TO COMMISSIONED OR CONSECRATED MINISTRY

Before almighty God, to whom you must give account, and in the presence of this assembly, I ask: Will you accept this ministry, believing that you are called by God to faithful service as an associate in ministry / as a diaconal minister / as a deaconess?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that the Holy Spirit "calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith" (Small Catechism, Article 3). It is the Spirit that provides the church with those persons who are enabled by God to lead the church in carrying out the ministry and mission of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In baptism God calls all people to serve the neighbor. Individuals are commissioned as associates in ministry or consecrated as deaconesses or diaconal ministers because they have been called by God to a public ministry of service for the sake of the service of all. This church believes that the call comes to individuals from God both personally and through the church.

³ The juridical function is fulfilled by the document "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline."

People experience the call to commissioned or consecrated ministry through a variety of ways. Fundamental to each is the personal experience of God's justifying act in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the awareness of the gospel in one's life, and the response to that gospel, that lead some to seek to serve in the public ministry of the church. This call may include the example and encouragement of others, the personal assessment of an individual's own interests and abilities, and response to the needs of the world. In whatever way the call may come to an individual, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that such a sense of call must be tested over a period of time, shaped by theological study, and finally confirmed in the church's call to serve as an associate in ministry, diaconal minister, or deaconess. It is the Holy Spirit who enables the church to discern a person's gifts and abilities for this ministry.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America prepares and approves candidates for commissioned and consecrated ministry by setting standards, by providing for theological education through the seminaries of this church, and by evaluating a person's qualifications for service through a synodical candidacy committee. Upon approval for consecration or commissioning, a person is eligible to receive a letter of call to serve in as an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America therefore understands the call to commissioned or consecrated ministry to mean that:

- Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, called by God through the church, are accountable to the Word of God for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- These ministers are called by God through the church and are not self-chosen or self-appointed;
- These ministers are called by God through the church for a ministry of service and for leadership for the sake of Christ's mission, and not for the exercise of domination or coercive power; and
- This ministry is a privilege granted by God through the call of the church and is not a right of the individual.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects each of its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to understand and accept the call to serve in this church's ministry as a call from God, and to believe that the Spirit sustains and upholds those who are commissioned and consecrated so they may fulfill their callings to public ministry.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross so that he might draw the whole world to himself. To those who look upon the cross, grant your wisdom, healing, and eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Prayer for Holy Cross Day, Evangelical Lutheran Worship

II. FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHURCH'S CONFESSION

The church in which you are to be commissioned / consecrated confesses that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God and are the norm of its faith and life. We accept, teach, and confess the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds. We also acknowledge the Lutheran Confessions as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures. Will you therefore serve in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and these creeds and confessions?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

It is essential for a commissioned or consecrated minister to be able to understand and faithfully interpret the Scriptures and the Christian tradition. In this question the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America asks that its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers assume responsibility for upholding this church's doctrinal tradition through faithful understanding and service. All who have been commissioned to serve as associates in ministry or consecrated to serve as deaconesses or diaconal ministers in this church are expected to accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Scripture, Creed and Confessions

The Scriptures reveal God's redemptive actions, including the message of law and gospel, judgment and mercy, "beginning with the Word in Creation, continuing in the history of Israel and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ" (ELCA Constitution, 2.02.). Commissioned and consecrated ministers of this church are to confess and teach the authoritative and normative character of the Scriptures "as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of [this church's] proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA Constitution, 2.03.). The ecumenical creeds are to be taught as true declarations of the faith of this church. The Lutheran Confessions are to be acknowledged as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures.

In identifying specific documents as normative for preaching and teaching, this church expects its commissioned and consecrated ministers to understand that the faith of the church is corporate, not individualistic; catholic, not sectarian; orthodox, not heretical. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects that its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers teach nothing "that departs from the Scriptures or the catholic church" (Conclusion to the Augsburg Confession).

Doctrinal Tradition

Christians enter into the catholic faith through baptism in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Commissioned and consecrated ministers of this church are called to continue in this catholic faith, bearing witness to it within the doctrinal tradition of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers express this tradition when they are:

Evangelical

The gospel is the good news that the decisive turning point in human history occurred in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The evangelical witness is that in Christ, God has acted to bring forgiveness to sinners, liberation for the oppressed, reconciliation for the estranged, and the promise of salvation. It is the gospel that is the power of God to create and sustain the church for God's mission in the world. Commissioned and consecrated ministers of this church are expected to show forth in word and deed God's saving gospel of justification by grace through faith, and so equip the baptized for their ministry in daily life.

Faithful

The church's scriptures, creeds, and confessions identify the grounding and goals of the church's hope: Jesus Christ. The church expects its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to be committed to Jesus who is the Christ, the Savior of the world, the Lord of the Church.

Reforming

The church's past is characterized not only by the faithful witness of the saints, but by sin, error, and the betrayal of its mission. The gospel frees the church for genuine repentance and confession, for renewal and reform. Commissioned and consecrated ministers are expected to acknowledge the church's past and present failures and to lead the church in its repentance and renewal.

Diaconal

Leadership in the church is to be shaped by Jesus' own ministry of serving. This church, therefore, expects its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to resist the temptation to seek power over people whether by force or manipulation and, instead, to minister to God's people and to lead them as servants. Such servant leadership is not one of weakness or timidity, but of strength and boldness.

Ecumenical

The church is called to "maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). This church expects its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to manifest the unity given to the people of God by leading the church in that common witness to the gospel that expresses the unity which the Spirit gives. Commissioned and consecrated ministers are encouraged to participate in ecumenical activities, including prayer and worship, and to witness to the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all" (Ephesians 4:5 and 6).

Ethical

The church witnesses to the gospel not only in its proclamation but also by how it lives and acts. The church expects its commissioned and consecrated ministers to lead and teach the church through example by lives that give expression to the gospel. Commissioned and consecrated ministers are called to represent in their personal lives the new life that is given to all Christians in baptism, and to be examples of a life that is consistent with the Word of God.

Gracious God, as you have called workers to varied tasks in the world and in your church, so you have called [people] to this ministry. Grant [them] joy and a spirit of bold trust, that [their] work may stir up each of us to a life of fruitful service; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Installation of a Deaconess, Diaconal Minister or Associate in Ministry,
Occasional Services for the Assembly

III. A LIFE IN THE FAITH AND IN THE CHURCH

Will you be diligent in your study of the Holy Scriptures and faithful in your use of the means of grace?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

The commissioned or consecrated minister serves people in the church and the world and nurtures the faith of others. In order to do this, the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister needs to develop and nurture a sound knowledge of the Scriptures, both intellectually and devotionally.

The commissioned or consecrated minister will seek regular opportunities for personal participation in the means of grace, including the renewal of baptismal grace in individual

confession and absolution and sharing in the sacrament of Holy Communion, thus receiving God's renewing, sustaining, empowering Spirit both in his or her person and for the practice of ministry.

The commissioned or consecrated minister engages in daily prayer and encourages others in the practice of regular prayer.

The associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister must be a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. There the associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister is an integral part of a community of faith in which mutual support is given and in which care, forgiveness, and healing occur.

The associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister supports and participates not only in the work of the congregation but also in the synodical and churchwide ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This church expects its commissioned and consecrated ministers to work in a collegial relationship with one another and with ordained ministers and to share in mutual accountability with those in positions of leadership and oversight in this church. The commissioned and consecrated ministers of this church are to seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the public ministries of this church and strive to extend the reign of God in the community.

Public ministry in this church carries with it expectations and accountabilities that are determined by the whole church and not simply by a given congregation, synod, institution, or agency served by the commissioned or consecrated minister.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has high expectations for those who serve within the commissioned and consecrated ministries of this church. It holds these expectations because it recognizes that when offense is given by an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, the witness of the gospel may be impaired and the ability to carry out public ministry is threatened.

Yet sin and brokenness are realities in the lives of all persons, including those who serve as ministers. It is crucial for us all to remember that repentance and forgiveness are to be daily realities in the life of every baptized Christian. Neither perfection nor self-righteousness is asked of the commissioned and consecrated ministers of this church. When there is failure in the lives of those who serve in public ministry, this church seeks to provide counsel and understanding. When there are repentance and forgiveness, this church rejoices. Indeed, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that God not only calls but sustains those who are set apart for the commissioned and consecrated ministry of Word and service. It is with this recognition that this church can affirm that those who are set apart for ministries of Word and service are to seek to embody those characteristics which are consistent with their callings.

The associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is concerned for the whole person. He or she welcomes and ministers to all. The minister serves those troubled with spiritual or emotional problems. This church expects that its commissioned and consecrated ministers will respect information confidentially shared.

The commissioned or consecrated minister recognizes the importance of life-long growth in learning. Such growth is intended to renew, extend, and deepen insight into the Scriptures and the doctrinal teaching of the church, and to enable one to respond to the insights and challenges

of the world with greater awareness and a more faithful confession. In an increasingly complex and educated society, the development of an informed intellect and professional skills is crucial to competent commissioned or consecrated ministry. This church expects of its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers regular and disciplined time for personal study, study in the company of others, participation in programs of continuing education, and periodic times for extended study. Congregations and other entities of this church are expected to provide the commissioned or consecrated minister the time and assistance with the financial resources needed for such study.

Because we are all stewards of the lives God has given us, the commissioned or consecrated minister needs to be an example of self-care, as well as caring for others. The significant demands of time and effort in a calling to commissioned or consecrated ministry can lead one to neglect proper nutrition, exercise, and time for recreation. The congregation, or whatever agency or institution the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister serves, should respect the need for the minister to have adequate time for self-care. Caring for self also includes seeking counseling and/or medical care when there is evidence of physical or mental illness, substance abuse, eating disorders, or relational problems.

Almighty God, by our baptism into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you turn us from the old life of sin. Grant that we who are reborn to new life in him may live in righteousness and holiness all our days, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer for Daily Renewal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

IV. THE ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY, DEACONESS, OR DIACONAL MINISTER AS PERSON, EXAMPLE, AND WITNESS

Will you witness to Jesus Christ in word and deed, pray for God's people, and by your own example encourage them in faithful service and holy living?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

The commissioned and consecrated minister is called with all Christians to “lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ” (Philippians 1:27). It is Christ’s own self-giving on the cross that is the example for Christian life for all believers.

Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers fulfill their callings in what they do and in who they are. By their words and in their persons they witness to the gospel of Christ. Diaconal identity is not one of moral or spiritual perfection. It is, instead, the living out of the good news that one is justified by God’s grace and thus called to live out that grace in daily service. The commissioned and consecrated minister is not simply a professional trained in skills to perform a task, but is one sent by the church to lead the community of faith through the ministry of Word and service. The commissioned and consecrated minister enables and equips others for their lives as Christians and for their ministry in the world by faithfully bearing witness to the Word of God, by serving effectively in their particular work, and by example.

Deaconesses and diaconal ministers are intentionally shaped for a diaconal identity, following the historic and ecumenical traditions. These consecrated ministers will seek to cultivate in themselves and in one another that diaconal model of life and service. Associates in ministry are

commissioned to a life of faithful service and will ground their ministry in the church's baptismal commitment to serve the neighbor.

Holy Living

The associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is to be an example of holy living so that the minister's life does not become an impediment to the hearing of the gospel or a scandal to the community of faith. The qualities of such a life include the following:

Integrity and Trustworthiness

The commissioned or consecrated minister is expected to be honest and forthright in dealings with others while protecting privileged and confidential communications. The minister should strive to develop a public reputation for integrity and to nurture trustworthy personal relationships. Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers must avoid conduct that is dishonest, deceitful, deceptive, or manipulative of others for personal benefit or gain.

The associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is expected to be fiscally responsible and is to be a faithful steward of time, talents, and possessions. The minister is to be an example to the community of generous giving.

Trustworthiness in Relationships

In all relationships, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is expected to honor his or her public promises, bear the burdens of others, and seek to build up the body of Christ.

In public ministry as well as in private life, the associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister is expected to develop and nurture appropriate relationships with others, acting in ways that build and sustain trust.

The commissioned or consecrated minister will respect and nurture friendships. Ministers will support friendships among others and will welcome and nurture friendships for themselves but will avoid compromising their ministerial callings in such relationships.

The commissioned or consecrated minister will strive to serve others and nurture trust by enhancing family life. Within the family, forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and mutual care are to be expressed. Children, if any, will be regarded with love, respect, and commitment. It is also expected that ministers maintain responsible relationships with their parents and other immediate relatives.

The associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister is expected to respect and support single people, encouraging them in their appropriate and healthy relationships.

This church is committed to the sanctity of marriage.⁴ In public ministry as well as in private life, the commissioned or consecrated minister is expected to uphold an understanding of marriage that is biblically informed and consistent with the teachings of this church. In so doing, the associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister will respect and support those who are married, recognizing this church's strong continuing support for this holy estate. As the social statement

⁴ This "Vision and Expectations" document uses the terms "marriage," "marry," and "married" to refer to marriage between a man and a woman.

Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust declares: “Marriage is a covenant of mutual promises, commitment, and hope authorized legally by the state and blessed by God. The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have recognized marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10:6-9. . . .”⁵ The public promises of marriage are to be honored and trust is to be nurtured for the good of all.

This church acknowledges that members of this church hold various convictions about lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. Nonetheless, this church has committed itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize and support lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and to hold the partners publicly accountable for the relationship. It has committed itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church. It also has committed itself to make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church should not call or roster people in such relationships.⁶ The associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is expected to respect the people who hold these various convictions.

Trustworthiness in Beginning, Sustaining, and Ending Marriages and Same-Gender Relationships

Should an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister seek to marry, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought and the minister shall make the decision known among those he or she serves.

A commissioned or consecrated minister who is married is expected to keep his or her marriage inviolate until death, to cultivate love and respect for her or his spouse, and to seek marital counseling when it is needed. It is recognized that due to human sin and brokenness, in some cases the marital relationship may have to be dissolved. Should a minister and spouse separate or seek to divorce, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought. Similarly, should a commissioned or consecrated minister decide to marry following a divorce, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought.

⁵ *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2009, p. 15

⁶ Action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly – CA09.05.23 , CA09.05.24, CA09.05.26, and CA09.05.27. Because of these actions, this document includes this church’s vision and expectations for single people, married people, and people in “publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.” The terms in the latter descriptive phrase are intended to have their common meanings. “Lifelong” means that the two parties intend the relationship to last as long as they both shall live. “Monogamous” means that the relationship is between two people only and excludes the possibility of other partners. “Same-gender” means that the relationship is between two men or two women of legal age. “Public accountability” means that the two parties to the relationship openly acknowledge the relationship, have a demonstrable commitment to the relationship as monogamous and lifelong, and have a willingness to seek and accept the aid of individuals and community in sustaining the relationship and the well being of both parties and any dependents.

For a commissioned or consecrated minister, both church and community are part of the public within which he or she is accountable. Public accountability for a married associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister includes recognition and support of the marriage in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law marriage requirements. Public accountability for an associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship includes recognition and support of the relationship in his or her ELCA congregation and compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides or, if unavailable, other means of documenting the status of the relationships and protecting the well-being of the partner and any dependents.

Should an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister seek to enter a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought and the minister shall make the decision known among those he or she serves.

A commissioned or consecrated minister in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship is expected to keep that relationship inviolate until death, to cultivate love and respect for his or her same-gender partner, and to seek counseling with the partner when it is needed. It is recognized that in some cases, due to human sin and brokenness, such a relationship may have to be dissolved. Should a minister and partner separate or seek to end their relationship, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought. Similarly, should a commissioned or consecrated minister, following the ending of a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, decide to enter another such relationship, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought.

Trustworthiness in Sexual Conduct

The expectations of this church regarding the sexual conduct of its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers are grounded in the understanding that human sexuality is a gift and trust from God. These ministers are to live in such a way as to honor this gift and trust.

The associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is expected to reject sexual promiscuity, the manipulation of others for purposes of sexual gratification, and all attempts of sexual seduction and sexual harassment, including taking physical or emotional advantage of others.

This church's social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states: "Sexual intimacy, together with promises of fidelity and public accountability, nurtures bonds that allow people to thrive and provides a rich context for the care and support of children."⁷ It also states: "It is in marriage that the highest degrees of physical intimacy are matched with and protected by the highest levels of binding commitment, including legal protection. It is in marriage that public promises of lifetime commitment can create the foundation for trust, intimacy, and safety."⁸

A single commissioned or consecrated minister is expected to live a chaste life, holy in body and spirit, honoring the single life, and working for the good of all.

A married commissioned or consecrated minister is expected to live in fidelity to his or her spouse, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a marriage relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful.

A commissioned or consecrated minister who is in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship is expected to live in fidelity to his or her partner, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a publicly accountable relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful.

Almighty God, by our baptism into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you turn us from the old life of sin. Grant that we who are reborn to new life in him

⁷ *Human Sexuality*, p. 15

⁸ *Human Sexuality*, p. 17

may live in righteousness and holiness all our days, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer for Daily Renewal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Faithfulness in Witness in the World

The charge to witness to the world is given to the church today as it was to the apostles of the early church. The content of that witness is God's revelation in Jesus Christ: God's creative self-disclosure as the Word made flesh; Jesus Christ victorious over death for the salvation of God's people; and the promise of everlasting life. The testimony of these acts of God's grace and forgiveness is expressed in both word and deed by commissioned and consecrated ministers through compassion, hospitality, patience, and forgiveness; through seeking peace and justice for all people; through care for God's creation; and through sharing one's faith through teaching, conversation, and personal witness. This witness is characterized by:

Evangelism

The apostolic witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ is at the heart of the church's mission. It is the proclamation of the message of salvation in Jesus Christ and reconciliation with God. This gospel is proclaimed through Word and sacraments. Through its commissioned and consecrated ministers of Word and service, this church affirms the critically important task of communicating this evangelical word to the world.

Compassion

Christians are called by God to participate in compassionate care for those in need. This church expects its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to follow the example of Jesus and to lead the church in compassionate care of the suffering and to speak to the church on behalf of the needs of the world.

Confession

Commissioned and consecrated ministers are expected to enter into the church's act of confessing the Christian faith in our world. The church is called to such a confession because its present existence lies between the advent of God's reign in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ and the promised certain consummation of the eschatological kingdom. This confession places this church and its ministers in the struggle against sin, death, and the devil.

Hospitality

Just as Jesus received sinners and ate with them, the church is called to welcome the stranger and to open its life to those who are outside the church or alienated from it. This church expects its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to be models of appropriate hospitality in their personal lives, to practice their ministry of service with welcome to all who have needs, and to lead the church in its witness to divine hospitality.

Peacemaking

The culmination of God's eschatological salvation will be the overcoming of every enmity and the reconciliation of the whole creation. Yet even in the present time, God's peace is a reality. This church expects its commissioned and consecrated ministers to be witnesses to and instruments of God's peace and reconciliation for the world.

Justice

The church is to witness to God's call for justice in every aspect of life, including testimony against injustice and oppression, whether personal or systemic. This church expects its associates

in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to be committed to justice in the life of the church, in society, and in the world. The ordained minister is expected to oppose all forms of harassment and assault.

Stewardship of the Earth

The people of God are called to the care and redemption of all that God has made. This includes the need to speak on behalf of this earth, its environment and natural resources, and its inhabitants. This church expects its commissioned and consecrated ministers to be exemplary stewards of the earth's resources and to lead and serve this church in the stewardship of God's creation.

Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for the Third Sunday after Epiphany, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

CONCLUSION

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirms that “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” (ELCA Constitution, 4.01.).

This church expects its associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to honor and equip the baptized for their ministry in the world. Such a ministry involves giving leadership in the church's witness to the world, exhibiting awareness of the global challenges of a multicultural, diverse society, and assisting the members of this church to live their daily vocations in faithfulness.

At the same time the commissioned and consecrated ministers of this church can know that they themselves are regarded as servants of Christ and messengers of the good news of God's salvation in Christ. As such they are honored for the ministry they bring to this church and to the world. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America prays for the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to those who serve this church as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

O God, through the ages you have called women and men to the diaconate and to particular ministries in the 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, that many people will be served and your name be glorified; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayers of the Day from the Rites for Installation of Deaconesses, Diaconal Ministers, and Associates in Ministry, *Occasional Services for the Assembly*

Revisions to the Candidacy Manual

(Agenda III.B.1d; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit Q, Parts 1 and 5)

Church Council Action:

Mr. Mark S. Helmke moved the recommendation of the *ad hoc* committee regarding revisions to the Candidacy Manual, noting that the committee recommended a series of amendments.

Moved: To adopt the revised Candidacy Manual; and
To authorize the Vocation and Education unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to make any necessary corrections for clarity and accuracy.

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

Mr. Helmke drew the council's attention to the committee's written report for its recommended amendments. He said the first set of amendments is intended to clarify current practices regarding background checks. The current manual states that background checks should cover the standard seven-year period, but that standard has changed and could cover a longer period of time. On behalf of the *ad hoc* committee, Mr. Helmke moved adoption.

Moved: *To amend the proposed revised Candidacy Manual by deletion and insertion:*
1. Page 86, lines 24–25: delete “The Background Check is conducted for a seven-year period.”
2. Page 99, lines 29–30: amend to read, “It is recommended that the background check cover at least seven years or a greater period, if provided by the background search provider.”

Vice President Peña called for discussion of the amendments.

Ms. Lynette M. Reitz noted variations in capitalization throughout the revised Candidacy Manual.

Secretary David D. Swartling referred to the second half of the main motion that will allow for editorial corrections later.

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

Moved

Carried: *To amend the proposed revised Candidacy Manual by deletion and insertion:*
1. Page 86, lines 24–25: delete “The Background Check is conducted for a seven-year period.”
2. Page 99, lines 29–30: amend to read, “It is recommended that the background check cover at least seven years or a greater period, if provided by the background search provider.”

Vice President Peña declared the amendments approved.

Mr. Helmke explained the second set of amendments that the committee recommended. The amendments will change the wording in the revised manual from “marriage or family situation” to “family situation or personal life.” On behalf of the *ad hoc* committee, Mr. Helmke moved adoption.

Moved: *To amend the proposed revised Candidacy Manual by substitution:*
Page 89, line 39, and page 114, lines 33–34:
• Amend “Are there issues in your marriage or family situation that could adversely affect your ability to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA?” to read instead, “Are there issues in your family situation or personal life that could adversely affect your ability to serve...?”
• Amend the corresponding “Entrance Information” and “Approval Information” forms in the same ways.

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

Moved;

Carried: *To amend the proposed revised Candidacy Manual by substitution:*
Page 89, line 39, and page 114, lines 33–34:
• Amend “Are there issues in your marriage or family situation that could adversely affect your ability to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA?” to read instead, “Are there issues

in your family situation or personal life that could adversely affect your ability to serve...?”
• Amend the corresponding “Entrance Information” and “Approval Information” forms in the same ways.

Vice President Peña declared the motion to amend approved.

Mr. Helmke stated there were no other amendments proposed for the Candidacy Manual.

Vice President Peña opened the floor for discussion of the revised Candidacy Manual as amended.

Ms. Susan W. McArver asked for clarification of the revised manual, page 10, line 14, where it describes the voting members of the candidacy committee as including “the synod bishop or her or his appointee, appointed (or elected) committee members, and a seminary representative recommended by the candidate’s ELCA or ELCIC seminary and appointed by the Vocation and Education unit.” Candidacy committees deal with candidates from a variety of seminaries, she said.

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson agreed that section was in error. He suggested that it could say: “. . . a seminary representative recommended by a seminary related to that synod and appointed by the Vocation and Education unit.” He added that the reference to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) is not necessary there.

Ms. McArver moved that the council consider an amendment.

Moved;

Seconded: That the Church Council amend its process for receiving proposed amendments to ministry policy revisions to allow an amendment to the Candidacy Manual which was received after the established deadline.

There being no discussion, Vice President Peña asked if everyone understood the motion and called for the vote.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: **That the Church Council amend its process for receiving proposed amendments to ministry policy revisions to allow an amendment to the Candidacy Manual which was received after the established deadline.**

Vice President Peña declared the motion passed and allowed the amendment to be considered.

Ms. McArver offered a motion to amend the revised Candidacy Manual.

Moved;

Seconded: *To amend the proposed revised Candidacy Manual by substitution:*
Page 10, line 14: . . . representative recommended by ~~the candidate’s ELCA or ELCIC seminary~~
a seminary related to that synod and . . .

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede asked whether the amendment should be specific about it being an ELCA seminary.

Pr. Olson responded that the question gave him opportunity to explain why it was not necessary to mention the ELCIC at this point in the document. A representative of an ELCIC seminary may work with a candidate in the ELCA candidacy process, so ELCIC seminaries are mentioned at several points in the document, he said. However a representative of an ELCIC seminary would not serve as a voting member of an ELCA candidacy committee.

Pr. Tiede asked if the amendment should specify “an ELCA seminary related to that synod.”

Ms. McArver accepted that as a friendly amendment to the amendment.

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

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:

To amend the proposed revised Candidacy Manual by substitution:
**Page 10, line 14: . . . representative recommended by ~~the candidate's ELCA or ELCIC~~
seminary an ELCA seminary related to that synod and . . .**

Vice President Peña declared the amendment passed and called for discussion of the main motion.

The Rev. Heather S. Lubold mentioned that the manual addresses such issues as candidacy and reinstatement, and she asked how this church will deal with ministers ordained under extraordinary circumstances.

Pr. Olson said that conversation on this topic will continue later with consideration of a rite. He gave the council background information about Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM). ELM has a roster of ordained ministers who may either seek reinstatement to the roster or enter the ELCA candidacy process, and no specific mention in this document is necessary, he said.

Secretary Swartling added that Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson had convened a group to consider this issue. The Office of the Secretary determined that the applicable bylaw did not answer the question whether ELM pastors should be ordained or received. The Office of the Presiding Bishop, in coordination with the Conference of Bishops, developed a rite to receive ELM pastors on to the roster of the ELCA, he explained. The council will consider that rite later.

Pr. Lubold asked whether ELM pastors would go through the ELCA candidacy process.

Secretary Swartling replied that everyone admitted to the ELCA roster, whether ordained or received, goes through candidacy.

Pr. Tiede pointed out that a section of the manual that addresses "Other Ordained Ministers" may apply to the ELM roster.

Pr. Olson agreed and added that the section, under "Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers of Persons Ordained in Another Lutheran Church or Another Christian Tradition" in the manual would apply to 17 pastors on the ELM roster whose ordinations were not previously recognized by the ELCA.

There being no further questions or discussion Vice President Peña called on the Rev. Raymond A. Miller to lead the council in prayer. Following the prayer, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger abstained from the vote.

VOTED:

**CC10.04.11 To adopt the revised Candidacy Manual (as amended); and
To authorize the Vocation and Education unit, in consultation with the Office
of the Secretary, to make any necessary corrections for clarity and accuracy.**

Vice President Peña declared the motion approved.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson addressed the council:

"As I reflect from August's assembly to this moment, I want to say a word of deep gratitude, first, to you who have been elected by this church to shepherd the process of implementing actions called for. You have done this in an exemplary way of thoughtfulness, of respect, and attentiveness to detail.

"I also want to say a great word of thanks to the Conference of Bishops. They have been absolutely key to being participants in this evolving process beginning in October through the Academy and through March. I can tell you, and if you followed along, every iteration has been clear, has been more consistent with the actions of the Churchwide Assembly in adopting the social statement, and have been very respectful of varied contributions.

"Having said all of those words of gratitude, we would not be at this point if it were not for the Rev. Dr. Stan Olson. He has guided us with incredible thoughtfulness, with an amazing capacity in his mind to hold all this information, with the receptivity to the contributions of many and then to come back, sometimes in a matter of days, with revisions that reflect those contributions. I think, on behalf of this whole church, I would invite you to stand and express your thanks."

Pr. Olson said he received the applause of the council on behalf of numerous people, naming members of the Conference of Bishops, ELM, the Lutheran Coalition for Renewal (CORE), Lutherans Concerned/North America, past

presiding bishops, staff of the Church in Society unit, members of the task force on human sexuality, and hundreds—possibly thousands—of others who have contributed in some way during the past 25 years to revising the ministry policies the ELCA. “We are still a church that is tense over this, but we are Easter people,” he added. “We have done an Easter thing today.”

RACIAL JUSTICE PROCESS OBSERVATION

(Agenda V.A.3)

Background:

Process observation continued at the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council and was led by the current members of the Racial Justice Working Group: Mr. Baron Blanchard, Ms. Arielle Mastellar, Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, and Ms. Lynette M. Reitz.

Four additional members joined the Racial Justice Working Group at this meeting: Mr. Ivan A. Perez, Ms. Judith Barlow-Roberts, Mr. David Truland, and Ms. Deborah Wilson.

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked the council for the work it had done that day. He called on Ms. Lynette M. Reitz and the process observation team.

Ms. Reitz invited each team member to share one or two observations and their written reports. She pointed out that the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA questionnaire referred to a shared northern European Lutheran ethnic heritage. She expressed the view that such wording excluded some ELCA members from their Lutheran heritage.

Mr. Baron Blanchard asked that primers be more focused with clearer purposes.

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus stressed the importance of the ELCA having leaders and staff members of color and whose primary language is not English, and the significance of using inclusive language in talking about accompaniment and international cooperation.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon said he had been listening for the voices of those who are not represented at the meeting. He reflected on the Bible study as possibly the only place he heard those voices, challenging the council to keep less privileged people in mind.

Vice President Peña asked for questions or other comments. There being none, he called for announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary David D. Swartling made a number of announcements regarding dinner, breakfast, and Sunday worship. He stated that, after recess, evening prayer would begin at 5:20 P.M.

RECESS

The April 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 5:14 P.M.

Following the plenary session, the Rev. Susan C. Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, led a service of evening prayer in the first-floor Chapel. Ms. Lelanda Lee, ecumenical resource representative of The Episcopal Church, served as lector.

**Sunday, April 11, 2010
Plenary Session V**

Prior to the convening of Plenary Session Five of the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council, council members and advisors gathered for a service of Holy Communion in the first-floor Chapel. Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson served as presiding and preaching minister; Ms. Elizabeth Gaskins was assisting minister; Vice President Carlos E. Peña was lector; and Ms. Nancy L. Olson provided music.

Vice President Peña called the fifth plenary session to order at 9:22 A.M. He thanked the council for the work it did the previous day. He also expressed gratitude to those who had led worship.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked the vice president for his role in worship.

Vice President Peña asked the Rev. Michael L. Burk, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, for the report of the Conference of Bishops.

**REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS
(Agenda II.B.; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 5)**

The Rev. Michael L. Burk indicated that he was reporting on behalf of the Rev. Allan C. Bjornberg, bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops. Noting that he is one of the newest bishops in the conference, Bp. Burk commented on the level of trust that he witnesses among its members. He called the work they did in helping churchwide colleagues craft the ministry policies of this church “the Conference of Bishops at its best.”

Mission support was a key topic, in the most recent meeting of the conference, surrounded by creative imagining of the future of this church and God’s mission, Bp. Burk added.

Bp. Burk asked the other synod bishops for additional comments. There being none, he thanked all his colleagues in the Conference of Bishops.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY
(Agenda II.A.3; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 3)**

Vice President Peña called on Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for the report of the secretary.

Secretary Swartling remembered the life of his longtime mentor and colleague, who had passed away recently in Seattle. During a recent visit to Seattle, the secretary found a woman selling religious symbols, and he purchased a depiction of an anchor. The artist had included a reflection that equated being anchored with being secure and immovable.

Secretary Swartling challenged that description, saying an anchored ship is still affected by current, wind, tide, and other external forces. As an officer on a submarine, he said he experienced coming above board in the morning to find landmarks at new locations with respect to the anchored ship.

The metaphor of the anchor may be more accurate than the artist portrayed, the secretary suggested. This church is anchored yet affected by external forces.

Secretary Swartling brought samples from the ELCA Archives to demonstrate the resources of this church and the fact that anxiety is not unique to the ELCA. The archives also include vivid, living examples of this church’s history of interdependence, he added. He cited the ELCA constitution that each part of this church recognizes it is the church while not the whole church.

In his written report, Secretary Swartling indicated that work of the staff in the Office of the Secretary has been “fast and furious.” He noted that he wanted to say more in his oral report about a number of issues raised in the written report—congregations voting to leave the ELCA, synod and Churchwide Assembly planning, and the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.

Secretary Swartling credited synod bishops for helping keep the process smooth for congregations deciding whether or not to leave the ELCA. He expressed frustration that, before making decisions, not all congregations want to hear the reasons the bishops provide for staying in the ELCA.

Secretary Swartling reported that as of April 7, 2010, there were 308 congregations that had taken a first vote to leave the ELCA. Of those 308 votes, 221 passed by two-thirds and 87 failed. Of the 308 congregations, 90 had taken a second vote and 89 passed. He noted that some of those 89 congregations may still appear on the roster of ELCA congregations, because the unique nature of each congregation means removal must be very deliberate.

Secretary Swartling reminded the council members that the first Synod Assembly of 2010 would begin April 16. He encouraged the members to attend their Synod Assemblies, to be introduced, and to be recognized for their service on the council and as representatives of the three expressions of this church.

The secretary stated that synod and churchwide staff routinely discuss matters coming before the Synod Assemblies, and council members could be included in those talks.

Synod Assemblies of 2010 will elect voting members to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, Secretary Swartling observed. He urged council members to communicate the importance of those elections in raising up and supporting faithful, wise and courageous leaders.

The secretary also pointed out that the representational principles of this church expand the leadership opportunities for youth and young adults.

Some ELCA members have questioned whether assemblies should hold hearings to discuss the election of churchwide voting members. Secretary Swartling offered some advice for those in the synods who are planning such hearings, stressing the reasons for electing voting members instead of delegates.

The secretary's written report included a memorandum explaining differences between memorials and resolutions, and he discussed the merits of proper resolutions and some of the topics of resolutions already received in synods. Resolutions are being drafted to revisit the social statement and ministry policy decisions, and Secretary Swartling emphasized the need for those resolutions to respect *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Secretary Swartling encouraged debate in this church but in good order. He cited *Robert's Rules* to indicate that motions that conflict with the constitution are out of order and null and void, and he gave examples of motions that would be out of order at Synod Assemblies—to repudiate Churchwide Assembly action, to follow earlier versions of governing policies, to allow leaders or congregations to be on rosters of two church bodies, or to unilaterally reduce mission support from a synod to the churchwide organization.

The secretary asked those present to notify the Office of Secretary if they have any questions about whether particular actions are appropriate. He added that the Office of the Secretary works with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and other churchwide units to provide the best counsel possible to synods.

Secretary Swartling introduced Ms. Mary Beth Nowak to discuss planning for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Ms. Nowak said the 2011 assembly will be at the Marriott World Center in Orlando, Florida. She expressed pleasure in the space for the assembly and the opportunity to house the entire assembly under one roof. Synods have been sent information to register their voting members online, she added.

Three synods have agreed to be involved in a test paperless project for this Churchwide Assembly, Ms. Nowak reported. More synods may be involved, depending on the technology that is used in the project. She said planning is underway to conduct the 2013 Churchwide Assembly without paper.

Ms. Nowak announced that to contain costs, the 2011 assembly will be shorter than originally planned. Pre-assembly meetings will start Sunday, August 14; the assembly will begin Monday, August 15, and conclude Friday, August 19.

Secretary Swartling noted that the written Report of the Secretary included lists of calls issued on behalf of the Church Council and property transactions. Travel costs are also addressed.

The secretary stated that 47 of 64 synods are involved in the ELCA's endorsed insurance program with Church Mutual Insurance Company. The plan to establish a pooled risk fund has been thwarted by economic realities, he added.

Secretary Swartling reported that he had sent, per council instructions, a letter to the youth representatives with the constitutional basis for not having youth advisors of the council serve as advisory members of the Churchwide

Assembly. He said the letter included this church's commitment to change the demographics of the governance of the ELCA.

The secretary indicated that a memorandum on dual rostering was in the council's meeting materials.

Secretary Swartling pointed out that many letters received by the Office of the Secretary and the Office of the Presiding Bishop are posted on the Net Community Web site, giving the example of letters asking that ministry policy decisions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly not be implemented. Replies assure the writers that the letters are provided to members of the Church Council. One council member has cited such online letters in bringing new business to this meeting, he reported. The secretary encouraged all council members to look at those letters for possible issues they would like the council to address.

Secretary Swartling reminded the council that it had voted that reservations for Church Council meetings must be made at least one month in advance, with individual council members paying the difference for late registrations. He said that penalty was not imposed for this meeting, but, as travel and other costs increase, this becomes a more sensitive issue. The secretary said meeting information is sent out 60 days in advance and reminders are sent 40 days in advance, asking council members to make their reservations in a timely manner as a matter of stewardship.

Secretary Swartling offered a presentation on the *Model Constitution for Congregations* "through the prism of interdependence" from the perspective of mission-support obligations. The model constitution does not say what many people say it says, he added.

Congregations are incorporated and, under statutory nonprofit law, their councils have fiduciary responsibilities and are subject to specific tax issues while being insulated from income tax, the secretary stated.

Secretary Swartling emphasized that the constitution is a missional document and cited:

***C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful.**

The ELCA is not an amalgamation of congregations but an organization that finds strength in its interdependence, he stressed. This provision addresses both the polity and ecclesiology of this church, he added.

Chapters 2, "Confession of Faith," and 3, "Nature of the Church," of the model constitution are required. The secretary said that amendments to Chapter 2 are not appropriate but that he is willing to review suggestions on a case-by-case basis.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 deal with "Statement of Purpose," "Powers of the Congregation," and "Church Affiliation," respectively. Secretary Swartling cited:

***C4.01. 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.**

***C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:**

The secretary drew attention to the active voice, present tense verbs that followed—worship, proclaim, carry out, serve, nurture, and manifest.

Secretary Swartling pointed out that the next provision addresses the work of the congregation regarding the listed purposes, especially two points:

***C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:**

g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

It is a constitutional imperative that congregations support their work, their synod's work, and the work of the churchwide organization, and interdependence is embedded in the constitution, he underscored.

Interdependence appears in other parts of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the secretary continued, as well as in the ELCA constitution:

8.15. Since congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization are partners that share in God’s mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program of this church.

The Model Constitution for Congregations picks that up:

***C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:**

b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

“Pledges” is a significant word, the secretary added, indicating the covenant into which the congregations enter to be interdependent. “Withholding mission support is a violation of this provision,” he stated.

This pledge is apparent throughout the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, Secretary Swartling said. Chapter 8, “Membership,” deals with the members of ELCA congregations:

***C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:**

c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

Interdependence is the responsibility of individual members of this church, he declared.

Chapter 9 of the Model Constitution for Congregations addresses pastors, the secretary noted.

***C9.03.c. Every pastor shall:**

4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the [Synod in which he or she is rostered].

He pointed out that it does not say “maintain” or “give minimum support” but “endeavor to increase” as the legal, ethical, and moral obligations of pastors.

“Vision and Expectations” includes, under the section titled The Ordained Minister as Person and Example, the following statement: “The ordained minister supports not only the work of the congregation, but also the synodical and churchwide ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Secretary Swartling called these provisions and policies “sacred covenants that come with the privilege of serving as a rostered leader in the ELCA.”

Congregation councils have similar requirements named in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. Under provision C12.04., the Congregation Council is obligated “to promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.”

In provision C12.05. the model constitution states, “The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.” As the congregation’s board of directors, the council is required to set the congregation’s budget, and “the budget shall include this congregation’s full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.”

Secretary Swartling added that, to make it perfectly clear, provision C12.06. mandates that the Congregation Council see that its constitution is followed.

There are provisions parallel to those of the *Model Constitution for Congregations* in the synod and churchwide constitutions, the secretary stated. Interdependence is not just an ideal but a concept embedded in the polity and ecclesiology of this church, he declared. This church is diminished when a congregation leaves, because interdependence is diminished.

Secretary Swartling asked, “What does it mean to be a leader in the ELCA?” The governing documents of this church provide some legal requirements, but he cited the ELCA constitution:

C5.01.h. Leaders in this church should demonstrate that they are servants by their words, life-style, and manner of leadership. Leaders in this church will recognize their accountability to the Triune God, to the whole Church, to each other, and to the organization of this church in which they have been asked to serve.

This is interdependence from a different perspective, he added.

Defining “leadership” begins in Psalm 24:1, “The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it,” the secretary stated.

Church Council members are members of the board of directors of a multimillion-dollar international corporation, Secretary Swartling said. Board members of social service organizations are routinely expected to make financial contributions to the organization. While council members are engaged in one-on-one conversations about stewardship, the secretary suggested the Kalos Society offers another way to be leaders in personal stewardship.

An action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly prompted the emphasis on wills and estate planning, and Secretary Swartling added that his will includes his congregation, synod, and the churchwide organization. He introduced Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, president of the ELCA Foundation and executive director of the Development Services unit.

INTRODUCTION TO KALOS—THE ELCA LEGACY SOCIETY (Agenda VI.C.)

Background:

Planning for a churchwide wills and bequest campaign was initiated through the ELCA Foundation and Development Services unit in 2008. For the purpose of increasing support of ELCA churchwide ministries, and as a service to every ELCA congregation and member, the ELCA Foundation will roll out a national wills and bequest campaign beginning with the launch of Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society—in 2010.

Church Council Discussion:

Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson, president of the ELCA Foundation and executive director of the Development Services unit, presented an update on the launch of the Kalos Society and plans for the roll-out of the wills and bequest campaign. The society and campaign have been planned for years, but the 2009 Churchwide Assembly brought that planning to the forefront with a resolution sponsored by the Montana Synod:

RESOLVED, that this assembly request that the ELCA develop a focused, long-term churchwide program to include publicity, education, survey response forms and any such other means to encourage all members to prepare an updated will, along with updated beneficiary designations, and furthermore to encourage all members to consider including one or more ELCA-affiliated ministries in their estate plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that each member of this and subsequent assemblies, all rostered pastors, staff members and leaders of the ELCA be encouraged to undertake such planning and be leaders by example in this effort.

Ms. Halverson said the Kalos Society and wills and bequest campaign are rooted in the strategic priorities of the churchwide organization. Wills are important for ELCA members, not only for their own stewardship lives and for the future of this church’s ministries but for the well-being of their families, she stated.

Ms. Halverson said the ELCA Foundation and the Development Services unit have included the Kalos Society and wills and bequest campaign into their strategic planning with the goal of increasing annual bequest income to the churchwide organization to \$15 million by 2015. Bequests have been an important source of revenue in recent years, and there is a potential for bequests to become a more consistent and stable source of income, she added.

Ms. Halverson suggested that Lutherans are likely to prefer having wills but have not been approached with the tools to prepare them. The recognition society and churchwide campaign will provide visibility for those tools.

Ms. Halverson introduced Mr. David Novak, director for gift planning in the ELCA Foundation, crediting him with the ideas for the society and campaign.

Mr. Novak said recent surveys indicated that 60 to 65 percent of all U.S. citizens do not have valid wills, and he estimated that about half of all ELCA members do not have wills or estate plans. Only about 8 percent of all ELCA members have remembered this church in their wills. That “room for growth” indicates the need for an ELCA bequest program.

People who consider including a charity in their wills are more likely to make annual donations to that charity, Mr. Novak stated. And the current donors to Vision for Mission, to World Hunger, or to global mission are likely new candidates for including the ELCA in their wills and estate plans.

If less than 10 percent of ELCA members include this church's ministries in their wills, then more than 90 percent of donor mortality results in lost current giving, he noted.

Since 2004 the ELCA has averaged about \$4.5 million in bequest revenue annually, and all bequests coming through the ELCA Foundation to endowments and other ministries have amounted to \$7 million or \$8 million annually, Mr. Novak calculated. Working with a consultant and looking at databases of communing Lutherans in ELCA congregations, it is estimated there is a potential of \$20 million to \$25 million in bequest income each year for ELCA ministries and endowments.

Projections are based on a number of assumptions, Mr. Novak said, but even conservative estimates are positive, because the donor base already is available to this church.

Mr. Novak added that a recognition society is an important element of a strong bequest program as a way to express this church's gratitude and as a means of marketing the ELCA's request for bequests.

The story recorded in Mark 14 about a woman in Bethany anointing Jesus is the basis of the recognition society, Mr. Novak stated. In the Gospel, Jesus said, "She has performed a good service for me," and, later, "What she has done will be told in remembrance of her." The Greek word for "good," "beautiful," or "lovely" is "kalos," Mr. Novak said, and that is the source of the name of Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society.

Mr. Novak said Ms. Halverson will issue a letter soon inviting charter membership in the society through Easter 2011. A recognition booklet will be sent to donors. He asked Church Council members to consider their own faith-inspired stories and to advocate on behalf of the society.

The ELCA Foundation plans to roll out the national wills campaign in 2011, Mr. Novak declared. The campaign will encourage ELCA members to have wills and will work with ELCA congregations to develop their own bequest programs.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked Ms. Halverson and Mr. Novak for their presentation.

Secretary Swartling noted a resolution regarding Kalos would be removed from the *en bloc* action and discussed later in this meeting. He concluded the Report of the Secretary.

REVISIONS TO THE ELCA PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS PROGRAM

(Agenda, III.F.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit J, Part 1a; Exhibit P, Parts 2a–2g)

Background:

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly approved *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and its implementing resolutions. Implementing Resolution 7 read:

To call upon the ELCA to amend the eligibility provisions of the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program, consistent with the policies of this church."

Following the Churchwide Assembly, staff of the Board of Pensions researched the implications of this resolution, fully aware that the Churchwide Assembly action requires "policies of this church" to be developed and approved by the Church Council. Amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program must be consistent with the policy changes to "Vision and Expectations" and "Definition and Guidelines for Discipline."

Preliminary work on plan amendments began following the Assembly and included introductory discussions at the October-November 2009 Board of Trustees' meeting. The Board of Pensions drafted provisional amendments for the February-March 2010 Board of Trustees' meeting, with the understanding that the time line preceded the spring 2010 Conference of Bishops and Church Council meetings. The Board of Pensions has worked closely with the Office of the Secretary and the Vocation and Education unit to be informed and updated with pertinent policy change recommendations as they have developed.

Plan amendments approved by the Board of Trustees in February-March 2010 were viewed as preliminary and subject to further revisions as necessitated by actions of the 2010 Conference of Bishops and Church Council meetings.

The proposed amendments are designed to provide the same benefits to an eligible same-gender partner as would be provided to a spouse, to the extent possible under each plan, and as permitted by federal law.

If approved by the ELCA Church Council, the Board of Trustees of the Board of Pensions will meet by teleconference to finalize the amendments.

Church Council Action:

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

Mr. Helmke reported that the committee dealt with a number of resolutions that the Church Council will consider *en bloc*. He said the committee's recommendation regarding revisions to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program was removed from *en bloc*.

Now that the Church Council had approved revisions to this church's ministry policies, in accordance with actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, Mr. Helmke declared it appropriate for the council to consider proposed amendments to ELCA benefit plans.

Mr. Helmke noted that the recommended action item involves six separate benefit plans administered by the Board of Pensions. He summarized the action as revising the eligibility of those benefit plans to permit participation by people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships consistent with the policies now adopted by the council.

Mr. Helmke pointed out that Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer of the ELCA Board of Pensions, was present and available to answer questions.

Mr. Helmke characterized the proposed changes to the benefit plans as attempting to treat people in same-gender relationships "in the same fashion that married couples are treated where it is possible to do so consistent with existing law."

The discussion in committee had included the importance of being able to pinpoint specific moments when coverage would begin and end, he said. The plan amendments would create a series of affidavits documenting those dates.

Mr. Helmke mentioned that an editorial correction was made to page 5 of Exhibit P, Part 2b. Under Section 8.04, the first line of disclosure "c" gives the false impression that "Member's" should be stricken.

Mr. Helmke moved the action the committee recommended.

Moved: To approve amendments to the ELCA Retirement Plan, the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan, the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan, the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, the ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan, and the ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan as detailed in Exhibit P, Parts 2a-2f.

Vice President Peña asked for discussion. There being none, he called for the vote and declared the motion approved.

VOTED:
CC10.04.12 To approve amendments to the ELCA Retirement Plan, the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan, the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan, the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, the ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan, and the ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan as detailed in Exhibit P, Parts 2a-2f.

Mr. Helmke concluded the report of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee.

Vice President Peña thanked Mr. Helmke and called on Secretary David D. Swartling.

Secretary Swartling acknowledged the work done by staff of the ELCA Board of Pensions in drafting these plan changes without knowing how this church's policies would be revised, and he encouraged council members to express their gratitude to Mr. Kapanke. The secretary noted the plan changes will go into effect on May 1, 2010.

The council responded with applause.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Judith Barlow-Roberts to reflect on "Dwelling in the Word."

UPDATE FROM AUGSBURG FORTRESS, PUBLISHERS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Ms. Beth A. Lewis, president and chief executive officer of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, to present the council with an update.

Ms. Lewis provided the council with information about the publishing house's defined benefits plan termination and distribution of assets. She explained the difference between a defined benefit plan and a defined contribution plan. The Augsburg Fortress defined benefit plan has been underfunded for the past nine years and met the "perfect storm" in the recent recession—a dramatic equity market decline, an adjustment to mortality tables, low interest rates, and continued withdrawals for current retirees.

Terminating the defined benefits plan affected about 500 plan members in three categories: retirees and beneficiaries; former employees in the workforce who are vested in the plan; and current Augsburg Fortress employees vested in the plan. Ms. Lewis added that there are two defined benefits programs—a guaranteed retirement annuity for the 79 members who retired before July 1994 and a program that is not guaranteed for the other 413 members. Of the 413, there are 135 members currently receiving benefits.

Augsburg Fortress froze the non-guaranteed defined benefits program in March 2005, Ms. Lewis said, and several years of study followed. The cost-of-living adjustment was eliminated in December 2009, and the non-guaranteed defined benefits program was terminated and its assets were distributed, she reported. All options were bad, she added.

Ms. Lewis said the plan's \$8 million in assets were distributed to the plan members, based on such actuarial data as age and years of service. Payments were calculated for each individual and distributed by mid-March 2010.

Several synods are considering resolutions taking Augsburg Fortress to task, she stated. Ms. Lewis characterized the resolutions as well-meaning but, in some cases, based on inaccurate information. She said she is working to help correct the information without hindering the resolution processes.

Ms. Lewis went on to give the council an update on the *Lutheran Study Bible*, which Augsburg Fortress published in March 2009 in paperback, hard cover, and the "Jesus Justice Jazz" version for the Youth Gathering. Some of the notes were edited and a second printing ran in June 2009. A note in Matthew 28 was written in an abbreviated format in the first printing, Ms. Lewis stated, and some readers said it offended them. The note was edited in the June 2009 printing. Complaints about the note in the first printing escalated in October 2009, and the Rev. Scott A. Tunseth, senior editor for Augsburg Fortress, wrote a detailed explanation about the original note. Ms. Lewis added that stickers are available for anyone who wants to cover the original note with the edited note.

Ms. Lewis concluded her update with a presentation of the new resources being developed by Augsburg Fortress. Several of the resources are available online, and many build on the Book of Faith initiative, she said.

Vice President Peña thanked Ms. Lewis for the update and called for a break until 11:20 A.M.

RECESS

The April 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 11:08 A.M.

**Sunday, April 11, 2010
Plenary Session VI**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called Plenary Session Six to order at 11:23 A.M.

UPDATE FROM AUGSBURG FORTRESS, PUBLISHERS (CONTINUED)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña noted that some council members had questions for Ms. Beth A. Lewis, so he called on Ms. Lewis to continue her update.

Ms. Susan W. McArver asked what types of resolutions from synods would be helpful at this time.

Ms. Lewis referred to a resolution drafted by the Office of the Secretary that would ask the Church Council to look into the termination of the publishing house's defined benefits plan. She called the draft resolution accurate, "carefully crafted," and "non-anxious."

The Rev. Jeff B. Sorenson said the council's Planning and Evaluation Committee had scheduled independently incorporated units to be reviewed in 2012, but members wondered whether an earlier review of Augsburg Fortress might be more helpful.

Ms. Lewis welcomed the council's conversation and advice. She explained that the whole publishing industry is in economic trouble, and Augsburg Fortress faces unique challenges as a religious publisher. She added that each year Augsburg Fortress updates its three-year strategic plan, and the current update will be presented to its board April 22–24, 2010.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon asked whether publishing materials in languages other than English could provide growth for the ELCA and its publishing house.

Ms. Lewis said Augsburg Fortress has an "ample inventory" of such materials in its warehouse. The publishing house cannot continue to produce materials that people say they want but do not buy, she added, but she expressed her willingness to continue that conversation.

There being no further questions, Vice President Peña thanked Ms. Lewis.

**RITE FOR RECEPTION ONTO THE ROSTER OF ORDAINED MINISTERS
(Agenda III.H.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit I, Part 1)**

Background:

On March 8, 2010, the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) reached a consensus on a draft proposal that, following approval of a synodical candidacy committee, would bring onto this church's official clergy roster those pastors who were ordained by and are currently on the clergy roster of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM).

"Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers" went through the internal and external review processes described in the document, "Review of Liturgical Material," in the period since the March meeting of the Conference of Bishops. The following summary identifies principal issues that arose in the designated review of this rite. Strategies for response to the issues then are explained. These strategies are reflected in the proposed rite.

The proposed rite was reviewed and recommended by the Office of the Presiding Bishop as well as the Conference of Bishops. Many of the liturgical texts and notes are drawn directly from the authorized Ordination rite, which received extensive review throughout this church prior to its publication in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services*. Some of these texts and rubrics have been adapted for the current context and purpose. These adaptations were the focus of this review.

The sole intent of the draft rite presented for authorization of limited use is to allow the ELCA to receive onto its roster of ordained ministers those ELM candidates who have been entrusted with a ministry of Word and Sacrament in an ordination that the ELCA has not recognized. This rite would follow their approval by a candidacy committee. "Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers with Prayer and the Laying on of Hands" is intended to be a rite that reflects the deep desire of the presiding bishop and synod bishops for reconciliation both in this church and in the

Church catholic. The hope of the presiding bishop and the Conference of Bishops is for a means of reception that embraces this church's desire for reconciliation with the ELM pastors who are serving ELCA congregations and wish to be fully recognized as ordained ministers in this church. At the same time the rite must be recognizable by fellow members of the Lutheran World Federation and among the ELCA's full-communion partners as containing signs consistent with ordination into the whole Church, in accordance with Lutheran Confessions, history, and practice. The rite brings to liturgical expression the reconciliation of relationships specific to this church while also seeking to respect this church's ecumenical commitment to the ongoing reconciliation of ministry in the Church catholic.

In this rite words are used that echo the promises of ordination and frequently are, in fact, words from the ordination rite. It will be apparent to those who examine or ultimately use this rite that it draws whenever possible directly from authorized texts while affirming promises made when the candidate was first entrusted with the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Since this rite falls under the category of "ministry rites" in the current liturgical review policy, this final version of "Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers" must receive authorization by the Church Council as the appropriate form to be used in this church as presented. It is prepared and restricted for "limited use," intended to be used only by synod bishops receiving ELM candidates within a two-year time limit.

Specific Issues and Strategies for Response **General Matters**

1. Review

Some reviewers pointed out that the rite required work to bring language consistency within the rite, between the rite and the notes, and with other, similar rites of the church (such as ordination). The use of language that could be variously understood also was noted by some reviewers.

Strategy for Response

Generally, the post-review rite uses instructions and headings in a way parallel to the other ELCA entry rites. For example, the following were added to the rite:

- instructions for standing before the assembly, turning around, and other actions;
- heading and hymn suggestions for the optional hymn of invocation;
- consistency of language in the rite and notes with regard to headings;
- consistent reference to "the one being received," using singular language rather than both singular and plural; and
- the greeting of peace at the end of the body of the rite.

Regarding ambiguity of language, the rite intentionally is broad enough to incorporate a range of understandings while being specific where clarity is essential. The review team made every effort to maintain and honor the nuances of the rite as drafted. For example, the post-review rite refers to the one being received as having been previously "entrusted with the ministry of word and sacrament."

Changes based on the review

1. Review: Presentation

Several reviewers questioned the use of the phrase "this church" in the Presentation on the grounds of lack of clarity; many in our assemblies would not necessarily understand that phrase to be synonymous with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, especially when used at the outset of the rite.

Strategy for Response

"This church" was changed to "Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" at the presentation for the sake of clarity.

2. Review: Address

It was widely noted in the review that the address seemed incomplete. Several reviewers noted that the address should include a succinct statement about the ministry of word and sacrament, some description of what is happening in this rite, and brief Scripture passages as part of the address to the one being received.

Strategy for Response

Language was added to set the ministry of word and sacrament within the ministry of all the baptized and to make clear the purpose of this rite: that is, to affirm the call to word and sacrament of the one being received and to receive the person with joy and gratitude as an ordained minister in this church. The scriptural addresses as they appear in the ordination service were added as an option. The notes at the end of the rite include more suggestions for such scriptural address, including the selections from the Charge in the ordination rite. The possibility of inserting the date when the one being received was entrusted with the ministry has been added. The questions asked in the ordination rite are here recast as statements of what was previously declared by the one being received, followed by a single question and answer in which those promises are affirmed. However, the statement regarding scriptural and confessional adherence in the earlier draft of this rite has been brought into closer alignment with the language of the ordination rite, so as to maintain the clarity of the authority of Scripture over the Creeds and Confessions.

3. Review: Thanksgiving

Some full-communion partner consultants and other reviewers questioned the meaning of the ambiguous phrase “others may participate in the laying on of hands” in the instruction after the first paragraph of the Thanksgiving. Others questioned use of the phrase “onto the roster of this church” in the prayer of thanksgiving, finding it to be language more appropriate to polity than to prayer. It was suggested that language more appropriate to prayer might be found.

Strategy for Response

The instruction for the laying on of hands has been revised to be parallel to the ordination rite, wherein “ordained pastors” participate in the laying on of hands. The phrase “as we receive name onto the roster of this church” has been changed to “as we receive name into the ordained ministry in this church” to avoid infusing polity language into the Thanksgiving, which has broad ecumenical implications.

4. Review: Charge

A reviewer noted that it seemed redundant to move from the Thanksgiving directly to the Blessing (“The God of peace . . .”).

Strategy for Response

The post-review rite includes a portion of the Charge found in the ordination rite, with a rubric noting that it is optional. The charge may speak powerfully to those who have relied on the support of their community to keep them through difficult times. It also includes a clear affirmation that God has called this one being received, whose labor has not been in vain.

5. Review: Acclamation

The instruction prior to the Acclamation in the draft submitted for review is intended to give the presiding minister opportunity to offer context for particular celebrations, but reviewers found the instruction to be confusing and unclear. It also was suggested that highlighting the acclamation portion of a previously enacted rite might create the sense that the acclamation carries more weight than is actually intended by the rite. Reviewers also found confusing the parenthetical inclusion of the phrase “in this church” in the last statement by the presiding minister. Clearer expression of the intent of this phrase was sought.

Strategy for Response

The instruction to the presiding minister was restored to parallel the words in the ordination rite. The insertion of the phrase, “echoing the voices of others and speaking for the whole church,” was well-received by reviewers and is sufficient to acknowledge the context and what took place in a previous rite. The presentation is modified to remove the words “in this church” because they seem awkward and limiting. “Let it be recognized and acclaimed” is clearer about what is happening in this rite, both acknowledging ministry that has gone before and praising God for the gifts of ministry embodied in this person who is here received and affirmed.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Steven P. Loy, chair of the Program and Services Committee, for the committee's report. The vice president drew the council's attention to points in the agenda and exhibits dealing with the rite for reception onto the roster of ordained ministers.

Pr. Loy asked the council members whether they needed more information about Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM).

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger asked how the proposed rite differed from the rite now used to receive ordained clergy on to the ELCA roster from full-communion partner churches and other churches.

The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer responded that ecumenical agreements already acknowledge the prior ordination of the minister being received.

The Rev. Donald J. McCoid added that the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, consider ministers ordained coming to this church from outside the ELCA and its full-communion partner churches according to set criteria.

The Rev. Stanley N. Olson said ministers ordained in other churches go through the ELCA candidacy process without being questioned about the ordaining church's candidacy process. The ELCA will request information gathered during the ELM candidacy process. He cited another difference being that most candidates received from other churches are entering new calls, while most ELM candidates are to continue in existing calls.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson explained that most clergy from full-communion partner churches remain on the rosters of the ordaining church body while serving ELCA congregations.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke asked in what period of time ELM ordinations occurred.

Pr. Loy asked the council's permission for a visitor—Ms. Amalia Vagts, executive director of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries—to address it.

Moved;

Seconded: To suspend the rules to grant Ms. Amalia Vagts voice for the purpose of answering questions during this portion of the Program and Services Committee's report.

There being no discussion of the motion, Vice President Peña called for the vote and declared the motion adopted.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: To suspend the rules to grant Ms. Amalia Vagts voice for the purpose of answering questions during this portion of the Program and Services Committee's report.

Pr. Loy asked Ms. Vagts for a brief description of ELM, including in what period of time ELM ordinations have occurred.

Ms. Vagts responded that ELM began as a movement within the ELCA to provide a parallel candidacy process for people who could not agree to meet the expectations of this church described in "Vision and Expectations." The 46 people on the ELM roster were removed or resigned from the ELCA roster or were removed or withdrew from the ELCA candidacy process, she explained. Those not already ordained went through the ELM candidacy process, were called by ELCA congregations, and received an "extraordinary ordination," using the ELCA's ordination rite. The first extraordinary ordinations were in January 1990, she stated, and the most recent was in January 2010.

Presiding Bishop Hanson said, "Throughout this process, as I have sought to shepherd it with our secretary and with colleagues, it is understandable that our focus will be on reconciliation of those relationships within the ELCA, but always mindful for us and for me as your chief ecumenical officer is to be attentive to how our internal actions seeking reconciliation impact our commitment to external reconciliation in the body of Christ. Let me be specific.

"In my comments to you yesterday, in my report, I cited our statement on ecumenism of '91 that shapes this church's life ecumenically and our commitment to the visible unity of the Church. That means we will work tirelessly as a church body until we can express our visible unity, for instance, in being together at the table of the Lord's Supper with all other persons of faith.

“In order to come to that point in our seeking reconciliation—visible unity, the body of Christ—we are now at a very difficult point ecumenically, because one of the major issues that stand in the way of that reconciliation that would allow for the sharing in the Eucharist together is the need to reconcile ministries. So, therefore, what we do internally to reconcile ministries will inevitably have an impact on how we are working to reconcile ministries with ecumenical partners. That led me in the first draft to tip toward ordination, as I leaned toward that external reconciliation.

“Then, as we did marvelous work with our Conference of Bishops and with our colleagues in ELM and with others, we came to this rite. . . . The elements in this rite are recognizable by those partners outside as containing signs consistent with ordination into the whole Church in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions, history, and practice.”

Pr. Loy called for questions.

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede asked whether this rite would apply to heterosexuals who may be on the ELM roster.

Ms. Vagts explained that the ELM roster is open to all people regardless of sexual orientation, but each of the 17 people for whom this rite will apply identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. A heterosexual member of the ELM roster would be in a situation of reinstatement to the ELCA roster, she said.

There being no further questions, Pr. Loy moved the recommendation of the Program and Services Committee.

Moved:

To authorize as the appropriate form for a period of two years, beginning April 12, 2010, and ending on April 11, 2012, the rite of “Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers,” for use by synodical bishops in receiving onto the roster of the ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America those pastors on the roster of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries or on the roster of a predecessor church body who were not previously on the ELCA roster of ordained ministers, who have been approved by a candidacy committee of a synod of the ELCA and who have received a call in this church;

To emphasize that no other use of this rite is authorized; and

To express gratitude for the thoughtful work of all those who contributed to the development of this rite.

Secretary David D. Swartling moved an amendment.

Moved;

Seconded:

To amend the first paragraph of the motion by insertion:

To authorize as the appropriate form for a period of two years, beginning April 12, 2010, and ending on April 11, 2012, the rite of “Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers,” for use by synodical bishops in receiving onto the roster of the ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America those pastors on the roster of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries or on the roster of ordained ministers of a predecessor church body who were not previously on the ELCA roster of ordained ministers, who have been approved by a candidacy committee of a synod of the ELCA and who have received a call in this church;

Vice President Peña asked for discussion of the amendment. There being none, he called for the vote.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

To amend the first paragraph of the motion by insertion:

To authorize as the appropriate form for a period of two years, beginning April 12, 2010, and ending on April 11, 2012, the rite of “Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers,” for use by synodical bishops in receiving onto the roster of the ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America those pastors on the roster of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries or on the roster of ordained ministers of a predecessor church body who were not previously on the ELCA roster of ordained ministers, who have

been approved by a candidacy committee of a synod of the ELCA and who have received a call in this church;

Vice President Peña declared the amendment approved and called on Pr. Schaefer.

Pr. Schaefer said that “Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers with Prayer and the Laying on of Hands” was meant to be a liturgical expression of reconciliation within the ELCA and within the Church catholic. The ELCA is recognizing prior ministry it has not yet recognized, and the rite is recognizable for ecumenical partners, consistent with ordination. He gave three examples from the rite.

Vice President Peña called for discussion of the motion as amended.

The Rev. Michael J. Schmidt asked whether the rite includes some sort of apology, if reconciliation is intended.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that it would be difficult for a bishop to apologize for this church’s previous policies, especially liturgically. Acts of reconciliation happen in pastoral conversation, he added.

Pr. Schaefer repeated the need for the rite to be recognizable for ecumenical partners.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk expressed the opinion that such an apology would go beyond the actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and not be sensitive to the tension that remains in this church regarding those actions.

Presiding Bishop Hanson added that an apology would articulate one view while the church is not of one mind.

The Rev. Gerald L. Mansholt noted a case in which he plans to use this rite, saying it tends to relationships with the person to be received and with those outside this church.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called on Mr. Blaire P. Smith, who led the council in prayer.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a vote on the motion as amended and declared it approved.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger abstained from the vote.

VOTED:

CC10.04.13

To authorize as the appropriate form for a period of two years, beginning April 12, 2010, and ending on April 11, 2012, the rite of “Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers,” for use by synodical bishops in receiving onto the roster of the ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America those on the roster of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries or on the roster of a predecessor church body who experienced an ordination that this church did not recognize, who were not previously on the ELCA roster of ordained ministers, who have been approved by a candidacy committee of a synod of the ELCA, and who have received a call in this church;

To emphasize that no other use of this rite is authorized; and

To express gratitude for the thoughtful work of all those who contributed to the development of this rite.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHURCHWIDE STAFF

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

Background:

At its November 2009 meeting, the Church Council approved revisions to the Churchwide Personnel Policies, including the elimination of the continuing education plan (CEP) for budgetary reasons. The Church Council voted (CC09.11.72) “. . . to request that the Human Resources section of the Office of the Presiding bishop bring to the next meeting of the Church Council recommendations for continuing education policies for churchwide employees.”

In response, Else Thompson, executive for human resources, in a memorandum dated April 7, 2010, provided the following report related to learning and development opportunities for churchwide staff:

Last November, the Church Council approved revisions to Churchwide Organization Personnel Policy 13: *Staff Training and Development*. At that time, given the changing nature of the policy as well as the reduction in resources available, members of the Program and Services Committee asked for an update regarding

ongoing learning opportunities for staff. Despite the need to do things differently, training and development opportunities remain a priority and the following three areas are now part of the process for on-going learning for churchwide staff:

- **Churchwide organization staff will have time.** As in the past, each employee will be able to use up to 80 hours (two weeks) and no less than 16 hours (two days) annually for learning activities. In addition, up to three months sabbatical time is available to all staff every six years. During sabbatical time, full pay and benefits continue.
- **The churchwide organization will have resources available to all at no cost to staff.** These resources include a combination of: 1) 340 computer-based classes purchased by Human Resources (HR) and Information Technology (IT) as well as free online learning; 2) classroom and other experiences sponsored by the Office of the Treasurer (OT), HR, the Board of Pensions (BOP) and other units; and 3) unit-funded experiences deemed relevant by unit executives.
- **Churchwide organization staff will have some funding assistance.** In addition to time and resources, the churchwide organization will match up to \$500 annually for any combination of the following: 1) tuition assistance for two- or four- year degree programs offered by accredited colleges or universities that advance the person's vocation working for this church (available to lay and rostered); 2) certification or re-certification if required or desired by the unit (available to lay and rostered); and 3) funding for continuing education requirements for rostered leaders.

The combination of time, resources, and funding will allow the organization to recruit and develop staff, it will provide opportunities for staff to grow and develop in their areas of expertise, and it honors the learning needs of both clergy and lay staff members who work for the churchwide organization.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy recalled that the council had changed personnel policies regarding continuing education for staff of the churchwide organization and had asked the executive for human resources to propose a continuing education program. He referred to the report of the executive for human resources and moved the committee's recommendation.

Moved: To receive with gratitude the report of the executive for human resources related to learning and development opportunities for churchwide staff; and
To encourage use of the time, resources, and funding provided for staff to grow and develop in their areas of expertise of work on behalf of the churchwide organization.

Vice President Peña asked for discussion.

Pr. Loy said the previous program allocated time and money that often went unused, while the new program is used more regularly and broadly.

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

VOTED:

CC10.04.14 To receive with gratitude the report of the executive for human resources related to learning and development opportunities for churchwide staff; and
To encourage use of the time, resources, and funding provided for staff to grow and develop in their areas of expertise of work on behalf of the churchwide organization.

SOCIAL STATEMENT DEVELOPMENT

(Agenda III.H.3; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Parts 1a–1c)

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy moved the committee's recommended action.

Moved: To affirm the current time line for the development of a social statement on genetics for consideration by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and
To request the Church in Society program unit to convene conversations related to the development of future social statements and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

Vice President Peña called for discussion of the motion.

Pr. Loy reported that some members of the Conference of Bishops had questioned the capacity of this church to deal with a proposed social statement at each of the next three Churchwide Assemblies. The Program and Services Committee expressed the view that it would not be appropriate to slow or change the process toward a social statement on genetics, which is near completion, but the timing of future statements could be considered.

The Rev. Martin D. Wells recalled that at least three bishops spoke to the Conference of Bishops about exhaustion and heartfelt concern about the capacity of this church to receive and implement social statements.

Pr. Loy replied that capacity is an important consideration and that the recently approved social statement on human sexuality raised the awareness of this church regarding the issue.

Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy reiterated the concern about exhaustion from the perspective of synod staff.

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger asked that the report to the November 2010 meeting include something about how the responses this church receives during the study and drafting process inform the drafting of the proposed social statement. He added that it is difficult to encourage people to respond when it is not evident that responses are incorporated into the statement.

The Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of Church in Society unit, responded that she would include that in the report. She reported that about a third of the language in a social statement has been affected by responses.

The Rev. Philip R. Wold agreed that capacity may be something to consider but suggested that social statements may energize ELCA members by engaging them in significant issues.

Ms. Graddy replied that the draft social statement on genetics is outstanding, but she said she worried that attention is still on the previous statement.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote and declared the motion adopted.

VOTED:
CC10.04.15 To affirm the current time line for the development of a social statement on genetics for consideration by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and
To request the Church in Society program unit to convene conversations related to the development of future social statements and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

Vice President Peña requested and received the council's consensus to extend the plenary session to 12:15 P.M. and to begin Plenary Session Seven at 1:30 P.M.

Concluding his report, Pr. Loy said that the Program and Services Committee heard a report on corporate social responsibility, and he invited council members to learn more about it and its screens.

UPDATE FROM THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION NORTH AMERICAN DESK (Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit A, Part 1b)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Teresita C. Valeriano, regional officer for North America of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), for an update on her work.

Pr. Valeriano reported that there are now more than 70 million people in 79 countries in the 140 member churches of the LWF. Two African churches are among the three largest member churches.

Pr. Valeriano extended greetings from the other North American member churches of the LWF—the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad—and from the Latvian Lutheran community.

Pr. Valeriano talked about the North America Pre-Assembly Consultation held January 29–31, 2010, in Kitchener, Ontario, in preparation for the Eleventh Assembly of the LWF, to be held July 20–27, 2010, in Stuttgart, Germany, under the theme “Give Us Today Our Daily Bread.”

Pr. Valeriano invited Lutherans in North America to participate in the assembly while in their local communities by praying for those at the assembly, using assembly materials to learn about the issues to be addressed, singing the songs prepared for the assembly, following the *Food for Life* recipes to eat together, and listening to fellow Lutherans in other regions as they prepare for the assembly. She added that assembly materials are available online.

Pr. Valeriano said the *Food for Life* resource includes stories of LWF ministries around the world and celebrates the diversity of the communion. She thanked the council for the privilege of serving the Lutheran churches in North America.

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson expressed the gratitude of the Church Council for the ministry of Pr. Valeriano, whose position will be eliminated after the LWF assembly. He praised her “passionate advocacy” for the LWF. The council responded with applause.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The secretary pointed out that election materials were available in preparation for the afternoon plenary and gave instructions regarding lunch. He noted officer reviews will be held during the lunch break in various locations and that the racial justice group would meet that evening instead of over lunch. He announced that the mini-retreat would begin upon adjournment.

RECESS

The April 2010 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 12:24 P.M. for lunch.

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

**Sunday, April 11, 2010
Plenary Session VII**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called the seventh plenary session to order at 1:38 P.M.

UPDATE ON DRAFT SOCIAL STATEMENT ON GENETICS
(Agenda V.F.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit K, Parts 1 and 2a–b)

Background:

In accordance with “Policy and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops “. . . shall be forums for deliberation on preliminary documents.”

The draft social statement on genetics was released for study and response by members of this church on February 18, 2010. In addition to discussion at meetings of the Church Council, members are invited to submit individual responses by October 15, 2010. A proposed social statement on genetics will be considered by the Church Council at its April 2011 meeting in preparation for final consideration by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

The draft social statement was not distributed in printed form, but was available online. An executive summary of the draft social statement and answers to a series of frequently asked questions about the draft social statement were provided as Exhibits K, Part 2a–b.

Church Council Discussion:

The Rev. Steven P. Loy introduced the Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for studies in the Church in Society unit, who provided the council with an update on responses to date to the first draft of the social statement on genetics and outlined “next steps” in the statement’s development process.

Pr. Willer described responses to the draft as “encouraging and appreciative,” including news stories, phone calls, and electronic mail. In addition to coverage by religious media and Web sites, he said that the draft statement was reported on in scientific, business, medical, and agricultural media.

Pr. Willer stated that at least nine synods have firm plans to conduct hearings on the draft statement and another 20 synods are making similar plans. He noted concerns raised about the capacity of this church to deal with social statements at this time, and he applauded the action of the council calling for further conversation on the matter.

Regarding next steps, Pr. Willer said responses to the draft will be received in print and online through October 15, 2010, from individuals, groups, and hearings. Task force members will review the responses for their next meeting in October 2010. A proposed social statement will be released in February 2011, and the Program and Services Committee will bring it to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council in advance of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly’s consideration.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked for questions. There being none, he thanked Pr. Willer for the update.

UPDATE ON THE CHURCH COUNCIL RACIAL JUSTICE WORKING GROUP
(Agenda V.A.3)

Background:

Process observation continued at the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council and was led by the current members of the Racial Justice Working Group: Mr. Baron Blanchard, Ms. Arielle Mastellar, Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, and Ms. Lynette M. Reitz.

Four additional members joined the Racial Justice Working Group at this meeting: Mr. Ivan A. Perez, Ms. Judith Barlow-Roberts, Mr. David Truland, and Ms. Deborah Wilson.

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly and the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, co-chairs of the Board Development Committee, for a report.

Pr. Obregon provided the council with an update on process observations. Eleven council members plan to be involved, he reported, inviting advisory members to join this group. Training will be provided before the council's November 2010 meeting.

UPDATE ON "MINI-RETREAT" (Agenda V.A.1; Exhibit B, Part 5)

Background:

"The ELCA: Converted to Mission" is the theme for the Church Council mini-retreat on Sunday evening, April 11, and Monday morning, April 12. A schedule for the retreat is provided below.

The resource book for the retreat is *The Ministry of the Missional Church* by Craig Van Gelder, professor of congregational mission at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. A copy was mailed to members and advisors who will attend the retreat.

Church Council Discussion:

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon drew the council's attention to the schedule and expressed excitement in discussing the mission of this church and ways to be a missional church.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña thanked Pr. Obregon for the report of the Board Development Committee.

UPDATE ON HAITI DISASTER RESPONSE

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Church in Society unit, who introduced the Rev. Daniel Rift, director for the World Hunger and Disaster Appeal, noting that he is a pastor of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with an extensive background in domestic and international relief.

Pr. Rift stated that relief and development are ecumenical work. He cited a number of earthquakes the world has experienced recently with Haiti being the place where "the human impact has been greatest." He described the work the ELCA is doing in Haiti directly and through partner organizations. He drew the council's attention to related printed materials that were distributed—a situation report and a reprint of an article from *The Lutheran*.

Pr. Rift introduced a video showing images of disaster and recovery in Haiti. He described the relief work in Haiti as an example of the strength of relationships among the Lutheran World Federation, Action by Churches Together, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Services in America, and companion churches. He added that work will continue in Haiti for months and years.

The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit, praised the resiliency of the Haitian people, spontaneously caring for each other and for expatriates. This church's commitment to relief and development in Haiti is about \$10.2 million, most of which will be delivered through international and domestic ecumenical companions as well as the ELCA. He reported that this church is operational in Haiti through the Lutheran Church in Haiti, an emerging church in a companion relationship with the Florida-Bahamas Synod.

Pr. Malpica outlined six areas of engagement in Haiti: emergency response, capacity building, community building, economic empowerment, sustainability, and advocacy. He added that the ELCA discovered that about 50 of its congregations were already engaged in ministries in Haiti, and those efforts are now being coordinated through accompaniment with the Lutheran Church in Haiti.

Pr. Rift praised the ELCA for its response to the earthquake in Haiti and its generosity. He added that, when ELCA members learn of a disaster somewhere in the world, they are beginning to turn to their church to respond.

Vice President Peña thanked Pr. Rift and Pr. Malpica for the update, and he reminded the council that half of the offering during morning worship was designated for Haiti response.

Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke noted the importance of congregations providing opportunities to respond the Sunday after a major disaster.

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede recommended congregations keep envelopes designated for ELCA Disaster Response available at all times.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Murray D. Finck, bishop of the Pacifica Synod, to reflect on “Dwelling in the Word.”

RESPONSE TO “MOTION F” OF THE 2009 ELCA CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

(Agenda III.I.1; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit B, Part 2b, Appendix A)

Background:

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly received Motion F: Proposed Study on “Bound Conscience”:

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America direct the Church Council to request the department for studies of the Church in Society program unit, in collaboration with the Lutheran Teaching Theologians of the ELCA, to undertake a study of the concept of “bound conscience,” focusing specifically on the historical understanding, the present meaning, and the institutional significance of “bound conscience,” and to disseminate widely through appropriate mechanisms the results of this study throughout the ELCA.

The Churchwide Assembly voted [CA09.06.39c] to refer Motion F to the Church Council to receive the evaluation of the Research and Evaluation section and to determine whether the requested study should be initiated.

Church Council Action [CC09.11.82]

To receive with deep gratitude the letter from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council;

To acknowledge the painful theological, moral, and institutional struggle of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council, congregations, and members as a result of the decisions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on the social statement on human sexuality and the recommendation on ministry policies;

To honor the Synod Council’s efforts to communicate this struggle and practice leadership in the face of disagreement and to encourage its “effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3);

To note that many of the concerns of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council are shared by others in this church and are acknowledged in the work of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality;

To emphasize this church’s commitments to recognize the conviction of members who believe that this church should not call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship as it implements the decisions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on the social statement on human sexuality and the recommendation on ministry policies;

To affirm that Scripture, the Confessions, and theology are foundational in this church’s decision-making;

To acknowledge that the scriptural, theological, and confessional foundations that underlie the decisions of the assembly, as well as the concept of “bound conscience,” continues to require explanation, theological exploration, and deeper and broader conversation, and more extensive communication;

To respond, therefore, to the request of Motion F of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly “to undertake a study of the concept of ‘bound conscience’” and “to disseminate widely through appropriate mechanisms the results of this study” with a commitment to a theological conversation on the foundations of this church’s decision-making, the results of that conversation to be disseminated to this church;

To refer the conversation to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with the Church in Society program unit, the Vocation and Education program unit, and Lutheran teaching theologians of the ELCA;

To anticipate the active involvement of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod and the rest of this church in the conversation; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action, providing the background information above as part of the response of the Church Council to the Synod Council's letter.

The Church Council requested [CC.09.11.87] that the Office of the Presiding Bishop develop a report in response to the actions. A working group¹ brought a proposal for this commitment to conversation for consideration by the Church Council in April 2010 based on two objectives:

1. Develop a proposal for review by the ELCA Church Council (April 2010) in response to “Motion F” of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly related to “respect for people whose consciences are bound to different understandings of Scripture” and “with a commitment to a theological conversation on the foundations of this church’s decision-making, the results of that conversation to be disseminated to this church”; and
2. Invite helpful and constructive engagement with the issue.

Sustained attention

The working group anticipates that sustained attention through theological exploration, conceptual clarification, extensive communication, and deeper and broader conversation about the meaning of “respect for people whose consciences are bound to different understandings of Scripture and Confessions” and “theological conversation on the foundations of this church’s decision-making” will suggest topics for further discussion.

Means

The working group has suggested several means to provide deeper and broader sustained attention within the ELCA, including sustained attention through both existing events and new initiatives:

1. Gatherings of key leadership groups

Goal: to encourage discussion throughout the ELCA by building on already-existing events.

- *Convocation of Teaching Theologians* (2010 & 2011): The topic for 2010 is already set but those who want to gather (and/or prepare papers) on this topic will be invited to do so. The steering committee is open both to having this topic fit into a sequence and to eliciting conversation among members. Bishop Ralph Jones will attend the August 2010 meeting on behalf of the Conference of Bishops. The topic for the 2011 convocation will be determined in August 2010.
- *Conference of Bishops’ Academy* (January 2011): Two committees of the Conference of Bishops, which met March 4-9, 2010, discussed plans for the Academy in 2011. The Synodical-Churchwide Relations Committee sent its suggestions to the Academy and Bishops’ Formation Committee, which recommended to the full Conference of Bishops that the topic for the 2011 Academy be the role of the authority of Scripture in the decision-making processes of the ELCA, especially as it relates to tradition, experience, and reason. Although there is not funding for all of the members of the teaching theologians to be present, a way is being sought so that some of them can attend. As the committee seeks the names of people to make presentations at the Academy, it is hoped that some of the presentations will address, at least in part, the topic of “bound conscience,” as requested by Motion F from the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.
- *Convocation of Lutheran Ethicists* (January 2012): The topic for the 2011 convocation has been selected, but the topic—or some aspect of it—will be suggested for 2012.
- *Gathering of Synodical Vice Presidents* (2011): Time will be requested on the agenda for discussion of the concept of “people whose consciences are bound” as well as a workshop on this topic.

¹ Bp. Michael Burk; Mr. John Emery; Pr. Ruth Hamilton; Pr. Marcus Kunz; Pr. Rebecca Larson; Pr. Heather Lubold; Bp. Jerry Mansholt; Dr. Susan McArver; Ms. Myrna Sheie (convener); Dr. Robin Steinke; Pr. Jonathan Strandjord; Pr. Roger Willer.

Other possibilities include the gathering of synodical assistants to bishops (2011), the Women of the ELCA Triennial (2012), the Youth Gathering (2012), and gatherings of Lutheran Women Theologians and Graduate Students (annual).

2. Publications

Goal: To provide access to both new and existing print and electronic resources.

- *Journal of Lutheran Ethics:* The November 2010 issue will be devoted to “respect for consciences.” It was noted that the events described above may give direction for the essays to be included. The Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee also discussed conversations “on the ground” in synods and possible topics for the November 2010 issue of the *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* related to “respect for bound conscience” and the commitment to theological conversation on this church’s decision-making.
- The Association of Teaching Theologians often publishes a book of essays based on convocation lectures.
- Publication of other documents and resources online on the ELCA Web site.

3. Other venues for helpful and constructive engagement

Goal: To draw on the work of theologians, both lay and clergy, and invite broad and deep engagement by ELCA congregations and individual members.

- Town Hall Forum(s) with panel of presenters and opportunity for dialogue
- Bibliography and resources, including helpful and constructive materials, presentations, and processes from a variety of perspectives
- Brief document on “how the ELCA makes decisions” (Office of the Secretary)
- Possible Web site (i.e., JLE Web site or separate): include presentations, bibliography, and resources.
- Presentations (online) through ELCA Communications and/or seminaries, colleges, or universities.
- “Sponsored conversations,” including seminars, forums, online conversations
- Ongoing events: gatherings of rostered people in synods and conferences; text studies; Synod Assemblies; campus ministries; First Call Theological Education; text studies; colleges and universities.

4. Budget

A specific proposal will be brought to the ELCA Executive for Administration for grant support from the churchwide strategic initiatives fund.

- **Summer intern** (summer 2010) to research and develop bibliography and resource listing (both print and electronic) representing the divergence of opinion and work with ELCA Web staff to develop a Web site on elca.org
- **Funding for Town Hall Forum** (or other venue for discussion)
- **Travel costs** for bishops to attend Convocation of Teaching Theologians (one in 2010; 5-6 in 2011) and for teaching theologians to attend 2011 Conference of Bishops Academy, pending review by related committees (agenda, academy, theological and ethical concerns), approval, and invitation by the Conference.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. John R. Emery, a member of the working group, to provide the council with a brief overview of the group’s recommendations. Mr. Emery reviewed the background information.

Mr. Emery expressed the opinion that the phrase “bound conscience” has created more conversation in this church since the assembly than any other concept discussed there. He added that the phrase has been abused and has caused confusion, primarily because it is seen by some as a means to protect “my conscience” rather than as something broader than respecting the conscience of the other and accepting the notion that “I could be wrong.”

The working group is recommending that this church invite a variety of groups into theological conversation and discernment, including the Church Council, Mr. Emery stated. He pointed out that the action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and the letter from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod did not ask for a definitive answer but for a study and report.

Mr. Emery moved the recommendation of the working group.

Moved:

To receive with gratitude the report of the working group in response to Motion F of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church;

To acknowledge the objectives of its recommendations:

- Respect for people whose consciences are bound to different understandings of Scripture;
- Commitment to a theological conversation on the foundations of this church's decision-making, the results of that conversation to be disseminated to this church;
- An invitation to helpful and constructive engagement with the issue of respect for people whose consciences are bound to different understandings of Scripture;

To anticipate deeper and broader sustained attention to these matters through:

- Conversation of key leadership groups throughout this church, including the Conference of Bishops, the Convocation of Teaching Theologians, the Convocation of Lutheran Ethicists, and the gathering of synodical vice presidents, as well as in gatherings of rostered people in synods and conferences, text studies, Synod Assemblies, campus ministries, congregational studies, and colleges and universities.
- Publications, such as the *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*, and possible resource books focused on presentations from the events cited above.
- A bibliography and/or resource listing on the ELCA Web site, including documents written from a range of perspectives.
- Encouragement for helpful and constructive dialogue in a variety of settings (e.g., "sponsored conversations," town hall forums, seminars, workshops, online conversations).

Vice President Peña asked the council for discussion of the motion.

The Rev. Michael L. Burk, a member of the working group, commented that the plan does not seem to engage people in congregations, and he recommended that this church pursue ways to do that.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote and declared the motion adopted.

VOTED:

CC10.04.16

To receive with gratitude the report of the working group in response to Motion F of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To acknowledge the objectives of its recommendations:

- **Respect for people whose consciences are bound to different understandings of Scripture;**
- **Commitment to a theological conversation on the foundations of this church's decision-making, the results of that conversation to be disseminated to this church;**
- **An invitation to helpful and constructive engagement with the issue of respect for people whose consciences are bound to different understandings of Scripture;**

To anticipate deeper and broader sustained attention to these matters through:

- **Conversation of key leadership groups throughout this church, including the Conference of Bishops, the Convocation of Teaching Theologians, the Convocation of Lutheran Ethicists, and the gathering of synodical vice**

presidents, as well as in gatherings of rostered people in synods and conferences, text studies, Synod Assemblies, campus ministries, congregational studies, and colleges and universities.

- Publications, such as the *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*, and possible resource books focused on presentations from the events cited above.
- A bibliography and/or resource listing on the ELCA Web site, including documents written from a range of perspectives.
- Encouragement for helpful and constructive dialogue in a variety of settings (e.g., “sponsored conversations,” town hall forums, seminars, workshops, online conversations).

OTHER ELECTIONS

(Agenda III.A.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit C, Part 1)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for consideration of unfinished business.

Secretary David D. Swartling explained that biographical information was distributed for an election to fill a vacancy on the Augsburg Fortress Board of Directors.

A ballot was distributed to voting members of the council.

Augsburg Fortress Board of Directors

Lay Male [Term 2015] - *to fill the unexpired term of Brilsford Flint*

Mr. Edward Klodt, Thousand Oaks, Calif. (2B)

Mr. Robert Hahn, Walkersville, Md. (8F)

The secretary and vice president asked that prayer precede casting ballots.

The Rev. Philip R. Wold led the council in prayer.

Vice President Peña asked the council to vote.

Completed ballots were collected, and the vice president declared voting closed.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC*

(Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit B, Part 2b)

Background:

Churchwide Assembly Action: Motion E: Wills and Living Trusts

RESOLVED, that this assembly request that the ELCA develop a focused, long-term churchwide program to include publicity, education, survey response forms and any such other means to encourage all members to prepare an updated will, along with updated beneficiary designations and furthermore to encourage all members to consider including one or more ELCA-affiliated ministries in their estate plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that each member of this and subsequent assemblies, all rostered pastors, staff members and leaders of the ELCA be encouraged to undertake such planning and be leaders by example in this effort.

The Churchwide Assembly voted [CA09.06.39b] to refer Motion E to the Development Services unit with a report to be brought to the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

Response from the ELCA Foundation and Development Services unit

Every year, ELCA congregations and ministries are blessed with bequests through wills and trusts. Since 2006, the ELCA churchwide organization has received an average of \$11 million annually in bequest income to support ELCA

and related ministries, both directly and through endowments. The potential for increasing bequest income for all the ministries of the ELCA is significant. Research indicates that the ELCA should be able to generate \$20 million to \$25 million annually once a comprehensive bequest program is solidly in place.

Planning for a churchwide wills and bequest campaign was initiated through the ELCA Foundation and Development Services unit in 2008. For the purpose of increasing support of ELCA churchwide ministries and as a service to every ELCA congregation and member, the ELCA Foundation will begin a national wills and bequest campaign with the launch of Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society in 2010.

The purpose of the legacy society is to recognize and celebrate the commitments of those who have remembered the churchwide ministries in their wills or estate plans. Inspiration for the Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society is found in Mark 14:3-9, the story of the anointing of Jesus at Bethany. “She has performed a good service—a beautiful thing—for me. . . . what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.” The Greek word for “good,” “beautiful,” or “lovely” is “kalos.”

The campaign will begin with invitations for charter membership through Easter 2011. Invitation will be extended to the ELCA Church Council, the churchwide leadership staff, the Conference of Bishops and synod staff, the ELCA Foundation Trustees, and known bequest donors.

In 2011, the ELCA Foundation hopes to extend the wills and bequests campaign across the church. The campaign will:

- Encourage ELCA members to provide for loved ones through a valid estate plan
- Motivate and assist ELCA members to remember this church in their wills or trusts.
- Create a greater awareness of the importance of legacy gifts to ELCA congregation, synods, the churchwide organization, and other ministries.
- Assist every congregation to develop its own bequest program.

Elements of the campaign will include:

- Encouraging and resourcing a bequest program in every ELCA congregation, linking to the ELCA Foundation services
- Providing a basic Web site template for congregations
- Creation of an online bequest manual available through the ELCA Foundation Web site
- Assisting congregations in planning an annual Bequest Sunday to educate, motivate and invite members to remember the church in their estate plans.

The ELCA Foundation will fund the 2010 costs for the launching of the Kalos Society from its operating reserve. The comprehensive wills and bequest campaign will begin in 2011, requiring approximately \$150,000–\$200,000 annually. The source of these funds is currently undetermined.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling, who drew the council’s attention to the resolution.

The secretary noted that, earlier in the meeting, the council received an introduction to Kalos—The ELCA Legacy Society. He moved the resolution and served notice of a proposed amendment.

Moved;

Seconded:

To receive with gratitude the response of the ELCA Foundation and Development Services unit to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly motion related to wills and living trusts;

To anticipate the launching of Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society in 2010 and a wills and bequests campaign in 2011; and

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

Secretary Swartling offered an amendment.

Moved;

Seconded:

To amend by inserting a new third paragraph:

To strongly encourage members of the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, synodical officers, and other leaders of this church to become charter members of the ELCA Legacy Society—Kalos; and

Vice President Peña called for discussion on the amendment.

Secretary Swartling stressed that the ability to claim 100 percent participation by the Church Council in the society was important for its success.

After brief discussion and an editorial correction transposing “strongly” and “encourage,” the secretary repeated the motion.

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

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

To amend by inserting a new third paragraph:

To encourage strongly members of the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, synodical officers, and other leaders of this church to become charter members of the ELCA Legacy Society—Kalos; and

The vice president asked for discussion of the motion as amended.

Ms. Susan W. McArver asked whether the society will recognize only bequests to the ELCA or to specific institutions of this church, such as to a seminary.

Ms. Cynthia J. Halverson responded that the recognition society will be for bequests left to ELCA ministries broadly and that the campaign will encourage congregations and other institutions to create their own societies. Many of the seminaries have similar societies already.

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

Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson abstained from the vote.

The chair declared the motion adopted as amended.

VOTED:

CC10.04.17

To receive with gratitude the response of the ELCA Foundation and Development Services unit to the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly motion related to wills and living trusts;

To anticipate the launching of Kalos—the ELCA Legacy Society in 2010 and a wills and bequests campaign in 2011;

To encourage strongly members of the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, synodical officers and other leaders of this church to become charter members of the ELCA Legacy Society—Kalos; and

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

REPORT OF OTHER ELECTIONS

(Agenda III.A.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit C, Part 1)

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

The secretary announced the results.

The vice president declared the election of Mr. Robert Hahn.

VOTED:

CC10.04.18 **To elect Mr. Robert Hahn, Walkersville, Md. (8F), to an unexpired term to end in 2015 on the Board of Trustees of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers.**

UPDATE ON THE ECUMENICAL JOURNEY

The Rev. Susan Langhauser, Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth, and the Rev. Steven P. Loy shared some of their experiences from February 3–17, 2010, as participants in a 16-member delegation from the ELCA to significant ecumenical centers in London, Istanbul, Rome, and Geneva.

SITE FOR THE 2013 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

(Agenda III.J)

Background:

The Office of the Secretary is responsible to “arrange for and manage meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. . . .” [ELCA 13.41.02.] and presents its recommendations for Churchwide Assembly sites to the Church Council for approval.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling, who introduced a brief promotional video for the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

The secretary thanked Ms. Mary Beth Nowak for her work in evaluating possible sites for the assembly.

Secretary Swartling explained that the criteria for selecting Pittsburgh included cost, location, and care for creation. He said a Churchwide Assembly had not been held in Region 8. He added that the David L. Lawrence Convention Center is a world leader in energy and environmental design. The secretary moved the action.

Moved;

Seconded: To designate [the David L. Lawrence Convention Center,] Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania—subject to the satisfactory completion of negotiations in the judgment of the secretary of this church—as the site for the Thirteenth Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, August 12–18, 2013.

Vice President Peña asked for discussion of the motion. There being none, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC10.04.19 **To designate [the David L. Lawrence Convention Center,] Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania—subject to the satisfactory completion of negotiations in the judgment of the secretary of this church—as the site for the Thirteenth Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, August 12–18, 2013.**

Vice President Carlos E. Peña reviewed the schedule for the afternoon and remaining items on the agenda. He estimated that remaining business could be conducted in 15 minutes and recommended extending the seventh plenary session to accomplish that business, conducting other scheduled activities after adjournment. The council gave its consent.

EN BLOC APPROVAL OF CERTAIN ITEMS

(Agenda IV)

Background:

The following *en bloc* resolution includes agenda items that were considered on the last day of the Church Council meeting. Inclusion of these items in the *en bloc* action reflected a judgment that these items were relatively noncontroversial in nature and may not require plenary discussion and a separate vote. Each of the items was noted as being in the *en bloc* action in the agenda.

On the first day of the council meeting, the chair provided an opportunity for members to indicate whether they wished to discuss separately any of the items listed in the *en bloc* resolution; any such item was removed from the *en bloc* resolution and discussed at the appropriate point in the agenda.

Church Council Action

At the request of the chair, Secretary David D. Swartling moved the recommended action. Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a vote.

VOTED:

CC10.04.20

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

VOTED:

CC10.04.21

Responses to Synodical Resolutions Directed to the Church Council, p. 95;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.22

Responses to Churchwide Assembly Referrals Directed to Church Council, p. 102;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.23

Election of Audit Committee Member, p. 114;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.24

Approval of a Church Council Summer WebEx Meeting, p. 115;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.25

Approval of a Request from *The Lutheran Magazine*, p. 115;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.26

Approval of Restated Bylaws of the Board of Pensions, p. 116;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.27

Acknowledgment of Independent Lutheran Organizations, p. 118;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.28

Approval of Amendments to Seminary Governing Documents, p. 119;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.29

Elections to Boards of Certain Social Ministry Organizations, p. 121;

EN BLOC

VOTED:

CC10.04.30

Elections to Boards of Certain Seminaries, p. 121.

EN BLOC

1. RESPONSES TO SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS DIRECTED TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL

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

VOTED:

CC10.04.21

To adopt *en bloc* the following responses to synodical resolutions and Churchwide Assembly actions:

EN BLOC

A. MINISTRY POLICIES

South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin Synod Council communicate to the ELCA Church Council this synod's strong support for the proposed revisions to this church's ministry policies (including changes to the pension and other benefits plan) that were developed pursuant to Churchwide Assembly action CA09.05.27 and published on March 15, 2010; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this council communicate to the ELCA Church Council this synod's strong support for the recommendation, reached by a consensus of the Conference of Bishops and announced on March 9, 2010, to admit pastors currently on the clergy roster of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries to this church's roster of ordained ministers by a rite of reception, rather than of ordination; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this council request that the ELCA Church Council adopt, without substantial amendment, the above-named proposed revisions to the ministry policies and recommendation regarding Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the secretary of this synod be directed to transmit a copy of this resolution to the secretary of the ELCA for consideration and possible action by the ELCA Church Council.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.21a

To receive the resolution of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin related to revisions to the ministry policies of this church;

To acknowledge the action of the ELCA Church Council on revisions to "Vision and Expectations," the Candidacy Manual, and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" and on the "Rite for Reception to the Roster of Ordained Ministers" as the response of the Church Council to the synod's resolution; and

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

B1. BENEFITS FOR DOMESTIC PARTNERS

South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)

WHEREAS, the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin adopted the "Resolution on ELCA Board of Pensions and Domestic Partners" at its 2008 assembly; and

WHEREAS, economic impacts have only worsened in that time; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Board of Pensions has not changed its policy of unjustly preventing unmarried partners to "unbundle" pensions from other parts of the program; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to call on the ELCA Board of Pensions to change the policies of the Pension and Other Benefits Program to more justly support domestic partners by allowing them to opt out of health benefits in the same fashion as current policy allows for married participants; and be it further

RESOLVED that the bishop of this synod report to the 2010 Synod Assembly how the president and trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions have responded to this concern.

B2. BOARD OF PENSIONS HEALTH PLAN

New England Synod (7B)

RESOLVED, that the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) shall offer health and benefit packages for same-sex domestic partners that are equal in value and coverage to those plans offered to heterosexual spouses, and that the ELCA Board of Pensions consult with its insurance contractors to determine how best to accomplish this mandate in a timely and equitable fashion; and

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod Assembly direct the New England Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Executive Committee Action

At its August 2009 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Church Council voted [EC09.08.24]:

To receive the resolutions of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin and the New England Synod related to benefits for same-gender domestic partners and other health care issues;

To acknowledge that pending actions of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly may inform response to these resolutions;

To refer the resolutions to the ELCA Board of Pensions in consultation with the Office of the Secretary with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2009 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from the ELCA Board of Pensions

The Board of Pensions prepared an initial response to the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin prior to the August 2009 Churchwide Assembly. A slightly revised version of the response dated July 10, 2009, follows.

Following the affirmative action of the Churchwide Assembly on *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, its implementing resolutions and, specifically, Implementing Resolution #7, “To call upon the ELCA to amend the eligibility provisions of the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program, consistent with the policies of this church,” the staff of the Board of Pensions has been researching the implications of this resolution, fully aware that the Churchwide Assembly action requires “policies of this church” to be developed and approved by the ELCA Church Council. Specifically, policy changes to ELCA documents, “Vision and Expectations,” and “Definition and Guidelines for Discipline” are to be approved by the ELCA Church Council. It is important that amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program be consistent with the policy changes.

Preliminary work on plan amendments began following the Churchwide Assembly and included introductory discussions at the October–November 2009 Board of Trustees meeting.

While it has been challenging to draft plan amendments prior to the approval of policy changes by the ELCA Church Council, the Board of Pensions drafted provisional amendments for the February–March 2010 Board of Trustees meeting, with the understanding that this time line preceded the spring 2010 Conference of Bishops and Church Council meetings. The Board of Pensions has worked with the ELCA Office of the Secretary and the Vocation and Education unit in order to be informed and updated with pertinent policy change recommendations as they have been developed.

Consequently, plan amendments approved by the Board of Trustees in February–March 2010 will be viewed as preliminary and subject to further revisions as necessitated by actions of the 2010 Conference of Bishops and Church Council meetings.

Church Council Action

At its November 2009 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC09.11.86a] [CC09.11.86b]:

To receive the update provided by the Board of Pensions as the initial response to the resolutions of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin related to benefits for domestic partners and the New England Synod related to the Board of Pensions health plan for same-sex domestic partners;

To authorize a delay in the final response to these resolutions until the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and

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

VOTED:

CC10.04.21b

EN BLOC

To acknowledge the action by the Church Council to approve amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program in response to implementing resolution 7 of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and revisions to “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline” as the response of the Church Council to the resolutions of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin and the New England Synod; and

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

C1. REPEAL OF “HUMAN SEXUALITY: GIFT AND TRUST”

Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has adopted the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; and

WHEREAS, in Part IV (lines 620–628 in the *Pre-Assembly Report*) this statement reads:

The historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have recognized marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10: 6–9: “But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one put asunder.” (Jesus here recalls Genesis 1:27; 2:23–24.); and

WHEREAS, in Part IV (lines 740–744, as amended, of the *Pre-Assembly Report*) it reads:

Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, some people, though not all, in this church and within the larger Christian community, conclude that marriage is also the appropriate term to use in describing similar benefits, protection, and support for same-gender couples entering into lifelong monogamous relationships; and

WHEREAS, the statement then goes on to treat these two positions and the variants within them as of equal validity, on the basis of the “conscience-bound beliefs” of those who hold them (Part IV, lines 809–868 of the *Pre-Assembly Report*); and

WHEREAS, on this same basis of the “conscience-bound lack of consensus in this church” (lines 452–453 of the Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies in Part V of the *Pre-Assembly Report*) the resolutions on ministry policies (CA09.05.23, 24, 26, and 27) were adopted; and

WHEREAS, neither the social statement nor the Recommendation on Ministry Policies presents an argument based on Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and with the aid of sound reason either to reject what is admitted to be the position of the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions based on Scripture or to accept a position which is admitted to be contrary to the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions; and

WHEREAS, the Confession of Faith of the ELCA (Chapter 2 of the ELCA Constitution) commits the ELCA to accept the canonical Scriptures as the authoritative source and norm of our proclamation, faith, and life, and to accept the confessional writings of the Lutheran church as a true witness of the Gospel and valid interpretations of the faith of the Church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council repudiate the decisions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly in adopting the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and the four Resolutions on Ministry Policies (CA09.05.23, 24, 26, 27) as violations of the Confession of Faith, Chapter 2 of the ELCA constitution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council memorialize the ELCA Church Council to repudiate these actions as violations of the Confession of Faith, Chapter 2 of the ELCA Constitution, refuse to implement these actions, and begin the process to overturn these decisions at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

C2. IMPLEMENTATION OF MINISTRY POLICIES

Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has adopted four Recommendations on Ministry Policies (CA09.05.23, CA09.05.24, CA09.05.26, and CA09.05.27); and

WHEREAS, CA09.05.23 states: “that in the implementation of any resolutions on ministry policies, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another’s burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all”; and

WHEREAS, CA09.05.27, in the second “RESOLVED” states “that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship”; and

WHEREAS, the fifth “Whereas,” introducing CA.09.05.27, states: “other members, congregations, candidacy committees, and synods of the ELCA acknowledge those gifts and skills for ministry, but believe that this church must maintain an expectation of celibacy for any gay or lesbian person, whether or not that person is in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, and thus believe that this church cannot call or roster people in such relationships”; and

WHEREAS, the use of “structured flexibility” is portrayed in the “Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies” as presented to the Churchwide Assembly on lines 488–498 of the *Pre-Assembly Report* in the following manner:

To choose structured flexibility does not imply that same-gender-oriented people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships would be able to serve everywhere in this church. The existing discernment processes for approval and call already assume that synods, bishops, candidacy committees, rostered leaders, and congregations will make decisions in keeping with their own conscience and convictions. If structured flexibility were

added to the process, this assumption would still protect any congregation, candidacy committee, synod, or bishop from having to violate bound conscience by approving, calling, commissioning, consecrating, or ordaining anyone in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship. Similarly, a structured flexibility process would protect the decisions of a congregation, candidacy committee, synod, or bishop who concludes that mission would be served best by approving or calling a particular candidate or rostered leader who is in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship [emphasis added]; and

WHEREAS, it is evident from these portions of the materials adopted and presented at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly that the “all” whose “bound conscience” the actions of the assembly have committed the ELCA to honor includes “synods,” and that this “bound conscience” includes the ability to choose not to approve, call, commission, consecrate, or ordain someone in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and

WHEREAS, the “bound conscience” of the Northeastern Iowa Synod can most clearly be determined by the actions taken at Synod Assembly; and

WHEREAS, actions of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly in 2004 (SA04.06.9), 2005 (SA05.06.38), 2007 (SA07.06.33, SA07.06.36, SA07.06.38, and SA07.06.41), and 2009 (SA09.06.15 and SA09.06.18) have declared the position of the Northeastern Iowa Synod to be that “Marriage, an institution ordained by God, is the life-long union of one man and one woman for the creation of human life and for their mutual love and care. . . . Sexual intercourse is part of the vocation of marriage and is misused in any other context” (SA04.06.9); have opposed any changes in the church’s teaching concerning marriage and sexuality (SA04.06.9, SA09.06.15); and have opposed any changes in the ELCA’s standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in the 1990 documents “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline” (SA05.06.38, SA07.06.36, SA07.06.38, SA07.06.41, and SA09.06.18); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council, recognizing the past actions of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly as evidence of the Northeastern Iowa Synod’s strongly held views with respect to the approving, calling, commissioning, consecrating, or ordaining of one in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship, determines that the standards for rostered ministry as outlined in the 1990 documents, “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline” shall remain in effect for the Northeastern Iowa Synod, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council encourage the Northeastern Iowa Synod Candidacy Committee and the Office of Bishop of the Northeastern Iowa Synod to continue to abide by such standards for rostered ministry in the Northeastern Iowa Synod during the period leading up to the 2010 Synod Assembly, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council recommends the following continuing resolution to the 2010 Synod Assembly of the Northeastern Iowa Synod:

S14.02.A10 *In addition to the standards for ordained ministers in the current “Vision and Expectations” as adopted by the ELCA Church Council, this synod shall continue to maintain this expectation from “Vision and Expectations” (1990) in its candidacy process and in its standards for pastors and other rostered leaders: Ordained ministers, whether married or single, are expected to uphold an understanding of marriage in their public ministry as well as in private life that is biblically informed and consistent with the teachings of this synod. The expectations of this synod regarding the sexual conduct of its ordained ministers are grounded in the understanding that human sexuality is a gift from God and that ordained ministers are to live in such a way as to honor this gift. Ordained ministers are expected to reject sexual promiscuity, the manipulation of others for purposes of sexual gratification, and all attempts of sexual seduction and sexual harassment, including taking physical or emotional advantage of others. Single ordained ministers are expected to live a chaste life. Married ordained ministers are expected to live in fidelity to their spouses, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a marriage relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful. Ordained ministers who are homosexual in their self-understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relationships.*

Executive Committee Action

At its January 2010 meeting, the Executive Committee voted [EC10.01.03]:

To receive the resolutions of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council requesting repudiation of the social statement on human sexuality and recommending procedures for the implementation of ministry policies within the synod;

To refer the resolutions to the Office of the Secretary with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and

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

Response from the Office of the Secretary

At its meeting on January 30, 2010, the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council rescinded the resolutions it had passed at its November 14, 2009, meeting concerning the “bound conscience” of the synod with respect to ministry policies and its intention to begin the process to “rescind” and “repudiate” the adoption of the social statement on human sexuality. According to an open letter dated February 1, 2010, from Ms. Susan Armstrong, vice president of the synod, the council’s action was taken in response to concerns, particularly about the authority of the Synod Council, raised by members and congregations of the ELCA in the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

Since the resolutions were rescinded by the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council, the Church Council does not need to act on them.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.21c

To acknowledge the action of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council to rescind the two resolutions requesting repudiation of the social statement on human sexuality and recommending procedures for the implementation of ministry policies within the synod; and

To express gratitude to the Synod Council for its deliberative process and for the “extensive and open conversation” that led to its decision and for the February 1, 2010, letter from Vice President Susan Armstrong notifying the Office of the Secretary of the Synod Council’s action; and

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

D. WINDSTORM INSURANCE CRISIS

Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E)

WHEREAS, Section 13.41.A03. of the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* contains a provision assigning Responsibilities for Risk Management to the churchwide organization; and

WHEREAS, the provision further specifies that “The Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in collaboration with the treasurer of this church, shall provide and manage insurance (exclusive of life and health) programs for the churchwide organization and shall make available insurance programs to **congregations, synods**, regions, and related institutional, agencies, and organizations . . .” [*emphasis added*]; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Offices of the Secretary and Treasurer did establish, in 2006, with the urging and full support of the Florida-Bahamas Synod, an insurance task force to explore, review, and recommend an insurance plan and provider to serve as the recommended property and liability insurance provider for congregations and synods across this church; and

WHEREAS, the result of a two-year examination of solutions recommended Church Mutual as an initial provider and as a step leading to the development of a Risk Pooled Trust or Captive Insurance Program as a long-term objective and ultimate solution to rising insurance costs across this church; and

WHEREAS, Church Mutual has now, in order to reduce insurance costs to other geographical areas of this church, excluded and segregated congregations of the Florida-Bahamas Synod from coverage; and

WHEREAS, the result of a separate insurance program for many of the congregations of this synod has resulted in windstorm premium increases of 200 percent to 400 percent, now forcing many congregations to choose between underfunding mission and pastoral ministry or risking the possibility of catastrophic loss and the likelihood of inability to continue ministry due to depletion of assets by canceling windstorm coverage; and

WHEREAS, the result of the continual increased insurance costs now threatens not only congregational ministries, but also mission support for synodical and churchwide expressions as congregations find it more difficult to cover expenses and share generously in mission support; and

WHEREAS, insurance costs for all Florida-Bahamas and many other ELCA congregations will continue to rise in a disproportionate manner, gradually and further eroding the collective effort to be God’s church in a challenging world; and

WHEREAS, we are now at a time when we must address the continuing problem that will ultimately impact this whole church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the ELCA initiate direction that will assure that affected congregations and synods of the ELCA are not excluded from a comprehensive insurance solution because of cost savings for other congregations or synods of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council direct the Offices of the Secretary and Treasurer to recommit their energies to finding an insurance solution more appropriate for this period in time and one that ensures and demands affordable insurance coverage for all congregations and synods of this church in the foreseeable future; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this program be undertaken immediately with full implementation planned no later than June 1, 2011.

Executive Committee Action

At its November 2009 meeting, the Executive Committee voted [EC09.11.37a]:

To receive the resolution of the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council related to comprehensive insurance coverage for congregations;

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer, with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Background from Office of the Secretary

The ELCA churchwide organization offers an endorsed insurance program for ELCA synods and congregations. That voluntary program seeks to provide a fairly priced level of coverage that addresses the needs of ELCA congregations across the country regarding many risk exposures, including natural disasters. ELCA congregations may become part of this program or may select their own insurance.

Prior to 2002, the insurance industry provided coverage, including windstorm, to congregations in Florida, except for those congregations in specific high-risk locations. A.J. Gallagher, at that time the ELCA's endorsed insurance program, promoted an endorsed program in the state, but also needed to address the named windstorm situation where necessary. They created a named Windstorm Loss Fund that congregations could join by contributing to a shared account. At the time, Florida congregations (as is the case today) chose their insurance carrier independently of the Florida-Bahamas Synod or the ELCA-endorsed program. Those congregations in high-risk areas gravitated to the A.J. Gallagher program and the Windstorm Loss Fund due to the lack of an alternative. However, only high-risk congregations participated. Over time, the program was modified but continued to attract mainly at-risk congregations. The Windstorm Loss Fund, therefore, was impacted negatively and suffered losses because it was populated largely by at-risk congregations.

By August 2005, it was clear that in order to sustain named windstorm coverage, an alternative, broader-based insurance product was needed. In that month and the two months following, Florida was hit by hurricanes Katrina, Wilma, and Rita. In late 2007, the Office of the Secretary and the Office of the Treasurer formed a task force to examine a number of insurance issues and ultimately recommend a solution to them. In the meantime, A.J. Gallagher continued to offer the endorsed insured program in Florida with a modified solution for named windstorms, an aggregated product shared by all congregations in the endorsed program.

In May 2008, the ELCA moved its endorsement to Church Mutual Insurance Company, with Willis as the program broker, with the understanding that Florida congregations would be offered a package of coverages, including windstorm insurance. This insurance would have specific limits per congregation. Because of the ELCA's endorsement, Church Mutual agreed to return to the state of Florida. It had left the state after 2005 due to the adverse political situation regarding insurance, not due to its losses sustained during the hurricanes of 2005 and prior. Church Mutual has attempted to provide a named windstorm product, but up to now those congregations seeking quotations have found it to be too expensive.

Both the ELCA's previous insurance broker, A.J. Gallagher, and its current one have recommended a broader sharing of risk (i.e., pooling) in order to address the problem of windstorm insurance. The difficulty is the need to enroll

a sufficient number of congregations to make the program viable and to collect information and underwriting data from congregations. The ELCA cannot require congregations to participate in this endorsed insurance program, and the Florida-Bahamas Synod cannot mandate that its Florida congregations participate. There is a sufficient number of congregations in Florida to attain a competitively priced insurance product covering named windstorms. However, the congregations must at minimum be willing to provide the broker with sufficient data to underwrite the product. This information has been provided to the Florida-Bahamas Synod on several occasions, even as late as November 5, 2009.

The ELCA churchwide organization, the broker, Willis, and the carrier continue to desire to work with synods and congregations on such issues as insurance for named windstorms. However, no carrier will provide the type of product demanded in the resolution, and there are no immediate or quick-fix solutions. One way that the churchwide organization has sought to address this challenge is to have a growing endorsed insurance program that provides a good insurance resource for all congregations and synods. The strategic hope is that, as the program expands with the participation of more congregations, a shared-risk pooled program will become feasible. For such a program to move forward, significant churchwide funding needs to be found, and the ability to take some insurance-related financial risks needs carefully to be weighed and assumed.

The churchwide organization, Willis, and the ELCA-endorsed insurance program insurer, Church Mutual, in consultation with synods and congregations, will continue to explore the challenges that Florida and other coastal states have in obtaining comprehensive insurance for windstorm loss at a fair and competitive rate and to develop a product that can provide an additional option for the congregations of the Florida-Bahamas Synod.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.21d

To receive the resolution of the Florida-Bahamas Synod related to comprehensive insurance coverage for its congregations;

To acknowledge the importance of comprehensive and affordable insurance coverage for ELCA synods and congregations across this church and to acknowledge in particular the financial and risk challenges facing congregations and synods where there have been natural disasters impacting on coverage availability and premiums charged;

To recognize that the churchwide organization provides a program of insurance coverage to ELCA congregations while acknowledging that ELCA congregations have the ability to select the brokers, carriers, coverage, premium amounts, and policies of insurance that best suit their individual needs;

To encourage continuing efforts by the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer, to seek to promote comprehensive coverage at a fair price to all congregations across this church; and

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

2. RESPONSES TO CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY REFERRALS DIRECTED TO CHURCH COUNCIL

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

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.22

To adopt *en bloc* the following responses to referrals from the Church Council to churchwide units in response to actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly:

A. LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

1. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)

[Memorial Category E3] [CA.09.04.21]

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happen through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the presiding bishop to create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm the ELCA’s commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners and community resources to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to effectively develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

2. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)

[Memorial Category E3] [CA.09.04.21]

WHEREAS, the Church in Society program unit of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offers opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation's response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Disaster Response use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

3. Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8A)

[Memorial Category E3] [CA.09.04.21]

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be "a public church that witnesses boldly to God's love for all that God has created"; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God's work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation's response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR currently lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Disaster Response use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

4. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)

[Memorial Category E3] [CA.09.04.21]

WHEREAS, the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR currently lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it effectively to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

5. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D)

[Memorial Category E3] [CA.09.04.21]

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, over the last decade the ELCA, in cooperation with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happen through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to direct the presiding bishop to create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm the ELCA’s commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to encourage Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to effectively develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

6. Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E)

[Memorial Category E3] [CA.09.04.21]

WHEREAS, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change and, since September 11, 2001, this nation has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, this nation since September 11, 2001, has become more acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers, and resources for best response; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR currently lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly direct the Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

7. West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)

[Memorial Category E3] [CA.09.04.21]

WHEREAS, the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages this church to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created”; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA over the last decade has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool, known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected by disasters; and

WHEREAS, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by being inspired, trained, and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life-transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and by offering ongoing assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected area; and

WHEREAS, disasters can affect anyone, but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the ELCA to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and striving for justice; and

WHEREAS, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunity for this church to bear witness to the love of Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and

WHEREAS, the deficits in the nation's response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated the need to be better prepared, and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Disaster Response office provides coordination, but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and

WHEREAS, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the ELCA to be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request that the Church in Society program unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society program unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society program unit to collaborate in facilitating conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Lutheran Disaster Response use the technological tools available to it to develop, support, and maintain a network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the network.

Churchwide Assembly Action:

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA.09.04.21]:

To thank the Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, and West Virginia-Western Maryland synods for their strong support for and concern about Lutheran Disaster Response;

To acknowledge that Lutheran Disaster Response is a collaborative ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS);

To acknowledge that Lutheran Disaster Response currently is involved in a strategic planning process, including the chief executive officers from five Lutheran Disaster Response-affiliated social ministry organizations;

To give consideration to creating a permanent Lutheran Disaster Response advisory committee and to defining a process for succession of committee membership;

To anticipate that this process will address effective, appropriate, and sustainable response mechanisms and the future nature and focus of Lutheran Disaster Response;

To acknowledge that the ELCA and LCMS are currently involved in a facilitated process regarding their relationship in Lutheran Disaster Response;

To encourage the ELCA to continue to deepen and develop its process for working together with churchwide units, synods, and social ministry organizations in times of specific disasters; and

To request that the Church in Society program unit bring a progress report to the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

Church Council Referral

At its November 2009 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC09.11.87] to refer the memorials to the Church in Society program unit.

Response from the Church in Society unit

In response to memorials to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly from the Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synods regarding Lutheran Disaster Response, the program unit for Church in Society was requested to bring a progress report to the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council.

In its response to these memorials, the Churchwide Assembly action acknowledged that Lutheran Disaster Response currently was involved in a strategic planning process, and it anticipated that this process would address effective, appropriate, and sustainable response mechanisms and the future nature and focus of Lutheran Disaster Response. In addition, it requested that the planning process give consideration to creating a permanent Lutheran Disaster Response advisory committee and to defining a process for succession of committee membership. It further encouraged the ELCA to continue to deepen and develop its process for working together with churchwide units, synods, and social ministry organizations in times of specific disasters.

The action also recognized that Lutheran Disaster Response is a collaborative ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS). It acknowledged that the ELCA and LCMS currently are involved in a facilitated process regarding their relationship in Lutheran Disaster Response.

LDR Strategic Planning Task Force

An LDR planning task force was formed in May 2009 regarding a range of issues, including the ones raised by the memorials noted above.

The members of the task force included the following: Kenneth Aicher, assistant to the bishop, Florida-Bahamas Synod; James Barclay, chief executive officer, Lutheran Family Services of Colorado; Ruth Henrichs, chief executive officer, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska; Marie Jerge, bishop, Upstate New York Synod; Barbara Droher Kline, chief executive officer, Lutheran Social Services, Northern California; Gerald Mansholt, bishop, Central States Synod; Kevin Massey, LDR director; Michael Nevergall, LDR assistant director; Gregory Pile, bishop, Allegheny Synod; Robert Rundle, president, Lutheran Social Services, South Central Pennsylvania; Julie Swanson, chief executive officer, Lutheran Family Services of Virginia; William Vanderwall, process consultant; Church in Society advisory members Josselyn Bennett, Leslie Weber, Rebecca Larson.

The task force began its work by reviewing documents and background literature. The task force met by conference call the following dates: July 2, 2009; September 11, 2009; November 12, 2009; January 21, 2010; and February 17, 2010. The task force met in person October 5–7, 2009, in addition to frequent e-mail and document exchanges. Task force meetings were facilitated by William Vanderwall.

The results of the work of the task force are contained in two framework documents:

- The Lutheran Disaster Response System Vision
- LDR Advisory Committee

Members of the task force have agreed to function as an interim advisory committee pending the appointment by Church in Society of the LDR Advisory Committee.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.22a

To receive with gratitude the report of the Church in Society unit in response to the memorial of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly related to Lutheran Disaster Response and its appended documents: the report of Lutheran Disaster Response Strategic Planning Task Force, “The Lutheran Disaster Response System Vision” and the report and recommendations related to the establishment of an LDR advisory committee;

**To acknowledge that these reports and recommendations as the response of the Church Council to the action of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

THE LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE SYSTEM VISION

“How we work together”

In times when the network is responding to disasters, the LDR system has resources to commit to support long-term recovery: expertise, funds, relationships, services, system clout, durability, reliability, people, and preparedness.

In times between responding to disasters, the LDR system cultivates a culture of resilience, readiness, and preparedness:

- Action plans for disaster response
- Resource development plans
- Clearinghouse of information
 - Simple and easy-to-use resources
 - Communications, internal and external to the network
 - Awareness of long-term recovery
- Develops and maintains key relationships
- Maintains an asset map of resources
- Maintains continuity through long-term recovery operations

Case Statement

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) has a long history and tradition of mobilizing local, regional, and national Lutheran organizations to respond to domestic disasters. In the Lutheran faith tradition, serving others in time of need is a foundational principle. Lutheran congregations across the country are an integral part of this collaborative ministry of service to communities affected by disaster.

LDR is a nationwide network of social ministry organizations (SMOs), Lutheran church bodies, volunteers, and many partners, who focus on disaster preparedness and long-term recovery response efforts in disaster-affected areas of the United States. The focus of LDR is serving the poor, the disenfranchised, and people and communities who fall between cracks of the existing response system. LDR also mobilizes care for the needs of congregations in times of disaster and builds the capacity for congregations to serve and respond by being prepared for disasters when they do occur. We care for the church, support community, and care for people in truly difficult times.

Shared strategies for accomplishing the LDR system vision:

- Network Strengthening/Positioning/Capacity Building for the Future
- Communicating to the Community
- Partnerships/Relationships
- Educating Others
- Developing Funding Resources

Network Strengthening/Positioning/Capacity Building for the Future:

- Create an LDR Advisory Committee
 - Build simple action plan templates for affiliates, synods, and congregations
 - Define mutual expectations for being part of the LDR system as specified in the LDR Affiliate Agreement
 - Create and maintain the system asset map (including leadership)
 - Provide a volunteer management “toolkit”
 - Develop and maintain “just in time” training opportunities for disaster response
 - Define responsibility for maintaining key relationships
 - Integrate network positioning strategies into a new branding and marketing plan
 - Create a multi-level affiliate system that recognizes regional differences in disaster frequency, the capacity of adjacent social ministry organizations, and the capacity of local Lutheran communities to support disaster response.
- Affiliate system:

- ▶ 1st level - Primary response entities, regularly responding to disasters with full-time capacity and responding in multiple ways
- ▶ 2nd level - Secondary response entities, responding less regularly with call-up staff and responding with one or two specialties
- ▶ 3rd level - Irregularly responding entities, with limited capacity, knowledge, and ability to respond
- Draw upon other examples of best practices

Communicating to the Community

- Utilize technology to communicate within the LDR network, reaching the broad mix of internal stakeholders
- Reinvent communications with judicatories
- Create simple and easy resources to disseminate information to affiliates, synods, and congregations
- Create a new plan for media relations across the network
- Strategize a new branding and marketing plan for the network, integrated with fundraising plans, and implemented jointly between affiliates and the LDR national office

Partnerships/Relationships

- Create new engagement plans that clarify relationship with or clarify roles and responsibilities with:
 - ▶ Other Lutheran systems, like health care, long-term care, other SMOs that are not LDR affiliates
 - ▶ Synods, clarifying expectations for both sides on the two-way relationship
 - ▶ Districts, clarifying expectations for both sides on the two-way relationship
 - ▶ Thrivent Chapters
 - ▶ National VOAD and other national disaster response organizational offices
 - ▶ Other regional and local disaster organizations like VOADS, Red Cross, The Salvation Army, FEMA, HHS, HUD, local-level organizations, long-term recovery committees
 - ▶ LSA
 - ▶ Ecumenical partners - such as in the Church World Service partnership
 - ▶ LIRS
 - ▶ Media organizations
 - ▶ Education institutions

Educating Others

- Teach preparedness for individuals, families, congregations, SMOs, and judicatories
- Train volunteers
- Improve the Web site to develop capacity for members of the LDR network to update portions of content themselves
- Utilize new social networking opportunities
- Provide briefings/initial training on disaster preparedness to synod bishops and provide follow-up support to bishops and staff during disaster response
- Engage congregations in preparedness training and responding to disasters
- Engage Thrivent at the national and local level in preparing and responding to disasters as part of the network
- Create an education program for school-age young people to build awareness and action

Developing Funding Resources

- Provide a transparent LDR national fiscal strategy for undesignated and designated funds that includes:
 - ▶ A pool of readiness-response funds available for immediate disaster response needs that is replenished by undesignated contributions
 - ▶ A pool of funds to support targeted strategic affiliate capacity
 - ▶ A pool of funds to support the national LDR capacity
 - ▶ Funds designated by donors for specific disasters and needs
- Develop a coordinated national/affiliate fund development strategy:

- ▶ Explore ELCA sources who may contribute as part of mission
- ▶ Identify philanthropic sources to support the network
- ▶ Build relationships with private sector for in-kind services/products or sponsorship opportunities
- ▶ Engage affiliates' leadership to get on board with the direction and invest in preparedness and capacity building
- ▶ Create coordinated national/affiliate fundraising plans following the new branding and marketing directions
- ▶ Organize pursuit of government funding opportunities, especially for federal contracts that can be leveraged to benefit one, some, or all affiliates most directly

PURPOSE OF LDR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Lutheran Disaster Response is a collaborative ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) that seeks to demonstrate Christ's compassion for people by promoting hope, healing, and wholeness for disaster survivors. Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) seeks to join with LDR network organization leaders and associated judicatories to advance the mission of Lutheran Disaster Response.

In 2009, LDR formed a Strategic Planning Task Force to look at where LDR has been, assess where LDR currently is, and envision where LDR wants to be in the future. The task force believes that bringing together a diverse group of LDR advisors into an LDR Advisory Committee will bring wisdom, knowledge, history, and great experience to accomplish even more in God's service to those affected by disaster.

The committee will be a place for two-way communication and information exchange between social ministry organization (SMO) leaders, judicatory leaders, and LDR leadership. This includes information about the needs and opportunities to serve in local communities/congregations affected by disasters and the resources LDR has for preparedness, education, and service. The LDR Advisory Committee can identify needs which LDR can help meet and enhance the understanding of support for people affected by disaster. The interaction with the LDR Advisory Committee will help set the strategic direction for LDR as well as inform SMOs about opportunities and resources available to aid disaster-affected areas.

Purposes of an LDR Advisory Committee

- Serve as a resource to LDR staff
- Add value to LDR direction, thinking, and decision making
- Information exchange between SMOs, judicatories, and LDR about the needs of people and surrounding communities affected by disaster
- Discussion and planning of services to prepare for and meet those needs
- Provide focus on services and resources that directly impact people or communities
- Assist in the development of resources to meet local and broader LDR network needs
- Subcommittees can investigate new and emerging issues in a timely and more in-depth way
- Assist in strategic planning and program evaluation
- Promote volunteer activities to aid in disaster preparedness and in directly responding to disasters
- Shared sense of mission and accomplishment to help bind the LDR Network together

Responsibilities of LDR national office

LDR staff will have the following responsibilities:

- Host meetings and establish meeting schedules for the LDR Advisory Committee
- Coordinate agendas, prepare meeting materials, and distribute in a timely manner
- Help identify potential committee members
- Ensure meeting minutes are taken, prepared, and distributed in a timely manner
- Prepare and distribute LDR financial reports to the committee
- Consult advisory committee on strategic directions, important decisions, challenging situations, and best practices
- Implement strategic directions and plans
- Facilitate relationships and communications between the committee, network SMOs, judicatories, and other disaster relief bodies

- Be a resource for information and resources concerning support for people and communities affected by disaster
- Respond to community inquiries regarding the network

Responsibilities of LDR Advisory Committee Members

Committee members will have the following responsibilities:

- Accept, support, and embrace the mission of Lutheran Disaster Response
- Identify strengths and needs in the LDR network
- Guide LDR in accomplishing its mission by thinking strategically, with an eye to the future, and by participating in strategic planning
- Help identify potential committee members
- Evaluate and measure the work of the committee
- Regularly review LDR budget performance and financial goals in the LDR plan
- Communicate with peer organizations about LDR and its services and resources
- Attend and participate in scheduled meetings
- Use LDR as a resource to educate community and congregational members on issues concerning disaster response
- Encourage the use of LDR services and resources by synods, districts, congregations, and community members
- Generate ideas and identify potential sources for resource development

LDR Advisory Committee attributes

- The committee will have co-leaders from LDR staff and the committee
- Quarterly meetings by conference call
- Meet in person at least once per year
- Ideal size is 8–10 members, representative of geographic distribution, LDR affiliate level, judicatories, and varied member skills and backgrounds
- Committee Membership goals: 4 chief executive officers (or senior leadership staff) from different geographic areas and different affiliate level organizations; 2 coordinators (or recently retired coordinators); 2 judicatory representatives (1 bishop and 1 district president); executive director, ELCA Church in Society program unit; executive director, LCMS World Relief and Human Care
- Staggered terms of members (2 or 3 years long)
- Includes an LDR purpose statement, easy to understand and communicate with others in the network
- Advisory committee member recruitment procedures offer stable yet renewing leadership
- The LDR network receives regular communication from the advisory committee
- Subcommittees take on specific tasks
- Advisory committee work is guided by a long-range plan

B. ADVOCACY FOR LEGAL PROTECTION AND FAIRNESS

Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

[Memorials Category E1] [CA.09.03.09i]

WHEREAS, the Lutheran church has a tradition of opposing discrimination codified in law, even during times of social dislocation; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has written social statements to guide efforts to advocate for the protection of legal rights and has developed an advocacy arm to carry out the pragmatic efforts at legislative change; and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality notes that “laws have a direct impact on patterns of social trust within households and networks of kinship” and that “victims of sexual violation must be able to rely on public institutions for intervention”; and

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement on human sexuality notes that “certain laws and economic realities . . . may create extreme economic hardship for some, including older adults, who desire to be legally married” and asks that the ELCA advocate for “altering laws and the factors that create a significant impediment for such people to be married”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to call on bishops, ministries, and members of this church to advocate for laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis

of sexual orientation or gender identity and for laws that define violence on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity as a hate crime; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to direct appropriate churchwide units and to encourage synods, congregations, and members of this church to advocate for laws and regulations that permit widows and widowers to marry without losing retirement benefits.

Churchwide Assembly Action

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA.09.03.09i]:

To thank the Minneapolis Area Synod for connecting faith to issues in public life;

To acknowledge the importance of the issues raised and to note background information provided related to the current and recent work done on hate-crime sentencing and employment non-discrimination;

To affirm the historical concern of ELCA social policy for advocacy related to human and civil rights and equal protection under the law and to encourage the members of this church to advocate in keeping with this tradition;

To request that, as financial and staff resources permit, the Church in Society unit study the issue of the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry; and

To acknowledge that the Church in Society unit advocates on these issues based on this church's social policy statements related to human and civil rights.

Church Council Referral

At its November 2009 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC09.11.87] to refer the memorial to the Church in Society unit.

Response from the Church in Society unit

The Church in Society unit has not been able to date to “study the issue of the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry” as requested in the 2009 Churchwide Assembly recommendation to the Minneapolis Area Synod memorial (Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness [CA.09.03.09i]) due to limited staff resources.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.22b

To authorize a delay in the response of the Church in Society unit to the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod related to legal protection and fairness regarding the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Note: The Church Council dealt separately with these items in Agenda/Minutes Exhibit B, Part 2b

3. *Churchwide Assembly Action: Motion E Wills and Living Trusts [CA09.06.39b]*

4. *Churchwide Assembly Action: Motion F “bound conscience” [CA09.06.39c]*

3. ELECTION OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBER

(Agenda IV.B.1)

Background:

Continuing resolution 14.41.E02. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* states:

An Audit Committee—composed of six members appointed by the Budget and Finance Committee and approved by the Church Council for two-year, renewable terms—shall assist the Budget and Finance Committee and the Church Council in fulfilling oversight of the churchwide organization’s accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems, and audit functions, consistent with its responsibilities as specified in the charter recommended by the Audit Committee, reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee, and approved by the Church Council. A minimum of two members of the Audit Committee shall be members of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Members of the Audit Committee and current term end date are: Ann F. Niedringhaus (August 2011); John F. Timmer (August 2010); Timothy L. Stephan (August 2011); Deborah Chenoweth (chair) (August 2011); Philip W. Bertram (August 2011); and Louise Hemstead (August 2011).

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.23

To elect John F. Timmer to the ELCA Audit Committee for a final two-year term beginning August 2010.

4. APPROVAL OF A CHURCH COUNCIL SUMMER WEBEX MEETING

(Agenda IV.C)

Background:

The Administrative Team has requested that the Executive Committee consider setting a date in the summer of 2010 for a WebEx meeting for the Church Council.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.24

To set August 4, 2010, from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon (CDT) for a WebEx meeting of the Church Council.

5. APPROVAL OF A REQUEST FROM *THE LUTHERAN MAGAZINE*

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

Background:

In a memo dated February 1, 2010, Daniel Lehmann, editor of *The Lutheran* magazine, wrote, “*The Lutheran* magazine requests permission to solicit those on the roster of the ELCA to seek contributions to offset the costs associated with providing complimentary copies of the magazine to rostered leaders. According to the Office of the Secretary, a best practice for such solicitation would be to gain the consent of the Church Council following consultation with the Conference of Bishops.”

The request is made in accordance with ELCA bylaw 11.41.06.:

“No churchwide appeal to congregations or individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by this church or churchwide units without the consent of the Churchwide Assembly, following consultation with the Conference of Bishops. No appeal to selected congregations and individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by this church or churchwide units without the consent of the Church Council, following consultation with either the Conference of Bishops or specific synods as appropriate. Proposals for such special appeals shall be presented to the Church Council through the appropriate council committee with recommendations by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.”

At its March 2010 meeting, the Conference of Bishops supported the request by *The Lutheran* magazine.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.25

To acknowledge the value of having well informed rostered leaders of this church;

To commend *The Lutheran* magazine for its generosity in providing complimentary copies to 16,467 rostered leaders and 711 surviving spouses;

To acknowledge the budget constraints under which *The Lutheran* operates as a self-sustaining publication of this church, especially in the current economic climate; and

To authorize the magazine to request donations from those who receive free copies.

6. APPROVAL OF RESTATED BYLAWS OF THE BOARD OF PENSIONS

(Agenda IV.D.2; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit P, Parts 1a–b)

Background:

The Board of Pensions has requested approval of amendments to its bylaws. The amendments are designed to incorporate the use of technology into the operation of the Board of Pensions and meetings of its Trustees. Additionally, the amendments update the bylaws to reflect actual practices with respect to notice of meetings.

The amendments to Article 5, relating to meetings of the Board of Trustees, make it clear that notice of meetings can be given by electronic communications, in accordance with Minnesota statutes. Section 5.2 is being amended to require notice of all meetings, including “other regular meetings,” which always has been the practice of the Board of Pensions. The amendment to Section 5.7 clarifies that consent to written actions can be made by authenticated electronic communications. This amendment codifies the use of “Directors Desk” or similar means of communication.

The amendment to Section 7.4 clarifies that committee meetings and voting can take place by electronic communication. Section 7.5 allows a committee action to be taken by authenticated electronic communication.

In accordance with Section 9.2 of the Restated Bylaws of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA and Article XII of the Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA, these amendments must be forwarded to the Church Council or the Churchwide Assembly for approval prior to the amendments being finalized.

The resolution of the Board of Trustees reads:

WHEREAS, the bylaws need to be amended to incorporate the use of technology into the operation of the Board of Pensions and meetings of the Board of Trustees and to reflect the actual practices of the Board of Pensions with respect to notice of meetings; and

WHEREAS, the amendments to the bylaws are more fully explained in the memorandum from Robert H. Rydland to the Board of Trustees dated February 9, 2010 (a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof); and

WHEREAS, Section 9.2 of the Restated Bylaws of the Board of Pensions and Article XII of the Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Board of Pensions require amendments to the Bylaws to be forwarded to the ELCA Church Council for approval; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Bylaws are amended as set forth in the redlined draft attached hereto and made a part hereof), and are to be forwarded to the ELCA Church Council for approval.

The memorandum noted in the action has been revised to provide the background information above. The restated bylaws are available in Exhibit P, Part 1b.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.26

To approve amendments to the bylaws of the ELCA Board of Pensions as detailed by specific section:

RESTATED
BYLAWS
of the
BOARD OF PENSIONS
of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
(with amendments indicated)

▸ ARTICLE 5 ◀

Meetings of the Board of Trustees

SECTION 5.2 Other Regular Meetings. The Board of Trustees shall establish at least one other regular meeting of the Board and it may establish additional other regular meetings. ~~Such meetings may be held without notice at the registered office of this corporation or at such other place or places as the Board of Trustees may designate.~~ Notice of such meetings shall be given in the manner described in Section 5.4 hereof.

SECTION 5.4 Notice of Meetings. ~~Written notice~~ Notice of each annual meeting of the Board of Trustees stating the time and place thereof shall be mailed, postage prepaid, or by a form of electronic communication consented to by the trustee to whom the notice is given, not less than five nor more than thirty days before the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting, to each trustee at her or his address, including both mail and electronic address, according to the last available records of this corporation. Written notice of each special meeting of the Board of Trustees stating the time, place and purpose thereof shall be mailed, postage prepaid, not less than five nor more than thirty days before the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting, to each trustee at her or his address according to the last available records of this corporation; no ~~No~~ business shall be transacted at any special meeting other than the business specified in ~~such the~~ notice of special meeting. Any trustee may make written waiver of notice before, at or after a meeting. The waiver shall be filed with the person who has been designated to act as Secretary of the meeting, who shall enter it upon the records of the meeting. Appearance at a meeting is deemed a waiver unless it is solely for the purpose of asserting the illegality of the meeting.

SECTION 5.7 ~~Written Action Without a Meeting.~~ Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Board of Trustees may be taken by a signed written action, ~~or consented to by authenticated electronic communication,~~ with two thirds (2/3) or more of the trustees entitled to vote on that action voting in the affirmative. The ~~written~~ action is effective when signed or consented to by authenticated electronic communication by the required number of trustees, unless a different effective date is provided in the written action, or the action requires Church Council or Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA approval. When written ~~action or consent~~ is taken by less than all of the trustees, all trustees shall be notified immediately of its text and effective date, except that failure to provide such notice does not invalidate the written action.

► ARTICLE 7 ◀

Committees

SECTION 7.4 Meetings and Voting. Each committee of this corporation may establish the time for its regular meetings and may change that time as it deems advisable. Special meetings of any committee of this corporation may be called by the chairperson of that committee, or by the President. At least five days' notice by mail, telephone or other form of electronic communication, consented to by the committee members, ~~electronic means~~ shall be given of any special meeting of a committee. At all meetings of a committee of this corporation each member thereof shall be entitled to cast one vote on any question coming before such meeting. The presence of a majority of the membership of any committee of this corporation shall constitute a quorum at any meeting thereof, but the members of a committee present at any such meeting, although less than a quorum, may adjourn the meeting to another time or place. A majority vote of the members of a committee of this corporation present at any meeting thereof, if there be a quorum, shall be sufficient for the transaction of the business of such committee.

SECTION 7.5 ~~Written Action Without a Meeting.~~ Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of a committee of the Board of Trustees may be taken by a signed written action or consented to by authenticated electronic communication with two-thirds (2/3) or more of the trustees entitled to vote on that action voting in the affirmative. The written action or consent is effective when signed or consented to by the required number of trustees, unless a different effective date is provided in the written action. When written action or consent is taken by less than all of the trustees entitled to vote, all trustees shall be notified immediately of its text and effective date, except that failure to provide such notice does not invalidate the written action.

7. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF INDEPENDENT LUTHERAN ORGANIZATIONS
(Agenda IV.D.3)

Background:

Bylaw 14.21.16. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* states:

The Church Council shall establish the criteria and policies for the relationship between this church and independent, cooperative, and related Lutheran organizations. The policies adopted by the Church Council shall be administered by the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization. The determination of which organization shall relate to a specific unit of the churchwide organization shall be made by the Church Council.

At its April 2006 meeting, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America voted [CC06.04.27] to approve a revised "Policy on Relationships of Churchwide Units with Independent Lutheran Organizations." The revision was made necessary by changes in structure, governance, and the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

In accordance with the revised policy, the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education unit, recommends that the ELCA Parish Nurse Association be acknowledged among Independent Lutheran Organizations in relationship to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the Vocation and Education unit.

VOTED:

CC10.04.27

EN BLOC

To acknowledge, in accordance with bylaw 14.21.16. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and the "Policy on Relationships of Churchwide Units with Independent Lutheran Organizations," the ELCA Parish Nurse Association,

which will relate to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the Vocation and Education unit. This action is contingent upon the association's removing "ELCA" from its name, given its independent and separately incorporated status, and providing evidence of the change to the Vocation and Education unit.

8. APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO SEMINARY GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

(Agenda IV.D.4; Agenda/MINUTES Exhibit G, Part 1)

Background:

Bylaw 8.31.01. provides both for the independent incorporation of ELCA seminaries and for a churchwide role in the approval of their governing documents: "Each seminary shall be a seminary of this church, shall be incorporated, and shall be governed by its board of directors consistent with policies established by the Church Council. Amendments to the governing documents of each seminary and each seminary cluster shall be submitted, upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization, to the Church Council for approval." This process of approval is accomplished by the following steps:

1. The appropriate seminary president notifies the director for theological education that the seminary board has taken action to amend its governing documents.
2. The director for theological education consults with the president on the content and intent of the amendment(s).
3. The director for theological education consults with the executive director of Vocation and Education and ELCA legal counsel.
4. The executive director of Vocation and Education and the director for theological education recommend appropriate amendments to the Church Council at its next meeting.
5. The Office of the Secretary notifies the seminary president and the executive director of Vocation and Education of the action taken by the Church Council on the recommendation.
6. The amendment(s) become(s) effective upon approval of the Church Council.

VOTED:

CC10.04.28

EN BLOC

To approve the amended constitution and bylaws of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania:

**LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
CONSTITUTION**

**Requested Amendments to the Seminary Constitution
Adopted by the Seminary Board, Winter 2010
Redline Version**

**ARTICLE III
Board of Directors**

Section 7. Committees:

- a. **Executive Committee:** There shall be an Executive Committee as provided in the Bylaws which shall act on behalf of the Board between its meetings.

- b. **Standing Committees:** ~~There shall be~~
~~an Academic Affairs Committee~~
~~an Admissions Committee~~
~~a Development and Communications Committee~~
~~a Finance Committee~~
~~a Long Range Planning Committee~~
~~a Personnel Committee~~
~~a Property and Facilities Committee~~
~~a Student Life Committee~~

The Board may establish or dissolve such standing committees as it deems prudent. The Board shall define the composition, scope, and powers of each standing committee.

Directors shall be appointed to committees annually by the Board chair with one director being designated as the committee chair. Non-director committee members may be appointed by the Board chair in consultation with the committee chair. ~~The majority of committee members shall be members of the Board, with the exception of the Admissions Committee and the Long Range Planning Committee.~~

- c. **Special Committees:** There may be such special committees as shall be appointed by the chair of the Board, with the approval of the Executive Committee, for such purposes and with such delegated powers as shall be specified by the chair. The chair and a majority of a special committee shall be members of the Board.
- d. **Subcommittees:** ~~The chair of the Board may, in consultation with the chair of the involved standing committee and with the approval of the Executive Committee, appoint subcommittees of any standing committee or special committee for such purposes and with such delegated powers as shall be specified by the chair. The chair of a subcommittee shall be a voting member of the Board. The chair shall appoint (i) an Audit Subcommittee of the Finance Committee for the purpose of recommending to the Board selection of the independent accountants of the Seminary and, after receiving and reviewing the annual and other reports of the said independent accountants and meeting with them as necessary and appropriate, recommending action upon such reports to the Board; and (ii) an Investment Subcommittee of the Development and Communications Committee and the Finance Committee for the purpose of fostering the growth of the endowment fund of the Seminary by encouraging and soliciting contributions to the endowment fund, reviewing and establishing policies with respect to the investment of the endowment fund, reviewing the performance of the endowment fund and selecting and retaining investment manager(s) for the endowment fund.~~ A chair of a standing committee may, with the approval of the chair of the Board, appoint such subcommittees of said standing committee for such purposes and with such delegated powers as shall be specified by the chair of the standing committee. The chair of a subcommittee shall be a voting member of the Board.
- e. **Non-Board Members:** Persons appointed to standing committees, special committees and subcommittees who are not voting members of the Board shall have ~~vote,~~ seat and voice;

~~provided, however, that when the committee or sub-committee acts on behalf of the Board itself such non-Board members shall not be entitled to vote.~~

- f. **Appointment; Removal:** The chair of the Board shall appoint members of standing committees, special committees and subcommittees in consultation with the chair of the relevant committee(s) and the president for terms not to exceed two years and may, also in consultation with relevant committee chairs(s) and the president, remove any such member.

9. ELECTIONS TO BOARDS OF CERTAIN SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS

(Agenda IV.G.1)

Background:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America serves as a corporate member of certain inter-Lutheran organizations and affiliated social ministry organizations. The role of corporate members includes the responsibility to elect ELCA representatives to the organization's board of directors as prescribed in the organization's governing documents. The relationship of the ELCA to certain inter-Lutheran organizations and affiliated social ministry organizations is expressed through the Church in Society unit.

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

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.29

To elect to the board of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service for a second three-year term expiring in 2012: Ms. Ruth Henrichs;

To elect to the board of Lutheran Services in America for a three-year term expiring in 2013: Mr. Brian Hofland;

**To re-elect to the board of trustees of Lutheran Medical Center to three-year terms expiring in 2013: Mr. Lawrence DiGiovanna and Pr. David Rommereim;
and**

To elect to the board of trustees of Lutheran Medical Center to three-year terms expiring in 2013: Ms. Maria Carlson, Mr. Dale Christensen, Mr. Frank Comerford, Mr. Thomas Edwards, Ms. Kristine Gebbie, Ms. Emma Graeber Porter, Mr. Gerald Luterman, and Pr. Jeanne Warfield.

10. ELECTIONS TO BOARDS OF CERTAIN SEMINARIES

(Agenda IV.G.2)

Background:

Bylaw 8.31.02. outlines basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries. Subsection 8.31.02.a. provides for churchwide representation: "At least one-fifth nominated, in consultation with the seminaries, by the appropriate churchwide unit and elected by the Church Council." The following are submitted for election based on a protocol between the seminary and the Vocation and Education program unit.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC10.04.30

To elect to the board of directors of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Chicago, Ill., for three-year terms expiring in 2013: Mr. Clarence J. Atwood Jr., Ms. Trina G. Gould, and Ms. Sarah Stegemoeller; and

To re-elect to the board of directors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Penn., for three-year terms expiring in 2013: Ms. Lynn Askew, Ms. Addie Butler, and Mr. Andrew Willis.

To elect to the board of directors of the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, Calif., to a six-year term expiring in 2016: Mr. Paul F. Tillquist.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary David D. Swartling, who provided background on the topic of new business.

The secretary stated that, at a previous meeting, the Church Council amended the Orientation Manual to create a mechanism for council members to introduce new business at council meetings.

Secretary Swartling reported that Ms. Susan W. McArver had submitted an item for new business before the deadline set at this meeting, requesting a “possible motion or discussion on the need to address the issue of Christian Education/Faith Formation more intentionally at the churchwide level, especially in light of recent cuts in positions, etc.”

The secretary described the item as a discussion matter and not an action item, and he asked that Ms. McArver be recognized.

Vice President Peña called on Ms. McArver.

Ms. McArver recalled that the previous Church Council meeting included a brief discussion regarding churchwide positions eliminated recently. She pointed out that a number of the positions were in the area of Christian Education, youth ministry, children’s ministry, and faith formation. She raised the concern that the stories and terminology of the faith may be lost on new generations without emphases in these areas.

Secretary Swartling suggested that this issue be referred to the Administrative Team, in consultation with the Vocation and Education unit, for a report with recommendations to be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council. He cited the Orientation Manual on “new business” and expressed the view that the administrative team could determine how best to proceed with this topic.

Vice President Peña called for additional discussion. There was none.

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Myrna J. Sheie to reflect on “Dwelling in the Word.”

CONSIDERATION OF UNFINISHED AGENDA ITEMS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked those present if there was any unfinished business before the council. There being none, he called on council members for any joys or concerns.

CHURCH COUNCIL JOYS AND CONCERNS

The Rev. Keith A. Hunsinger explained that he had abstained from the votes on ministry policies and the rite because he disagreed with the changes but felt he could not vote against them as a council member. He expressed gratitude that the policies and rite were developed with respect for those who disagreed with the assembly actions.

The Rev. Rachel L. Connelly thanked the council for its prayers for her and her parishioner.

The Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede thanked God for health and a transplant donor.

The Rev. Michael J. Schmidt requested prayers for the students at Valparaiso University because of the death of their campus pastor.

RACIAL JUSTICE PROCESS OBSERVATIONS

(Agenda V.A.3)

Background:

Members of the Racial Justice Working Group are Ms. Judith Barlow-Roberts, Mr. Baron Blanchard, Ms. Arielle Mastellar, Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus, the Rev. J. Pablo Obregon, Mr. Ivan A. Perez, Ms. Lynette M. Reitz, Mr. David Truland, and Ms. Deborah Wilson.

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Lynette M. Reitz for process observations.

Ms. Reitz asked those present to complete and return evaluation forms. She said the council's invitation to a visitor to speak was a unique expression of openness.

Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus thanked Ms. Judith Barlow-Roberts for her "Dwelling in the Word."

Mr. Baron Blanchard reminded all present to observe processes in this church for their justice issues.

The Rev. J. Pablo Obregon expressed the view that the process observations were beginning to bear fruits, and he thanked the council.

Vice President Peña thanked the group for its observations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The secretary noted that the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council will end at 3:00 P.M. on Sunday, November 14. He reminded council members to make timely reservations to attend that meeting and to complete expense vouchers for this meeting.

The vice president reviewed arrangements to begin the retreat shortly after adjournment.

EVALUATION AND DEBRIEFING

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the council members if they had any thoughts to share in evaluation of the meeting. He then called on advisors for their review.

Ms. Catherine Crimi, representing the European American Association, said that this was the first time she had attended a Church Council meeting. She called the meeting a positive experience.

Mr. Norman Smith, president of Lutheran Men in Mission, added that it was also his first Church Council meeting. He thanked the council for its welcome and concern for all members of this church, including those who may disagree with decisions taken.

Ms. Elizabeth Gaskins, president of the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association, also noted the invitation and welcome of this church and urged continuation of such hospitality.

Ms. Sylvia Danielson, representing the Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA, said this also was her first Church Council meeting. She said that she was glad to hear "a Latino voice" and that she hoped to hear more.

Vice President Peña thanked the advisors for their presence and their comments.

ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary David D. Swartling thanked those present for a worship offering of \$4,521 toward Vision for Mission and Haiti Earthquake Relief.

CLOSING PRAYER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Rachel L. Connelly, who led the council in a closing prayer.

ADJOURNMENT

The sixty-fourth meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adjourned April 11, 2010, at 3:30 P.M.

Following adjournment, Church Council members and advisors entered into a retreat, “The ELCA: Converted to Mission,” which began at 4:00 P.M. and continued through noon on Monday, April 12, 2010.