

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN AMERICA**

Church Council

MINUTES

April 4–6, 2014

**Prepared by the
Office of the Secretary**

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**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES
April 4–6, 2014
Chicago, Illinois**

The eighty-second meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was convened in the Council Room of the Lutheran Center at Chicago, Illinois.

The U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation and the Executive Committee of the Church Council met Friday, April 4, 2014, followed by meetings of the council's Budget and Finance, Legal and Constitutional Review, Planning and Evaluation, and Program and Services Committees. Church Council members gathered at 11:15 A.M. (Central Daylight Time) in the Chapel of the Lutheran Center for a Midday Prayer Service led by the Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale.

ORGANIZATION OF MEETING

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

Voting Members

Officers:

Pr. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop
Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president
Pr. Wm Chris Boerger, secretary
Pr. Linda O. Norman, treasurer

Chair of the Conference of Bishops:

Pr. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod

Church Council:

Mr. Paul G. Archer	Ms. Kayla S. Koterwski (<i>excused</i>)
Ms. Marit L. Bakken	Mr. John W. Lohrmann
Mr. Nicholas A. Barber	Mr. Michael Mason (<i>excused</i>)
Mr. Hans E. Becklin	Ms. Susan W. McArver
Mr. Allan J. Bieber	Pr. Loren D. Mellum
Ms. Amanda E. Briggs	Mr. Fernando Mercado
Mr. Reid A. Christopherson	Pr. Raymond A. Miller
Ms. Christine P. Connell	Pr. Robert G. Moore
Pr. Karsten Decker	Pr. Linda Nou
Pr. Elizabeth E. Ekdale	Mr. John M. Pederson
Ms. Marjorie B. Ellis	Ms. Meri Jo Petrivelli
Pr. William E. Flippin Jr.	Ms. Pamela E. Pritt
Mr. Gary D. Gabrielson	Mr. Clarence M. Smith
Pr. Vicki T. Garber	Pr. Jonathan Splichal Larson
Pr. Joyce M. Graue	Ms. Ingrid S. Stafford
Ms. Cynthia M. Gustavson	Ms. Leslie J. Swenson
Ms. Louise A. Hemstead	Mr. Oliver W. Thul
Pr. Stephen R. Herr	Pr. Kathryn A. Tiede
Mr. William B. Horne II	Pr. James H. Utt
Ms. Maren Hulden	Pr. William O. Voss
Mr. James M. Hushagen	Pr. Michael R. Ward
Pr. Peder J. Johanson	Ms. Man Hei Yip
Pr. Carla J. Johnsen	

Representatives of the Conference of Bishops

Bp. Michael L. Burk, Region 5	Bp. Stephen S. Talmage, Region 2
Bp. Claire S. Burkat, Region 7	Bp. Shelley R. Wickstrom, Region 1
Bp. Ralph E. Jones, Region 8	Bp. Herman R. Yoos III, Region 9
Bp. Marcus C. Lohrmann, Region 6	Bp. David B. Zellmer, Region 3
Bp. Brian D. Maas, Region 4 (<i>excused</i>)	

Resource Persons

Office of the Presiding Bishop:

Pr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration
Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, executive for research and evaluation
Ms. Rhondean Johnson, executive for human resources
Pr. Marcus R. Kunz, assistant to the presiding bishop for theological discernment
Ms. Kathryn M. Lohre, assistant to the presiding bishop for ecumenical and inter-religious relations
Pr. Walter S. May, assistant to the presiding bishop for synodical relations
Pr. Donald J. McCoid, director for ecumenical and inter-religious relations
Ms. Jodi L. Slattery, assistant to the presiding bishop for governance

Office of the Secretary:

Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel
Mr. Frank F. Imhoff, manager for official documentation
Ms. Sue E. Rothmeyer, executive for Office of the Secretary administration
Mr. David A. Ullrich, associate general counsel

Unit Staff:

Pr. Cherlyne V. Beck, program director for disability ministries and support of lay rostered leaders
Pr. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit
Ms. Antoinette “Toni” J. Daniels, director for relationships and operations of the Global Mission unit
Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, executive director of the Mission Advancement unit
Pr. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit
Ms. Evelyn B. Soto, director for operations and programs of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit
Pr. Gregory J. Villalón, director for leadership for mission/candidacy

Separately Incorporated Ministries:

Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director, Women of the ELCA (*excused*)
represented by Ms. Deborah Calvert, associate executive director, Women of the ELCA
Mr. Doug Haugen, executive director, Lutheran Men in Mission
Ms. Beth A. Lewis, president, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Ms. Eva M. Roby, president, Mission Investment Fund
Pr. Martin A. Seltz, publisher, worship and music, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Sr. Janet Stump, directing deaconess, Deaconess Community of the ELCA
Pr. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, president, Portico Benefit Services

Press:

Ms. Candice Hill Buchbinder, Mission Advancement
Ms. Melissa Ramirez Cooper, Mission Advancement
Ms. Elizabeth M. Hunter, *The Lutheran* magazine
Mr. Daniel J. Lehmann, editor, *The Lutheran* magazine

Ecumenical Guests:

Pr. Scott D. Anderson, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Ms. Stephanie Cheney, The Episcopal Church
Bp. Susan C. Johnson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (*excused*)
Pr. Elizabeth D. “Betsy” Miller, Moravian Church in America (*excused*)
Bp. Sharon Z. Rader, United Methodist Church
Pr. Lisa Vander Wal, The Reformed Church in America

Registered Guests

Pr. Kim L. Beckmann, legislative team, Goodsoil
Mr. George Evalt (Peace Not Walls)
Mr. Joe Scarry, No Drones Network (Peace Not Walls)
Pr. W. Steven Shipman, director, Lutheran CORE (Coalition for Renewal)
Pr. Ann M. Tiemeyer, program director for women’s ministries, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC)
Ms. Amalia Vagts, executive director, Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM)

Friday, April 4, 2014
Plenary Session I

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

(Agenda I.A.)

Background:

Agenda items had been distributed electronically and by mail. Additional items were distributed at the meeting to the members of the Church Council and invited resource persons.

Church Council Action:

Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president of the ELCA and chair of the Church Council, called the meeting to order at 3:31 P.M. He introduced several guests and noted those members who had asked to be excused from this meeting. The chair drew the attention of the council members to the materials for the meeting and the deadlines to introduce new business and to remove items from the *en bloc* resolution for separate consideration.

The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, secretary of the ELCA, made the following motion.

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, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.01 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.

Vice President Peña declared the agenda was adopted.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

(Agenda I.B.)

Background:

The minutes of the November 8–10, 2013, meeting of the Church Council were distributed to council members electronically on Net Community. Minutes for meetings held in executive session were added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings November 8–10, 2013, January 21, 2014, February 20, 2014, and March 24, 2014, were distributed electronically to members. Minutes for meetings held in executive session were added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

Opportunity was provided for Church Council members to submit in writing any corrections for the distributed text of the minutes to the Office of the Secretary. Proper corrections were entered into the protocol copies of the minutes. Such corrections did not need to be raised in the plenary session in connection with the approval of the minutes.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña pointed out the minutes that had been prepared since the November 2013 meetings of the Church Council and its Executive Committee.

The Rev. Vicki T. Garber made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To approve the minutes of the November 8–10, 2013, meeting of the Church Council; and
To ratify actions of the council’s Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the
November 8–10, 2013, January 21, 2014, February 20, 2014, and March 24, 2014, meetings.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.02

**To approve the minutes of the November 8–10, 2013, meeting of the Church Council; and
To ratify actions of the council’s Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the November 8–10, 2013, January 21, 2014, February 20, 2014, and March 24, 2014, meetings.**

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

(Agenda I.C.; Exhibit A, Part 1)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton for her report.

Presiding Bishop Eaton said:

“Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

“We are trying to figure out—and your input on this will be important for us here in the churchwide organization—what kind of reporting is reporting. I am going to try to organize my report around something I think that might be helpful. We have worked with a consultant, Lyla Rogan, as we developed the operational plan for this triennium and for the annual goals. One thing we learned is that our written reports basically tell you what we have been doing, and we do not know if that is effective reporting or if you want us to say how we are moving against our own goals or the goals we have established in the operational plan. It would be helpful if you could talk with us as we make our reports and reflect on what would be most useful.

“Having said that, here it goes. I would like to organize my remarks first of all by talking about the four emphases that I have been sharing. People have been wondering if I have a vision. That has been the constant question. And I think these four emphases contain that vision, and they are beginning to get traction. Before I could even list them at the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit all-staff meeting, the new director for evangelical mission from the Florida-Bahamas Synod said, ‘We are church. We are Lutheran. We are church together. We are church for the sake of the world.’ I think we are starting to get that, and I will continue to unpack what those emphases mean.

“When I talk about being church, I talk about how we are really clear on how we are formed, informed, motivated, and sent out into the world. My understanding is that worship is (and I know people hate this word now) actually a *missional* activity as well as a devotional one. Worship needs to be the center of our life together, and at the center of our worship needs to be the crucified and risen Christ.

“We do wonderful, wonderful things as the ELCA, and I do not want us to stop for a minute. You will hear about those wonderful things over the course of this weekend. And you are doing them in your own congregations, your own agencies, and your own synods. This is happening. But we need to be able to be clear and also to say this out loud, ‘How are we different? How are we differently motivated from morally upright, compassionate, justice-seeking atheists?’ If our folks cannot understand that, then we have got some work to do.

“Also, as you can see here in the front of this room, we have the Word and Sacraments highlighted. It is a candle, baptismal bowl, and Bible. We are trying to see ourselves as a community of communal spiritual discernment. You will be hearing more about that from Bishop Crist, Pastor Kunz, and Bill Horne.

“We all need to be intentional about regular spiritual disciplines or practices, which we may in fact be doing but we do not tell each other or we are not intentional about this. We should be about prayer and silence, and solitude and Scripture study (not for the sake of sermons, all of you clergy types). Separate from that is regular corporate worship, giving, hospitality, and service. All of that is part of who we are. I am trying to make *how* we are being a church an emphasis. I am proud that we are a public church, and I am proud of the work that former Presiding Bishop Hanson did to move us there. Now we need to also emphasize *the church*, as well as the public church. Goal One works well with that in the Operational Plan. [Goal One: Congregations are growing, vibrant in their worship life and diverse, and worshipers increase their engagement in and support for God’s mission, locally and globally.] I know also that Scott Weidler and the late Peter Perella were working on a Worship Jubilee, which will be held in July of 2015. Some of us bishops, when we have traveled around to congregations in our synods, find that worship ought to be transcendent and in some cases, it is not transcendent. Is that delicately put? [Laughter] How can we equip and help our people see *that* is who we are and *that moment* as a community together, intentionally and in the presence of God, giving praise and glory to God, and then receiving the forgiveness and grace, is an important thing?

“We should borrow every best practice that we can from secular agencies where they do a lot of things a heck of a lot better than we do. Hence, we finally for the last two cycles have adopted an operational plan. But, some of the things that we do, we do not need to move to strategic planning right away. In fact, what we should do is engage in this community of communal spiritual discernment so that the voices of others can be heard who do not process as quickly. We can listen to the Holy Spirit and then be guided that way, so we can go to strategic plans. Pr. Amy Reumann, ELCA state public policy director in Pennsylvania, was talking about that this past week in Washington, D.C., and she said, ‘For coming to decisions, this is pure gold.’ So it is already getting traction across this church.

“We need to be Lutheran. If we are not really clear about who we are, how can we engage in an authentic, meaningful relationship with somebody else? All of us, and I will speak for our tradition, and this is not to take away from any of our full-communion partner traditions because we need to hear clearly from you, who you are. But, if we are not aware who we are, we are missing something. The Lutheran voice has a distinctive timbre that can add to the conversation, not only within our organization, but ecumenically, in interfaith discussions, and in our secular discussions, and therefore in the public square. To that end, the churchwide organization will embark on a study of the Small Catechism. Pr. Marcus Kunz, with a focus group, is trying to work toward a way to help folks, current employees and new employees, to understand the Lutheran language—what it talks about. The way we are going to do that is through a study of the Small Catechism.

“The work of the Theological Education Advisory Council will also help us to have an authentic and unapologetic Lutheran voice for our work as we are moving toward the 500th anniversary/observance of the Reformation. And you will be hearing more about that as we go along.

“We are also church together, and we have a lot of goals addressing that emphasis. How are we church together, internally, within the ELCA? How do we do that among the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and the Administrative Team? We have already established some dates anticipating developments during the Church Council retreat where we can start to have conversations beyond this council and to engage our partners. My goal is for us to understand that we are Team ELCA, and Jesus is the captain. But, too often, we are necessarily, and sometimes rightly, very immersed in our particular context or in the particular way that we serve. Even within this building, we do not automatically think that what we are doing will have an impact on somebody else in the next cubicle or the next unit or that maybe we could gain from another person’s wisdom. We are trying to find ways to make that more possible.

“Being church together also means we are working on the relationship between all expressions of the church. Our relationships have not been as sanguine or robust as they could be. One of my goals for 2014 is to work on the relationship between the Conference of Bishops and the churchwide organization. We did start that with a retreat just for the bishops the day ahead of the Conference of Bishops meeting, which means they gave up an extra day to spend in retreat and to start to look at how the Conference of Bishops functions, and how the conference can then be in better partnership with the churchwide organization.

“One of the ways is looking at the agenda for the Conference of Bishops meetings. Since the bishops are all in Chicago for the Conference of Bishops at the same time and the churchwide organization staff is in Chicago, except for the deployed folks, how do we keep the integrity of the meeting for the bishops? It is a separate meeting, but at the same

time, this is a chance for us as partners together to have conversations and do planning and dreaming together. Some suggest that we might just have a Churchwide Day and then have meetings all day and then have separate time at the same meeting for the Conference of Bishops. We are looking at different configurations. We will be working with the Executive Committee of the Conference of Bishops and the Administrative Team to see how we can find some way to work together and not miss that opportunity.

“We are also church for the sake of the world. We do a lot of work around that. Our social statements are important for that. Part of being a public church is the important advocacy work the ready benches do. Thirty-two bishops were in Washington, D.C., at the end of March, having meetings with members of Congress. Most of the meetings we had—I think there were 70 separate meetings—were with *the* Congress person, which is unusual because you often meet with staffers.

“Our advocacy office in Washington, D.C., is a wonderful group of people who help to advise bishops; bishops help to advise them. We try to work with governmental agencies. We have deployed state public policy offices around the country and our Lutheran Office for World Community in New York. We also have something here called the Public Policy and Procedures Group (PPPG), and that draws upon the wisdom of our advocacy folks from Washington, D.C., New York, and our units here. But, in order for us to have a more focused and perhaps greater impact, it has been my decision—and they have begun work on this—to do an audit of all the letters that I have signed since coming to office. I am going to be signing fewer letters I think than previous bishops. The audit will help us see what kinds of letters I am signing. Are they always on the same topics? And who else are signatories? So, if it is just us and our wonderful ecumenical friends, people just say, ‘OK. Those are the usual suspects.’ But could we sign letters on issues like immigration reform or criminal justice or even Israel and Palestine and develop a coalition with the National Association of Evangelicals to co-sign or the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops or various Jewish or Muslim organizations? We are going to be working on that to build these coalitions and be a lot more targeted in the approach of letters I sign and to come up with a ranking. Which letters need a signature from the presiding bishop? Which letters need a signature from unit executives or other officers? We will continue to look at this approach.

“We are involved in all kinds of ecumenical and inter-religious work. Most important right now is working up to 2017 and the U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic work to get all the places in our years and years of dialogue where we have come up with some substantive agreement in one place, and it is called *Declaration on the Way*. It is still a work in process, but the hope is that the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican will affirm this as a resource where Lutherans and Roman Catholics already agree. This is very important.

“Stephen Bouman, executive director for the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, was appointed by former Presiding Bishop Hanson nearly seven years ago to be a part of the Peace Research Institute of Oslo. This is a group that has dialogue between U.S. and Iranian religious and political leaders. This group has been in dialogue for so long that one participant is now the chief of staff for the new Iranian president. I had the chance to be a participant this past March in Switzerland. We come from our own faith traditions. When we try to find ways to engage with each other or to have exchanges even, it is from the basis of our Abrahamic traditions, our Abrahamic understandings, and our Abrahamic faiths. It is a very different way of doing discussions.

“You might be aware or familiar with our understanding of accompaniment. That is also a way where we can be the church for the sake of the world, without thinking we know more about it than everybody else in the world. That has been important.

“So, those four emphases have been my vision. We are church. We are Lutheran. We are church together. We are church for the sake of the world.

“Another important piece of work—some of you have your buttons on—is the launch of *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*. This has been the work that you recommended to the Churchwide Assembly. It was passed by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and was launched February 1. When we rolled this out for folks working in this building to make commitments, we received over \$270,000. The Conference of Bishops is also working toward making its commitments to the Campaign for the ELCA. The campaign actually fits with those four emphases that I have. Everything rolls right in, and we will do the work we need to support that together. Christina Jackson-Skelton, executive director of the Mission Advancement unit, has put together the campaign team, and it will be fully staffed around June 1.

“Activities—there is a lot going on in the church. I counted it up, and I have been in 12 synods for specifically synod-related activities since November 1. It has been great for me to see how the church functions. I have also been engaged in a Christian-Jewish summit, where those of us from our denominations who signed a letter asking for Congress to investigate the government of Israel for potential war crimes in the use of our military aid really upset a lot of our Jewish partners. The summit achieved a great outcome. It was a God thing. We thought we could come up with a process that would lead to a process where maybe we could start talking to each other. Finally, the rabbi in charge of the Anti-Defamation League said, ‘We just need to meet, face-to-face.’ So, we are going to do that on an annual basis. That was a huge breakthrough for us.

“Ongoing projects and concerns—we had LWF General Secretary Martin Junge, Bishop Phaswana from South Africa, and Bishop Halmarson from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada come to meet with us in a three-part process trying to see how we, the Church of Sweden, and the Evangelical Ethiopian Church Mekane Yesus can find ourselves back into greater partnership. It was a very good conversation. It happened with the Conference of Bishops at our meeting where we devoted an afternoon to the representatives from the Lutheran World Federation. We are still waiting for the report.

“We also had a consultation with two representatives from the Lutheran World Federation about the North American Lutheran Church’s application for membership into the Lutheran World Federation. They met with the NALC people as well, and I hope we will be hearing from them soon. They asked me what it would mean for the ELCA, if the North American Lutheran Church was admitted into the LWF; and I asked them what it would mean for the LWF if a denomination, that has declared it is not in altar and pulpit fellowship with another member communion, would become part of a communion of communions.

“We are still working on how to walk with Jewish partners in this country and also in Israel, with Israelis, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and with Palestinians in our *Peace Not Walls Campaign*. That is a real delicate balance there. We are trying to figure out how we are working with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, though we do work with them through Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran World Relief, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. Their counterpart to Bishop Crist, the chair of their Council of Presidents, was at the Lutheran prayer breakfast in Washington, D.C., and he led the prayer for all of us Lutherans.

“Also, I am trying to take a look at what it would look like for people in our church who do not agree with the 2009 Churchwide Assembly decisions regarding rostered leaders in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. What would it look like for them to feel seen, heard, and included in this church, while at the same time balancing that with folks who say, ‘This is a celebration.’? Bishop Kurt Kusserow and Bishop Guy Erwin are working together with me at the present time to see how we can form that conversation, which I think is very helpful.

“Reflections—we have a very talented and committed staff here. And they are still in transition. There are lots of transitions in the Global Mission, Mission Advancement, Congregational and Synodical Mission units and in the Office of the Treasurer. Right now, the Office of the Secretary and the Office of the Presiding Bishop are relatively stable. We have new senior staff. Rhondean Johnson is our new executive for human resources. Yay. We love her. And also Kathryn Lohre and Don McCoid—Kathryn is going to become the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and Don will then transition to be director. They are switching positions. Don is trying to get even more retired. Thank you, Kathryn and Don.

“We are also looking at the building culture. We are working with Mike Hansen, who has been interviewing folks and teams and all of the units and offices. These are very dedicated folks. We have gone through a huge reduction in force. Like all of you, we are trying to do more with less. How can we make sure that we are not just spinning our wheels and deal with the stress and anxiety of not only how the world is but also this building? Also, since we last met, once again thanks to Rhondean who handled with care and grace the death of two of our staff people within the first ten days of her employment here. Pat Dever collapsed at her desk. Her team was wonderful. They called the ambulance, ministered to her, and Wyvetta Bullock gathered them for prayer. Rhondean reached the next of kin, and then Pat died. And then Peter Perella. We knew that was coming, but Peter was only 35 years old. He was our director for worship and liturgical resources. He left behind three young children and a beautiful wife. It has been tough. Please keep us in your prayers.

“One final reflection is that there are a lot of moving parts in this church. I was used to my 20 counties in Northeastern Ohio. Another thing that I am discovering is that I always like to preach about living in the tension. You know, it is fun to preach about living in the tension. Well, now that I am living the dream [Laughter], I find myself (and I am not trying to be egocentric) at the pivot point of a lot of absolutely opposite tensions in the church and in our relationships with ecumenical and interfaith colleagues around the world. I took a vow, and I know I cannot do this work apart from God, but that has been an interesting learning and a realization that is just come about in the last couple of weeks. It really hit me a lot in chapel today. So, thank you and thank you, Mr. Vice President.”

The Rev. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops, announced that Presiding Bishop Eaton had been honored by Harvard Divinity School as a distinguished alumna.

Vice President Peña also noted that Presiding Bishop Eaton’s birthday had been April 2, and he thanked her for her report.

GREETING FROM THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

(Agenda I.D.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton, who brought a greeting from the Rev. Susan C. Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Bishop Johnson was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

(Agenda I.E.; Exhibit A, Part 2)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña relinquished the chair to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton, who called on Vice President Peña for the report of the vice president.

Vice President Peña read and reflected on Matthew 14:22–33, and he led the Church Council in prayer. He drew the council’s attention to his written report and related several of his experiences as vice president since the previous meeting. He spoke of Synod Assemblies he would attend in 2014 and encouraged all Church Council members to attend Synod Assemblies. He also urged council members to be personally involved in the ELCA Malaria Campaign and the Campaign for the ELCA. He talked about the mission support think tank and the various past conversations regarding mission support.

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

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHURCH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

(Agenda I.F.1.; Exhibit C)

Background:

Mr. Iván A. Pérez (5A), the Rev. Amsalu T. Geleta (8G), and Ms. Feronika Raming (7B) had resigned from the Church Council. In accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 14.15., the secretary of this church declared vacancies on the council.

The Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) nominated Mr. Fernando Mercado, Warrenville, Ill., to complete the term of Mr. Pérez ending in 2015.

The Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) nominated the Rev. Karsten Decker, Paget, Bermuda, from its clergy roster to complete the term of Pr. Geleta ending in 2015.

The New England Synod (7B) nominated Ms. Man Hei Yip, North Quincy, Mass., to complete the term of Ms. Raming ending in 2015.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña introduced the background information on Church Council vacancies and nominees.

Secretary Wm Chris Boerger made the following motion on behalf of the Executive Committee.

Moved;

Seconded: To elect Mr. Fernando Mercado, Warrenville, Ill. (5A), to the Church Council for a term ending in 2015;
To elect the Rev. Karsten Decker, Paget, Bermuda (8G), to the Church Council for a term ending in 2015; and
To elect Ms. Man Hei Yip, North Quincy, Mass. (7B), to the Church Council for a term ending in 2015.

Mr. Paul G. Archer asked whether these nominees would be eligible for re-election after their terms have been completed.

Secretary Boerger noted that they are from "paired synods" and would not be eligible for re-election. There being no further discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

**CC14.04.03 To elect Mr. Fernando Mercado, Warrenville, Ill. (5A), to the Church Council for a term ending in 2015;
To elect the Rev. Karsten Decker, Paget, Bermuda (8G), to the Church Council for a term ending in 2015; and
To elect Ms. Man Hei Yip, North Quincy, Mass. (7B), to the Church Council for a term ending in 2015.**

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted. The council responded with applause. At the invitation of the chair, each of the newly elected Church Council members introduced themselves. Vice President Peña thanked them for their remarks and their willingness to serve.

U.S.A. NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

(Agenda I.F.2.)

Background:

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provided for the ongoing work of the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in continuing resolution 15.12.B13., "From time to time as necessary, the Executive Committee of the Church Council shall convene as the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. The U.S.A. National Committee also consists of the members of this church who serve as voting members of the council of the Lutheran World Federation. One staff member of the Global Mission unit and the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall serve as consultants to the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation."

The U.S.A. National Committee of the LWF met April 4, 2014, for the sole purpose of recommending to the LWF Council that Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton be named to complete the unexpired term of the Rev. Mark S. Hanson on the LWF Council. The recommendation was considered in consultation with LWF General Secretary Martin Junge and Pr. Hanson, former presiding bishop of the ELCA.

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña noted that the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) had recommended to the LWF Council that Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton be named to complete the unexpired term of the Rev. Mark S. Hanson on the LWF Council. The LWF Council will meet in June 2014.

PRIMER ON COMMUNAL DISCERNMENT

(Agenda I.G.; Resource Documents)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. William B. Horne II to facilitate a presentation on communal spiritual discernment. The Rev. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops, and the Rev. Marcus R. Kunz, assistant to the presiding bishop for theological discernment, presented the Church Council with a primer on communal spiritual discernment and various practices the Church Council could incorporate into its work. Bp. Crist and Pr. Kunz participated in the Communal Discernment Task Force, which provided its report to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly among the resource documents of the Church Council. Mr. Horne suggested that the council's Board Development Committee monitor the council's continuing use of communal spiritual discernment.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: WORD AND SERVICE ROSTER

(Agenda I.H.)

Background:

Several members of the Word and Service Task Force and resource staff were available to join Church Council members in a discussion regarding the work of the task force—to facilitate the creation of a single, unified roster of Word and Service ministry, subject to the review and recommendation by the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council as well as the approval of the Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary Wm Chris Boerger, who made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To go into a committee of the whole for a period of 30 minutes to discuss the creation of a unified Word and Service ministry roster and to be led by the members and staff of the Word and Service Task Force. During the committee of the whole no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.04

To go into a committee of the whole for a period of 30 minutes to discuss the creation of a unified Word and Service ministry roster and to be led by the members and staff of the Word and Service Task Force. During the committee of the whole no parliamentary motions will be in order and no votes will be taken.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

The Church Council entered into a committee of the whole at 4:52 P.M.

The committee of the whole rose at 5:31 P.M., and the Church Council returned into plenary session.

CHURCH COUNCIL JOYS AND CONCERNS

(Agenda I.I.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Stephen R. Herr, who asked specific people how the Church Council may pray for them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Secretary Wm Chris Boerger to make announcements.
Secretary Boerger provided details about the schedule and deadlines.

HYMN AND PRAYER

(Agenda I.J.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. Clarence M. Smith and the Rev. Raymond A. Miller Jr., who led the Church Council in singing a hymn and in prayer.

RECESS

The April 2014 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 5:43 P.M. Council members gathered in the Augsburg Room of the Lutheran Center for a reception hosted by Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA and for a banquet dinner. Council members also engaged in café conversations, which were off the record.

**Saturday, April 5, 2014
Plenary Session II**

Members of the Church Council gathered in the Augsburg Room of the Lutheran Center at 8:30 A.M. for racial and gender awareness training led by Ms. Judith E. Roberts, program director for racial justice ministries.

Council members gathered at 11:45 A.M. in the Chapel of the Lutheran Center for a Midday Prayer Service led by Bishop Sharon Z. Rader of the United Methodist Church.

The deadline for introducing new business and for removing items from *en bloc* consideration was at noon.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called the second plenary session to order at 1:31 P.M. in the Council Room of the Lutheran Center.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON FAITH

(Agenda II.A.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited Mr. Gary D. Gabrielson to share a personal reflection on faith.

Mr. Gabrielson read and reflected on Isaiah 6:8.

After Mr. Gabrielson's remarks, the chair called on the Rev. Stephen R. Herr, who asked specific people how the Church Council may pray for them.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.B.; Exhibit J)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Susan W. McArver, chair of the Program and Services Committee, who presented the committee's report.

UPDATE ON SOCIAL TEACHING DOCUMENTS

(Agenda II.B.4.)

Ms. Susan W. McArver announced that the Program and Services Committee would bring three items to the Church Council for consideration, including two items within the *en bloc* resolution. The committee had received a report from staff of the Theological Discernment Team regarding progress on development of a social message on gender-based violence. She made the following motion on behalf of the Program and Services Committee.

Moved;

Seconded:

To reaffirm the commitment of the Church Council to the completion of a social message on gender-based violence that speaks carefully and comprehensively to the issues;

To extend the time for the development of the social message until the April 2015 Church Council meeting; and

To ask staff to provide progress reports to the fall 2014 meetings of the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council.

Ms. McArver explained that in November 2013 the Church Council authorized the Theological Discernment Team to develop a social message on gender-based violence for possible adoption at the council's November 2014 meeting. After meeting with consultants in February 2014, the team determined that more time was needed to carefully address related issues in the message, and it requested an extension for its work.

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

VOTED:

- CC14.04.05** **To reaffirm the commitment of the Church Council to the completion of a social message on gender-based violence that speaks carefully and comprehensively to the issues;**
 To extend the time for the development of the social message until the April 2015 Church Council meeting; and
 To ask staff to provide progress reports to the fall 2014 meetings of the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

Ms. McArver summarized actions proposed in the *en bloc* resolution to amend Global Mission personnel policies and to respond to a 2013 Churchwide Assembly action regarding communion practices.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS MINISTRY AND DISABILITY MINISTRY PROGRAMS WITHIN ALWAYS BEING MADE NEW: THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE ELCA

(Agenda II.B.1.; Exhibit J, Parts 4 and 5)

Ms. Susan W. McArver described a presentation the Program and Services Committee received on the Campaign for the ELCA. At a March 2014 meeting, the committee received a working proposal on how to implement and integrate an action of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to include the formation, recognition, and encouragement of lay young adult and youth leaders as well as the disability ministries of this church into the campaign.

OBSERVANCE OF THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFORMATION

(Agenda II.B.2.)

Ms. Susan W. McArver mentioned that the Program and Services Committee had received an update on observances of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. She announced that the Rev. H. Karl Reko had been hired as part-time coordinator of the ELCA's commemorations.

CHANGING FAMILY CONFIGURATIONS WORKING GROUP

(Agenda II.B.3.)

Background:

In response to 14 memorials and “in keeping with the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review task force,” the 2013 Churchwide Assembly asked [CA13.03.12] the Church Council to authorize a group to explore “changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of this church” and “to bring a report and possible recommendations to the fall 2014 meetings of the Conference of Bishops and Church Council regarding appropriate next steps in carrying out these commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families.”

At its November 2013 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC13.11.64]:

To affirm the 2013 Churchwide Assembly action to invite and encourage conversations and resource sharing among this church's congregations, rostered and lay leaders, and the Conference of Bishops on changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of this church;

To authorize a working group to explore this social concern and to bring recommendations regarding appropriate next steps in carrying out these commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families;

To request a sub-group of the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and Office of the Presiding Bishop, to identify and

recommend individuals to serve on a working group, with voices representing the breadth of viewpoints identified in the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, and including, specifically, representation by members of the LGBTQ community;

To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint a working group; and

To request that the working group bring progress reports to the Conference of Bishops and Church Council beginning in fall 2014 and that a final report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2015 Church Council meeting.

The sub-group received the names of individuals who would represent the breadth of viewpoints identified in *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and identified individuals for nomination to the working group.

The Executive Committee appointed [EC14.02.05 and EC14.03.08] the following individuals to serve on the working group tasked with exploring ways to carry out this church's commitment to invite and encourage conversations on changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of this church: Ms. Tempie D. Beaman, Chaplain [Lt. Col.] Christine L. Blice-Baum, the Rev. Yehiel Curry, the Rev. Amsalu T. Geleta, the Rev. David P. Gleason, Mr. Cliff Haaland, Mr. Smith F. Heavner, Chaplain [Lt. Col.] Douglas V. Hedman, Bp. Mark W. Holmerud [Sierra Pacific Synod], Ms. Kayla S. Koterwski, the Rev. Gary J. Liedtke, Bp. S. John Roth [Central/Southern Illinois Synod], Mr. George C. Watson, Ms. Suzanne G. Wise, and the Rev. Erma Seaton Wolf.

Mr. Watson agreed to serve as chair of the working group. Ms. Jodi L. Slattery, assistant to the presiding bishop for governance, and the Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for theological ethics, were assigned as staff liaisons to the group. The first meeting of the working group was scheduled for June 27–29, 2014.

Church Council Discussion:

Ms. Susan W. McArver reported that a working group had been appointed to explore ways of carrying out this church's commitment to invite and encourage conversations on changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of the ELCA.

Ms. McArver concluded the report of the Program and Services Committee by inviting Church Council members to a listening event that members of the ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice: One in Christ would conduct during the council's lunch break on Sunday, April 6, 2014, regarding development of a social statement on women and justice.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

(Agenda II.C.; Exhibit A, Part 3)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Secretary Wm Chris Boerger to present his report.

Secretary Boerger described the services of the Office of the Secretary for this church, including work regarding event planning, risk management and insurance, archives, and records management. He spoke of efforts to revise the roster manual and the constitutions. He stated that transitioning from a biennial to a triennial Churchwide Assembly, which elected members to the Church Council, would require detailed consideration by the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of how synods nominate members for possible election to the council. The secretary reported on preparations for 16 Synod Assemblies which would be conducting elections of a bishop in 2014. He noted the importance of parochial reports for assigning voting members to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly and for statistical comparisons. He indicated that the rate of congregations voting to disaffiliate from the ELCA had slowed significantly. He also described activities to update Rostered Leader Profiles from Formatta files to other forms.

There being no questions or comments, Vice President Peña thanked the secretary for his report.

REPORT OF THE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.D.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Raymond A. Miller Jr., chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, who presented the committee's report.

AMENDMENTS TO SEMINARY GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

(Exhibit H, Part 1)

Background:

ELCA bylaw 8.31.02. states:

Amendments to the governing documents of each separately incorporated seminary and each seminary cluster shall be submitted, upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization, to the Church Council for approval.

Proposed amendments to the bylaws of Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn., were provided to the Church Council at its November 2013 meeting. The council voted [CC13.11.67]:

To approve the amended bylaws of Luther Seminary, with the exception of amendments to Articles IV and V; and

To authorize the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee and the appropriate churchwide unit, to approve any changes to the seminary bylaws that are submitted prior to the spring 2014 Church Council meeting.

The proposed amendments to Article IV (Confession of Faith) and Article V (Membership of the Board of Directors) of the Luther Seminary bylaws were reviewed and approved by the boards of Luther Seminary and the Luther Seminary Foundation on February 8, 2014, and presented to the Church Council.

Church Council Action:

The Rev. Raymond A. Miller Jr. made the following motion on behalf of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee.

Moved;

Seconded:

To authorize the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee and the appropriate churchwide unit, to approve any changes to the Restated Bylaws of Luther Seminary.

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

VOTED:

CC14.04.06

To authorize the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee and the appropriate churchwide unit, to approve any changes to the Restated Bylaws of Luther Seminary.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

Pr. Miller concluded the report of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

(Agenda II.E.; Exhibit A, Part 4)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Rev. Linda O. Norman, treasurer of the ELCA, to present her report.

Treasurer Norman provided the financial results of the churchwide organization for fiscal year 2013 ending on January 31, 2014. She reported a net operating loss of \$4.6 million, after applying Church Council transfers of \$7.5 million to support the Campaign for the ELCA and the Mission Development Fund. Before those transfers, the churchwide organization operated with a net operating surplus of \$2.9 million. Mission support for the fiscal year was \$48.8 million; at mid-year the Office of the Treasurer projected that mission support would be short of the budgeted \$49.4 million, and it had determined that at least \$48.7 million in mission support would lend confidence to this church's 2014 budget for mission support. The treasurer tracked recent trends in revenue sources such as mission support, which

accounted for 68.9 percent of current fund revenue for the churchwide organization in fiscal year 2013. ELCA World Hunger began 2013 with a \$2.7 million balance; it received \$18.7 million in gifts and distributed \$19.3 million in grants to set the beginning balance for 2014 at \$2.1 million. International grants accounted for 71.7 percent of disbursements from ELCA World Hunger, 22.2 percent for domestic grants, and 6.1 percent for fundraising. The ELCA Malaria Campaign received \$4.4 million in gifts during 2013, bringing the campaign-to-date total to \$11 million; the campaign goal was to receive \$15 million by the end of 2015. Almost \$2.5 million was distributed in direct grants and capacity-building payments to companion churches in Africa; work continues on the ELCA Malaria Campaign spending plan to utilize the rest of the funds through the end of the campaign. Disaster Response received nearly \$10 million in 2013, largely toward typhoon and tornado recovery efforts and toward undesignated funds. Including ELCA World Hunger monies, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit accounted for 34.1 percent and the Global Mission unit for 30.7 percent of expenditures for the churchwide organization in 2013, mostly through financial support grants to the Lutheran World Federation, congregations, and global companion ministries. The treasurer explained the cash management policy of this church and demonstrated that current practice was well in keeping with the policy. She reported that the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust ended 2013 with more than \$519 million in value. She also presented asset values for the ELCA Charitable Gift Annuity Program and ELCA Deferred Gift Programs.

In response to questions, Treasurer Norman discussed the transition from biennial to triennial budget planning and the importance of monitoring finances and making periodic adjustments, synods sharing the quarterly financial summaries that the Office of the Treasurer posted on the ELCA website, and implementation of new telephone and website systems.

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

REPORT OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.F.; Exhibit F)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Louise A. Hemstead, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, who presented the committee's report. She identified members of the committee and announced that Ms. Ingrid S. Stafford had been appointed as chair of the Audit Committee. Ms. Hemstead mentioned many of the matters that had been discussed in committee.

REVISIONS TO 2014 SYNOD MISSION SUPPORT PLANS

(Agenda II.F.3.b.1.; Exhibit F, Part 5b)

Ms. Louise A. Hemstead reported that, since the Church Council meeting in November 2013, the churchwide organization received revisions for 2014 mission support plans from two synods decreasing their previous percentage sharing plans. She made the following motion on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Moved;

Seconded:

To acknowledge the correction by the following synod in the percentage of sharing of 2014 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Lower Susquehanna Synod;

To acknowledge that circumstances in the following synod has led to the decision to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2014 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage the synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that the synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission support sharing: South Carolina Synod; 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 direct synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen financial support for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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

VOTED:

CC14.04.07

To acknowledge the correction by the following synod in the percentage of sharing of 2014 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Lower Susquehanna Synod;

To acknowledge that circumstances in the following synod has led to the decision to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2014 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage the synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that the synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission support sharing: South Carolina Synod; 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 direct synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen financial support for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

2015 SYNOD MISSION SUPPORT PLANS

(Agenda II.F.3.b.2.; Exhibit F, Part 5b)

Ms. Louise A. Hemstead reported that many synods were in the process of preparing their 2015 mission support plans for presentation to their Synod Assemblies. The churchwide organization received plans for 2015 from 39 synods; 25 plans maintained 2014 mission support percentages, 10 plans increased percentages, and four decreased percentages. She made the following motion on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Moved;

Seconded:

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to increase the percentage of sharing of 2015 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Western North Dakota, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Southwestern Texas, Slovak Zion, Delaware-Maryland, Alaska, Montana, Western Iowa, Northern Great Lakes, and Northeastern Pennsylvania;

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2015 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Oregon, Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Central/Southern Illinois, La Crosse Area, Southeast Michigan, Southern Ohio, New Jersey, Metropolitan New York, Upstate New York, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Southeastern, Florida-Bahamas, and North/West Lower Michigan;

To acknowledge that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2015 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: Northwestern Minnesota, South Carolina, Caribbean, and Northwest Synod of Wisconsin;

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to direct synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for

evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen financial support for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To request that all synods submit their 2015 mission support plans prior to their 2014 synod assemblies.

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

VOTED:

CC14.04.08

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to increase the percentage of sharing of 2015 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Western North Dakota, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Southwestern Texas, Slovak Zion, Delaware-Maryland, Alaska, Montana, Western Iowa, Northern Great Lakes, and Northeastern Pennsylvania;

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2015 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Oregon, Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Central/Southern Illinois, La Crosse Area, Southeast Michigan, Southern Ohio, New Jersey, Metropolitan New York, Upstate New York, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Southeastern, Florida-Bahamas, and North/West Lower Michigan;

To acknowledge that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2015 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: Northwestern Minnesota, South Carolina, Caribbean, and Northwest Synod of Wisconsin;

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

To request that all synods submit their 2015 mission support plans prior to their 2014 synod assemblies.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

MISSION FUNDING DISCUSSION

Ms. Louise A. Hemstead led the Church Council in a conversation regarding mission funding systems by posing the following questions for specific small groups of members to discuss.

- What foundational principles are essential in considering funding models for this church's work?
- What impact do current trends have on how you approach mission funding?
- How does community—and relationships within your context—impact funding of this church? What can be gleaned?

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL
April 4–6, 2014**

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After approximately 20 minutes of small-group discussions, the members related their reactions and indicated their responses on posters.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña made announcements related to “health and wellness” activities available during the upcoming break, noting that the third plenary session would be held in the Augsburg Room of the Lutheran Center.

RECESS

The April 2014 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 3:25 P.M.

**Saturday, April 5, 2014
Plenary Session III**

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called the third plenary session to order at 4:15 P.M. in the Augsburg Room of the Lutheran Center.

BIBLE STUDY

(Agenda III.A.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Claire S. Burkat, bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, who led the Church Council in a study of Titus, a disciple of St. Paul in the New Testament.

REPORT FROM THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

(Agenda III.B.; Exhibit A, Part 6)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Rev. Jessica R. Crist, bishop of the Montana Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops, to present the conference's report.

Bp. Crist drew the council's attention to the written report and discussed the manners in which synod bishops communicate with each other between meetings of the Conference of Bishops. She described the February–March 2014 meeting of the conference, explaining an amendment to the ELCA continuing resolution regarding the organization of the Conference of Bishops that the conference had recommended.

There being no questions or comments, Vice President Peña thanked Bp. Crist for the report.

UPDATE ON THE MISSION SUPPORT THINK TANK

(Agenda III.C.)

Background:

The 2011 Churchwide Assembly endorsed [CA11.03.07] recommendations of the Living Into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (LIFT) task force, as amended by the Church Council, and asked "the Conference of Bishops, in consultation with synod leaders and the churchwide organization, to prepare a report and recommendations for the November 2012 meeting of the Church Council for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly that," among other things, "builds on the Blue Ribbon Committee report of 2007 and includes recommendations for renewed, sustainable financial support for the mission and ministries of this church, including funding for theological education."

In April 2012, a Group of Nine of the Conference of Bishops reported to the Church Council, which authorized [CC12.04.08] the appointment of a Mission Funding Task Force. The task force prepared a report presented to the Conference of Bishops at its October 2012 meeting, recommending a new system for managing this church's shared responsibility for mission support. At its November 2012 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC12.11.32]:

To recognize the need for and encourage ongoing discussion and analysis among synods and the churchwide organization on strengthening mission support for the benefit of this whole church;

To encourage and invite synods to partner on a regional basis or in groupings of synods to pilot ways to strengthen and build mission support, including development of approaches that emphasize stewardship, promote lateral accountability among synods and their leaders, and enhance collaboration with the churchwide organization;

To request that the Mission Investment Fund explore the development of a remittance process system that would improve the process for transmitting mission support and other funds designated for synod and churchwide ministries, strengthen financial controls, enhance financial reporting and

access to timely information, and to invite and encourage synods to explore the possibility of participating in such a system; and

To request that the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council monitor the pilot programs established by synods and the development of a remittance process system for synods by the Mission Investment Fund for the purpose of making a report and possible recommendations to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.

The Church Council also asked [CC12.11.33] that “the churchwide organization, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, continue to build the case for the support of a church that shares a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, including creating a comprehensive strategy for growing stewardship and increasing awareness of all the ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” and encouraged “this church in all its expressions to identify and leverage all networks within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to assist in the interpretation of and financial support for its ministries, and to endorse the proposal to develop a major comprehensive campaign on the 25th anniversary of the ELCA, focused on giving to mission and ministry.”

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton assembled one bishop from each of the nine regions of this church in a “mission support think tank,” convened by the Rev. H. Julian Gordy, bishop of the Southeastern Synod. Other members of the think tank were Bishop Richard H. Graham [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod], Bishop James E. Hazelwood [New England Synod], Bishop Marcus C. Lohrmann [Northwestern Ohio Synod], Bishop Michael W. Rinehart [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod], Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes [Northern Great Lakes Synod], Bishop Stephen S. Talmage [Grand Canyon Synod], Bishop Shelley R. Wickstrom [Alaska Synod], and Bishop Larry R. Wohlrabe [Northwestern Minnesota Synod].

Plans were underway for the think tank to meet in April 2014 and to prepare a report for the Church Council by April 2015.

Church Council Discussion:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton to explain the purpose of the mission support think tank, and he introduced members who were present: the Rev. Marcus C. Lohrmann, bishop of the Northwestern Ohio Synod, the Rev. Stephen S. Talmage, bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod, and the Rev. Shelley R. Wickstrom, bishop of the Alaska Synod.

Presiding Bishop Eaton provided a history of attempts to address shortcomings in the mission support system this church used to pass funds from congregations through synods to the churchwide organization. She gave the rationale for assembling a think tank to develop a report for the April 2015 meeting of the Church Council.

Bp. Lohrmann commented on declining mission support in recent years, its financial implications, and the tensions it created among the expressions of this church. He outlined some of the topics the think tank would consider and some of the challenges it may face.

Participants discussed how to involve all expressions of this church in making decisions about mission support, use common terms to explain mission support and its purposes to ELCA members, explain the role of synods in this church, and have rostered leaders make monetary contributions directly to the churchwide organization instead of to their congregations.

UPDATE ON ALWAYS BEING MADE NEW: THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE ELCA
(Agenda III.D.; Exhibit J, Part 5)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, executive director of the Mission Advancement unit, to provide a progress report on the Campaign for the ELCA.

Ms. Jackson-Skelton directed the Church Council members to the written report. She spoke about the action of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to include disability ministries and youth and young adult ministries in the campaign and work to add the two new components to the campaign’s case statement. She noted that the campaign officially launched on February 1, 2014, and presented preliminary data. She reported that \$16.2 million in gifts and commitments, with

an additional \$5 million in planned or deferred gifts, made a total \$21.2 million impact on the campaign's \$198 million goal. She described the structure of the campaign and its resources.

In response to questions and comments, Ms. Jackson-Skelton discussed including existing commitments toward programs involved in the comprehensive campaign as well as the different approaches being used to market the campaign to rostered leaders and to congregations

CHURCH COUNCIL JOYS AND CONCERNS

(Agenda III.E.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Stephen R. Herr, who asked specific people how the Church Council may pray for them.

PROCESS OBSERVATIONS

(Agenda III.F.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Ms. Marjorie B. Ellis for a report.

Ms. Ellis introduced Ms. Amanda E. Briggs, who presented observations about the meeting's processes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked the Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede for announcements about events planned for the evening, including a Holden Evening Prayer Service to begin at 9:00 P.M. in the Grand C Ballroom of The Westin Hotel in Rosemont, Ill.

Secretary Wm Chris Boerger provided additional information about the meeting schedule.

HYMN AND PRAYER

(Agenda III.G.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited the Rev. Linda Nou to close the session with prayer and to lead the Church Council in singing a hymn.

RECESS

The April 2014 meeting of the Church Council recessed for the day at 5:49 P.M.

Sunday, April 6, 2014
Plenary Session IV

The Board Development Committee of the Church Council met prior to the start of the fourth plenary session.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called the fourth plenary session to order at 9:30 A.M. in the Council Room of the Lutheran Center.

UPDATE ON THE CHURCH COUNCIL RETREAT

(Agenda IV.A.; Exhibit E)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited Mr. John J. Scherer, co-director of the Scherer Leadership International, to lead a discussion with the Church Council. Mr. Scherer will be the facilitator for the council's retreat in August 2014.

Mr. Scherer reported on his initial conversations with Church Council members regarding the council's continuing work to be a more effective board of directors and on preliminary plans for the retreat. He also led the Church Council members in conversation about topics for the retreat.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON FAITH

(Agenda IV.B.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited the Rev. Joyce M. Graue to share a personal reflection on faith.

Pr. Graue reflected on experiences of mission work in Papua New Guinea, the Central African Republic, and the United States.

PRIMER ON AUGSBURG FORTRESS, PUBLISHERS

(Agenda IV.C.; Exhibit P, Part 1)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Ms. Beth A. Lewis, president of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, to present the Church Council with a primer and update on the publishing house of the ELCA, a separately incorporated ministry of this church.

Ms. Lewis responded to questions about the availability of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* resources other than through Augsburg Fortress, the audience of publications, and the rationale for closing seminary bookstores.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE FOR ADMINISTRATION

(Agenda IV.D.; Exhibit A, Part 5)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, for her report to the Church Council.

Pr. Bullock noted that the council had affirmed the strategic intent of the 2014–2016 Churchwide Operational Plan at its November 2013 meeting. Goals and an annual plan for 2014 had been developed, and she explained the plans and the implications of implementing them. She indicated that progress reports on applying the operational plan would be brought to the council yearly. In developing the plans, questions arose regarding reports and what content would assist the Church Council in addressing its governance responsibilities. Pr. Bullock invited council members to discuss the following questions in small groups.

- What governance responsibility does the reporting serve?
- What has been helpful in your experience? Why?
- What is less helpful?

In plenary, Church Council members spoke with Pr. Bullock about providing: simple reports of steps taken to achieve each goal and the criteria used to assess those steps, so that the council could focus on the policies and long-term needs of the organization; “dashboard indicators” of whether or not work is on track to achieve each goal and of where improvement is needed; lists of accomplishments and of what had not been accomplished; the criteria used to develop each goal or the questions each goal is addressing; and reports that are frank about difficulties and that anticipate the hard questions.

A recommendation about the small-group process was to provide vehicles to report back other than in plenary discussion. Pr. Bullock suggested that any other recommendations be sent to her.

Pr. Bullock and Presiding Bishop Eaton responded to a question about addressing the faith formation of staff.

Vice President Peña requested and received consensus to extend the plenary session by 10 to 15 minutes.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

(Agenda IV.E.; Exhibit I)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. William B. Horne II, chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, who presented the committee’s report.

PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION OPERATIONAL PLAN

Background:

Among the responsibilities of the Church Council, ELCA bylaw 14.21.02. says the council “shall review the procedures and programs of the churchwide units to assure that churchwide purposes, policies, and objectives are being fulfilled.”

At its November 2013 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC13.11.59] “to affirm the strategic intent of Part A of the 2014–2016 Churchwide Operational Plan.”

Church Council Action:

Mr. William B. Horne II made the following motion on behalf of the Planning and Evaluation Committee.

Moved;

Seconded: To approve the Planning and Reporting Framework of the Churchwide Organization Operational Plan.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.09 To approve the Planning and Reporting Framework of the Churchwide Organization Operational Plan.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

LIVING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER (LIFT) II COMMITTEE

(Agenda IV.E.1.; Exhibit I, Part 1)

Background:

The original Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA (LIFT) task force was appointed in 2009 to evaluate the organization and interrelationships among the parts of this church in light of the many social and economic changes that have taken place since the ELCA was formed. The 2011 Churchwide Assembly received its

report and approved the implementing resolutions recommended by the Church Council. In November 2011, the council appointed a LIFT Advisory Committee to assist the Office of the Presiding Bishop in implementing the LIFT recommendations. In 2012, the Church Council approved a resolution “to authorize the LIFT Advisory Committee to continue to fulfill these important roles in moving forward on the LIFT report and recommendations and the implementing resolutions adopted by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, and to refer to it hereafter as the ‘LIFT II Committee.’

Church Council Action:

Mr. William B. Horne II summarized the final report of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT) II Committee. He indicated that unfinished business identified in the report would be items the council’s Planning and Evaluation Committee will continue to work on. He made the following motion on behalf of the committee.

Moved;

Seconded: To receive with gratitude the Living into the Future Together (LIFT) II final report and to express appreciation for the diligent and thoughtful work of the members of the committee.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.10 To receive with gratitude the Living into the Future Together (LIFT) II final report and to express appreciation for the diligent and thoughtful work of the members of the committee.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

Mr. Horne concluded the report of the Planning and Evaluation Committee by discussing the committee’s charter.

RECESS

At the invitation of Vice President Carlos E. Peña, Mr. Hans E. Becklin closed the fourth plenary session with a table grace.

The April 2014 meeting of the Church Council recessed for lunch at 11:43 A.M.

**Sunday, April 6, 2014
Plenary Session V**

Members of the ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice: One in Christ conducted a listening event prior to the start of the fifth plenary session.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called the fifth plenary session to order at 1:29 P.M. in the Council Room of the Lutheran Center.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON FAITH

(Agenda V.A.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Mr. Nicholas A. Barber to share a personal reflection on faith.

Mr. Barber related an experience of his uncle and his family.

REPORT OF THE BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Agenda V.B.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede, chair of the Board Development Committee, who presented the committee's report.

Pr. Tiede spoke of the committee's charter and membership. She reported on planning for the Church Council retreat in August 2014 and preparations council members may do in advance. She talked about planning agendas for the April 2014 and November 2014 meetings of the Church Council.

Ms. Jodi L. Slattery, assistant to the presiding bishop for governance, responded to questions about retreat details.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY (CONTINUED)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited Secretary Wm Chris Boerger to follow up on his report.

Secretary Boerger noted that many memorials and resolutions from the Churchwide Assembly are assigned to churchwide units for responses without a method of prioritizing the work being asked of staff. He stated that he would bring a proposal to the November 2014 meeting of the Church Council to establish a process for the council to prioritize Churchwide Assembly referrals in its next meeting after an assembly.

CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC*

(Agenda V.C.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Secretary Wm Chris Boerger whether any Church Council member had removed an item from the *en bloc* resolution for separate consideration.

Secretary Boerger reported that the follow item had been removed from the consent calendar.

THE ISOLATION OF INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Virginia Synod (9A) [2013]

WHEREAS, we are called by the Gospel to live in community; and

WHEREAS, we are called to love and care for our neighbor in body, mind, and soul, including the fullness of mental health; and

WHEREAS, isolation separates individuals of all ages from the love and support of a helping community; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) calls us to do God's work with our hands; and

WHEREAS, our synodical leadership encourages mutual support and accountability; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that members of the Virginia Synod Assembly encourage their congregations to pray for those living in isolation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that members of the Virginia Synod Assembly encourage their congregations to identify and reach out to those who are living in isolation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Virginia Synod encourage congregations and individuals to partner with institutions and agencies who work with children, youth, adults, and senior citizens to identify and reach out to those who are living in isolation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Virginia Synod of the ELCA forward this to the ELCA Church Council for further consideration.

Church Council Action [CC13.07.35c]:

To receive the resolution of the Virginia Synod on The Isolation of Individuals Living in Our Communities;

To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To request that a report be brought to the November 2013 meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

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

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (November 2013)

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit is requesting an extension to our response to this Church Council action until April 2014 due to limited staff capacity.

Church Council Action [CC13.11.69e]:

To receive the response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To postpone the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit report with possible recommendations to the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (April 2014)

At its November meeting, the Church Council adopted a social message on “The Body of Christ and Mental Illness.” The very first page of that message speaks about the loneliness and isolation that those with mental illness experience. However, under the heading of “The Call to Companionship”, the message reminds us that being integrated into a community is treated as definitive by Jesus. In fact, on page 12 the message clearly states that “to people who are experiencing mental illness, physical, prayerful companionship can be a sign of God’s presence in a time when God’s presence cannot be felt any other way.” And so, in italics on page 16, we read that “The ELCA commits as a church to accompanying you in your valley of the shadow...” We also read of a commitment to the families and caregivers of those with mental illness, “The ELCA as a church commits to accompanying you as families and caregivers with honest, hopeful yet realistic, and prayerful companionship.”

To assist congregations in beginning conversations about the particular loneliness and isolation that those with mental illness experience, a congregational study guide has been developed to accompany the mental health message. Conversations about the isolation involved with mental illness can help to broaden the discussion so that the isolation experienced in the world in general can also be addressed.

For those whose isolation has led to despair and thoughts of suicide, there is an Independent Lutheran Organization called Lutheran Suicide Prevention Ministry which can provide many resources for helping people to move through the valley of the shadow.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called for a motion.

The Rev. Vicki T. Garber made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded: To thank the Virginia Synod for encouraging congregations and individuals to reach out to those living in isolation;
To receive the response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;
To encourage congregations and individuals to use the mental health message congregational study guide to engage in conversations about isolation;
To encourage congregations and individuals to utilize the resources provided through Lutheran Suicide Prevention Ministry; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Mr. Paul G. Archer indicated that he had asked that this item be removed from the *en bloc* resolution for separate consideration. He noted that the original resolution dealt with those living in isolation and mentioned “including the fullness of mental health” in a “whereas,” yet the prepared response to the resolution deals almost exclusively with mental illness. He suggested that mental illness was not the only reason for an individual to live in isolation. Mr. Archer also asked whether the Church Council could receive the response of the synod after the secretary informs it of this action.

The Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, replied that the response was meant to help congregations engage with their communities and specifics of how to do that would be difficult.

Church Council members suggested contacting the authors of the resolution in the Virginia Synod regarding their intentions, including in the response what Pr. Bouman had said about congregations engaging with their communities, and addressing the broader issues of isolation.

Ms. Susan W. McArver made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded: To refer this matter to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for further work.

There being no further discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.11 To refer this matter to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for further work.

Vice President Peña declared the motion to refer was adopted.

EN BLOC APPROVAL OF CERTAIN ITEMS

(Agenda V.D.; Exhibits B and D)

Background:

An *en bloc* resolution or consent calendar was presented to the Church Council of routine or noncontroversial actions prepared by staff of the churchwide organization (Exhibit B) and by the council’s committees (Exhibit D). Opportunity was provided to members of the Church Council to remove items from *en bloc* for separate consideration by the council. A single vote on those items remaining *en bloc* is taken without debate or amendment.

At its February–March 2014 meeting, the Conference of Bishops approved a proposed change to an ELCA continuing resolution concerning the organization of the Conference of Bishops.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña indicated that, since the proposed amendment of a continuing resolution required a two-thirds vote, the Church Council would consider that proposal separate from the rest of the *en bloc* resolution which required a majority vote.

Secretary Wm Chris Boerger made the following motion.

Moved;

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded:

To approve the following amendment to the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

10.91.B1314. *Organization of the Conference of Bishops*

The Conference of Bishops may establish committees as the members, from time to time, may determine to assist in fulfillment of assigned responsibilities. Quadrennially, the Conference of Bishops shall elect a chair and vice chair to preside at meetings and serve as ex officio members of the executive committee of the conference with the presiding bishop and secretary. Three synodical bishops also shall be elected by the conference as members of the executive committee. The Conference of Bishops shall establish criteria and terms for three synodical bishops to be elected by the conference as members of the executive committee.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote by show of hands.

VOTED:

TWO-THIRDS VOTE

CC14.04.12

To approve the following amendment to the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

10.91.B1314. *Organization of the Conference of Bishops*

The Conference of Bishops may establish committees as the members, from time to time, may determine to assist in fulfillment of assigned responsibilities. Quadrennially, the Conference of Bishops shall elect a chair and vice chair to preside at meetings and serve as ex officio members of the executive committee of the conference with the presiding bishop and secretary. Three synodical bishops also shall be elected by the conference as members of the executive committee. The Conference of Bishops shall establish criteria and terms for three synodical bishops to be elected by the conference as members of the executive committee.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

Secretary Boerger made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To take action *en bloc* on the remaining items listed in Exhibits B and D.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.13

To take action *en bloc* on the remaining items listed below.

Vice President Peña declared the motion was adopted.

A. CONFIRMATION RESOURCES

Southeastern Minnesota (3I)

WHEREAS, members of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod have engaged in ongoing conversation about confirmation ministry and what it means in this time and place;

WHEREAS, the most recent study of confirmation ministry in the ELCA is from 1993;

WHEREAS, 56% youth in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ages 13-17 make a personal commitment to living life with and for God (Portraits of Protestant Teens: A Report on Teenagers in Major US Denominations, Phil Schwadel and Christian Smith, 2005);

WHEREAS, one third of adults under 30 are religiously unaffiliated (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, October 2012); and

WHEREAS, if confirmation is only centered in youth ministry we miss opportunities for lifelong faith formation; and

WHEREAS, some in our Lutheran faith community are struggling with Biblical literacy, faith articulation and Christian identity;

Therefore be it resolved that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod will continue innovative exploration of Confirmation ministry;

Be it further resolved that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod will share with other expressions of the church any resources that are discovered in this exploration;

Be it further resolved that synods and congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be invited to reimagine Confirmation ministry in the 21st century;

Be it further resolved that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be a network for the adaptations that are already and will take place in the three expressions of the church; and

Be it further resolved that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council requests that the Church Council direct the appropriate unit of the churchwide expression to update the resources available on the churchwide web site to reflect the changes in faith formation ministry that are taking place within all expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Church Council Action [CC13.04.26]:

To thank the Southeastern Minnesota Synod for its resolution related to confirmation ministry;

To acknowledge that the churchwide organization is in the process of a complete redesign of the entire ELCA.org website;

To request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in consultation with the Mission Advancement unit and the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to update the resources on the new ELCA.org website to reflect the changes in faith formation ministry taking place within all expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To further request that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, as part of the ongoing work of the Faith Formation Team (which includes unit staff and staff from Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, as well as Christian education teachers in ELCA colleges and seminaries and other partners), take up the conversation about “re-imagining” confirmation ministry and resources, and to report progress to the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council; and

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

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (April 2014)

A review of the Southeastern Minnesota resolution on confirmation, along with information related to confirmation shared by Bishop Michael Girlinghouse with the Conference of Bishops, suggests there are two distinct areas related to confirmation this resolution addresses. The first issue is the request that the ELCA.org website reflect the changes that are taking place in faith formation ministry within each of the three expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The second issue can be summarized in the following question, “Does the ELCA need to explore a new vision for confirmation in the 21st century?”

Reflecting Changes in Faith Formation on ELCA.org

In the revised ELCA website “Resources” section, one of several areas listed is Faith Practices. Within that section, there are several resources related to the current Faith Practices Initiative. They are divided into four areas:

1. Baptismal Covenant
2. Program Planners
3. Spiritual Renewal
4. Story Matters

The Faith Practices webpage is still under development and will eventually have a link to the ministry of the Christian Education Network of the ELCA (formerly known as the Lutheran Association of Christian Educators [LACE]). The Christian Education Network of the ELCA has several confirmation resources and other faith formation resources and is extremely helpful in providing assistance to anyone seeking a particular type of resource. Its website has a link to the location of ELCA Resource Centers, and these centers also have many faith formation materials, including confirmation materials.

The Faith Practices webpage will be updated periodically by the program director for faith practices to insure that the most current information is offered for those seeking new insights on how to live out their faith.

Does the ELCA need to explore a new vision for confirmation in the 21st century?

1. The Southeastern Minnesota Synod has a team that crafted this resolution. The group was formed in February 2011 to explore alternative practices that can re-imagine confirmation in the 21st century. We are responding to the confirmation resolution submitted by this team. The primary questions of this group are the following:
 - Do we need confirmation today?
 - Is confirmation working as it was intended to work?
 - Is confirmation necessary?
 - Should parents be involved in confirmation?

Two members of this team are members of the Christian Education Network of the ELCA.

2. The Confirmation Project, a research project being funded by the Lily Endowment, is a collaborative research effort among five denominations to learn more about confirmation and equivalent practices across the United States. The intent of the project is to research how the experience of confirmation serves to intensify and integrate beliefs into daily life.

The five denominations participating are the following: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., The Episcopal Church, and the United Methodist Church. Members of the team leading this research are ordained ministers, practical theologians, researchers, youth ministers, and Ph.D. and Master of Divinity candidates. The team is currently seeking congregations that would like to be involved in the research. The actual research will begin in fall 2014.

Undoubtedly, the findings from this study can be critical to the efforts of the ELCA as a new vision for confirmation is discussed. The Rev. Brenda Smith, program director for faith practices and missional leadership in the Congregational and Synodical Missions (CSM) unit, will be the liaison with the staff of “The Confirmation Project,” directing them to the individuals and ministries at the churchwide organization that they may need to contact as this research project evolves.

3. February 3–5, 2014, twenty-eight ELCA faith formation leaders representing various networks and organizations gathered for a summit in St. Louis following the Youth Extravaganza. The overall goal of the summit was: “To renew and strengthen partnerships for a common mission of faith formation within the ELCA.” The conversation was extensive and vibrant, with a clear recognition that faith formation education in this missional age must change if it is to catch up with the dynamic societal changes in our culture. For example, “Are our teaching strategies sensitive to the needs of ethnic specific communities?”

One expected outcome of the summit was to “identify opportunities to more fully share and live out a common vision and mission for faith formation together.” As summit participants continue to network, it can only enhance our ability to strive to make faith formation relevant, exciting, transformational, participatory, and theologically grounded. The summit was partially funded by a grant from the CSM unit.

Please note that this was the second gathering of faith formation leaders hosted by the CSM unit. The first summit took place in September 2011, and more than 20 faith formation leaders gathered to spend time sharing their ministries and also discussing future joys and challenges to be faced in faith formation in the 21st century. Following that summit, one of the participants, Terri Elton, associate professor of Children/Youth/Family Ministry wrote a white paper titled, “What is Faith Formation in a Missional Age?” A copy of this white paper is attached to this report as *Appendix A*.

The Rev. Brenda Smith will be meeting with Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton to discuss her vision for faith formation in the ELCA. The resolution and Churchwide Assembly memorial on confirmation will be discussed with her at that meeting. As a churchwide organization, we continue to be in a variety of conversations about confirmation ministry. We are grateful to the Southeastern Minnesota Synod for its ongoing work in re-imagining confirmation ministry in the 21st century.

VOTED:

**CC14.04.13a To receive the response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit and to thank the Southeastern Minnesota Synod for their resolution on Confirmation Resources; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

B. A CHURCHWIDE POLICY OF PARENTAL LEAVE FOR ROSTERED PERSONS

Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2013]

WHEREAS, questions arise between rostered persons and congregations concerning the compensation and benefit package for parental leave; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) document, “Definition of Compensation Benefits, and Responsibilities of the Pastor,” item D.6. states, “Where applicable, parental leave up to six weeks with full salary, housing and benefits;” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA document, “Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities for Associate in Ministry, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister Under Call,” item D.6. states, “Where applicable, parental leave up to six weeks with full salary and benefits;” and

WHEREAS, ordained persons and congregations have not been consistent with the application of the parental leave benefit as stated in the “Definition of Compensation Benefits, and Responsibilities of the Pastor;” and

WHEREAS, the church is called to support and uplift parents and families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to direct the Office of Secretary to amend the documents, “Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities of the Pastor” and “Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities for Associate in Ministry, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister Under Call,” items D.6. to state “parental leave of at least six weeks with full salary and benefits;” and further be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to encourage all congregations to adopt a parental leave policy consistent with the above-referenced documents and in which congregations are encouraged to offer all employees the same benefit.

[The Office of the Secretary determined that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorial, “Churchwide Policy of Parental Leave for Rostered Persons,” is a resolution that more properly should have been submitted to the Synod Council for referral to a churchwide office through the Church Council’s Executive Committee.]

Executive Committee Action [EC13.07.21c]:

To receive the resolution of the Lower Susquehanna Synod regarding A Churchwide Policy of Parental Leave for Rostered Persons;

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit; and

To request that a report with recommendations be brought to the November 2013 Church Council meeting.

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2013)

After reviewing the resolution more extensively, we request additional time in order to consult with colleagues to properly address the resolution. This additional time will also be helpful as the newly elected secretary is acclimated to the position and responsibilities.

Church Council Action [CC13.11.69b]:

- To receive the response from the Office of the Secretary;
- To postpone the report with recommendations to the April 2014 Church Council meeting; and
- To request the secretary of this church to inform the synod of this action.

Response from the Office of the Secretary (April 2014)

The forms “Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities of the Pastor” and “Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities for Associate in Ministry, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister Under Call” are used in a number of synods as part of the documentation supporting the letter of call issued by the synod for synod staff and by a congregation supporting the letter of call by a congregational vote. These forms are made available to synods and congregations under Office of the Secretary resources on the ELCA website.

The two forms have provided flexibility through a series of blanks that the calling body completes to describe the compensation and benefits that are part of the call. When a recommendation is made, for example related to continuing education, the recommendation is in parenthesis. The current recommendation (paragraph D.6.) related to parental leave is simple a statement, “where applicable, parental leave up to six weeks with full salary and benefits.” This statement is inconsistent with the method of recommendations in the rest of the form and provides no certain benefit.

The issue of parental leave (or maternity and paternity leave) is further complicated by the Family Medical Leave Act. This legislation applies to organizations with a large number of employees and provides for unpaid parental leave. It does apply to many congregations and agencies in this church.

The churchwide organization cannot impose a personnel policy on the entire church but may provide forms that provide recommendations and flexibility. Each congregation or synod has the authority and responsibility to attend to personnel issues. The churchwide organization’s personnel policies do provide for “Maternity/Paternity and Adoptive Leave” of four consecutive weeks paid leave.

There has been consultation with the Congregation and Synodical Mission unit and the Conference of Bishops regarding this resolution, current practices followed, and the need for flexibility. Given the current request calling for six weeks paid leave, the existing language in the current forms, and the existing churchwide organization’s policy of four weeks paid leave, it is appropriate to change paragraph D.6. to keep the forms flexible and allow discretion in the calling entity. (Recommended 6 weeks; 4 weeks minimum.) The new D.6. would read as follows:

D.6. Maternity/Paternity or Adoptive leave of _____ weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits.
(Recommended 6 weeks; 4 weeks minimum).

Although the forms are not adopted by the Church Council, the Office of the Secretary will make these changes pursuant to the Church Council response to this resolution.

VOTED:

**CC14.04.13b To receive the response from the Office of the Secretary and to thank the Lower
Susquehanna Synod for its resolution on Parental Leave for Rostered Persons; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

C. SEMINARIAN DEBT INCURRED THROUGH INADEQUATE HEALTH INSURANCE

Background:

The Office of the Secretary determined that the following four memorials were resolutions that more properly should have been submitted to the Synod Councils for referral to a churchwide unit or office through the Church Council's Executive Committee.

Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F) [2013]

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Delaware-Maryland Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to consult with the eight ELCA seminaries and Portico Benefit Services to offer adequate and affordable health insurance coverage for ELCA seminarians; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit encourage Portico Benefit Services to offer health advocates to students, free of charge, to assist students facing major medical expenses.

West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H) [2013]

RESOLVED, that the 2013 West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to consult with the eight ELCA seminaries and Portico Benefit Services to offer adequate and affordable health insurance coverage for ELCA seminarians; be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA seminaries be encouraged to ensure that no seminarian ever incur medical expenses totaling more than \$1,500 dollars a year; be it further

RESOLVED, that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit encourage Portico Benefit Services to offer health advocates to students, free of charge, to assist students facing major medical expenses.

Allegheny Synod (8C) [2013]

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct the eight ELCA seminaries to explore the possibilities of partnering with Portico Benefit Services to extend their healthcare ministry by developing more affordable, adequate insurance coverage for seminary students.

Montana Synod (1F) [2013]

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Montana Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit to consult with the eight ELCA seminaries and Portico Benefit Services to offer adequate and affordable health insurance coverage for ELCA seminarians; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit encourage Portico Benefit Services to offer health advocates to students, free of charge, to assist students facing major medical expenses.

Executive Committee Action [EC13.07.21a]:

To receive the resolutions of the Delaware-Maryland, West Virginia-Western Maryland, Allegheny, and Montana synods regarding "Seminarian Debt Incurred Through Inadequate Health Insurance;"

To recognize that Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators, Inc. (EIIA) provides a comprehensive seminary student health plan for ELCA seminary students and the EIIA staff provides hands-on services to assist students;

To affirm the work of EIIA as being in accordance with the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits;

To recognize that EIIA is working with ELCA seminaries to identify healthcare insurance options in light of the implementation of the Affordable Healthcare Act;

To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with all ELCA seminaries, EIIA, and Portico Benefit Services; and

To request that a report with possible recommendations be presented to the April 2014 Church Council meeting.

Response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (April 2014)

Following the action of the Executive Committee of the ELCA Church Council to refer the resolutions of the Delaware-Maryland, West Virginia-Western Maryland, Allegheny, and Montana synods regarding Seminarian Debt

Incurred Through Inadequate Health Insurance to the Congregational and Synodical Missions (CSM) unit and to request a report and recommendations to the Church Council's April 2014 meeting, three CSM staff members (Jonathan Strandjord, Greg Villalón, and Mark Wilhelm) were assigned to this task.

These three have worked in preparing this report with Andy Willenborg, the chief financial officer at Wartburg Theological Seminary (and, through him, have consulted with the business officers of the other ELCA seminaries), with Marion Hernandez, vice president for student programs at Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators, Inc. (EIIA), and with Brad Joern, vice president for products and services at Portico Benefit Services (Portico).

The synod resolutions accurately note that full-time seminarians at ELCA seminaries are required to have health insurance and that this insurance may be obtained through either private insurance, parental insurance, spousal insurance, or school-supplied insurance. They also are correct in stating that, for some seminarians, health care costs are a significant contributor to high levels of student debt.

In order to make available the option of school-supplied insurance, the seminaries of the ELCA have worked together for a number of years through EIIA to provide a comprehensive student health plan. Over the years, EIIA has worked with the seminaries to design plans that help control costs that students pay both in premiums and in out-of-pocket expenses. In a time of rising health care costs, a major challenge has been to keep premiums affordable while at the same time limiting out-of-pocket expenses (which can be especially difficult for students with dependents).

In keeping with the requirements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), the plan design EIIA has secured for the ELCA Seminary Health Plan for the 2014–2015 school year limits student out-of-pocket expenses more than in previous years. The current \$500,000 maximum will increase to unlimited; the \$500 deductible and 20 percent co-pay will apply toward the out-of-pocket maximum of \$5,000 per individual; the pre-existing condition exclusion will be removed; and preventive and wellness services will be covered 100 percent while in-network.

This limitation on out-of-pocket costs will greatly reduce the exposure of a seminarian covered under this plan to catastrophically high medical costs. At the same time, this increased coverage is a significant reason for the 25 percent increase in the cost of insurance premiums in 2014–2015 compared to 2013–2014 (to \$3,556 for a student, \$6,785 for a spouse, \$4,160 for a child). Therefore, while there will be in this next year fewer cases in which medical costs result in very high student debt, the increased cost of insurance could result in an increase in borrowing by seminarians enrolled in the ELCA Seminary Student Insurance Plan.

The cost of insurance in the ELCA Seminary Student Insurance Plan has provided good value for seminarians. (For example, in 2012–2013, the total cost of claims actually exceeded total premiums.)

Looking ahead, the premium cost of the plan secured through EIIA for 2014–2015 will be less expensive than what is available in the individual insurance market for the same coverage. At the same time, it is possible that due to low household income levels, a significant number of students and their families will qualify for government subsidies (premium tax credits) for health coverage offered through a health insurance exchange. As a result, some of our seminarians will potentially have lower cost options to consider on an insurance exchange.

In the rapidly changing marketplace of health insurance, it is more important than ever that students at our ELCA seminaries have access to good information and counsel concerning their options. EIIA has for several years offered educational webinars providing objective information, but student participation up until now has been low. It will be important to find new ways to ensure that students both have the information they need to find the plan that is best for them and, in the case of the ELCA Seminary Student Insurance Plan, know how to use it most effectively.

A further challenge will be to keep our plan viable as enrollment numbers likely shrink. Enrollment has already significantly contracted over the last five years (from 678 in 2008–2009 to 322 in 2013–2014) as the federal rules for Student Insurance Programs have eliminated low-premium/limited coverage options and as the ACA has enabled students under age 26 to continue health coverage under their parents' insurance (or for subsidized coverage in some states that provided it even before the ACA). With the full implementation of the ACA, enrollment in our plan might decline to a point where the pool is too small on its own to secure coverage. Therefore, EIIA is working to pool together multiple seminary systems in developing a common plan for those seminarians for whom a student plan will continue to be the best and most affordable option.

Portico would seem to be a natural source of health insurance coverage for ELCA seminarians, but certain challenges exist to doing so. First, Portico's governance process must be considered as it relates to offering benefits to those who

do not meet current eligibility definitions. Thought must be given to the definition of an eligible student—the attainment of “endorsed” status, for example—and what implications that might or might not have for benefits beyond health coverage. Second, none of Portico’s current health plan options guarantees out-of-pocket expenses at the levels suggested in the resolutions. For example, Portico’s most comprehensive plan limits annual out-of-pocket expenses for medical and pharmacy expenses to \$3,000 for individuals and \$6,000 for families. Third, the question of how health coverage through Portico would be paid for needs to be addressed. Would students be expected to pay the contributions as part of their seminary costs (just like now), would it be provided by the ministry sites where they do their internship/residency, or would some other means be necessary?

If students were covered in the Portico plan, Portico could offer health care advocacy to students and their families by virtue of its relationship with both the student and the benefits administrator; whereas, in the current arrangement, health care advocacy is not possible since Portico does not have a relationship with the benefit administrator. Portico is well-positioned to provide seminarians with certain wellness resources through the Mayo Health Clinic health assessment and the financial counseling services it provides at no charge to seminarians through its partnership with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota. Future considerations for utilizing Portico’s experience might include providing information to seminary students and administrative staff regarding how to best evaluate opportunities available through the health insurance exchanges, as well as helping candidacy committees become better equipped to recruit and support healthy leaders.

The following are some possible recommendations:

1. That CSM, in partnership with the ELCA seminaries, work with EIIA and Portico to develop a robust strategy to engage all seminarians at ELCA seminaries in opportunities to understand the advantages and disadvantages of various health insurance options available to them under the Affordable Care Act.
2. That EIIA move ahead with folding the ELCA Seminary Student Insurance Plan together with its other seminary plans.
3. That CSM develop a strategy to ensure that every candidacy committee has basic knowledge of health insurance issues and the options available to their candidates, with at least one member of each committee participating in an annual webinar or other training.
4. That during the 2014–2015 academic year, CSM, the ELCA seminaries, and Portico actively explore the feasibility of bringing at a future date some ELCA seminarians into a Portico plan at some appropriate point of candidacy (e.g., at endorsement).

VOTED:

CC14.04.13c

To request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in partnership with ELCA seminaries, to work with Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators, Inc. (EIIA) and Portico Benefit Services in order to develop a robust strategy to engage seminarians at this church’s seminaries in opportunities to understand the advantages and disadvantages of various health insurance options;

To affirm EIIA’s intent to incorporate the ELCA Seminary Student Insurance Plan with its other seminary plans;

To encourage the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to develop a strategy to ensure that every candidacy committee has basic knowledge of health insurance issues and the options available to their candidates, with at least one member of each committee participating in an annual webinar or other training;

To request during the 2014-2015 academic year that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the ELCA seminaries, and Portico Benefit Services continue to explore the feasibility of allowing ELCA seminarians to enroll into health coverage through Portico Benefit Services at an appropriate point of candidacy (e.g. at endorsement);

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

D. TO COMMISSION AN ADULT CATECHISM

Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [2013]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to request the Church Council to commission, through the appropriate channels with appropriate funding, the development of an Adult Catechism as a resource for the church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to request that this catechism be prepared as an educational resource to supplement Luther's Catechisms, not as a vehicle for establishing specific policies or norms within this church or for binding the consciences of its members; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to request that the Church Council invite full communion partner churches to participate in this project so that continued inter-church dialogue may be enriched and shared throughout the churches, and so that this church may further live out the promise of its partnerships; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this catechism take into account and reference the extensive bilateral ecumenical dialogues of the past 50 years.

[The Office of the Secretary determined that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly memorial, "To Commission an Adult Catechism," is a resolution that more properly should have been submitted to the Synod Council for referral to the Church Council. The resolution will be transmitted, as attached, to the Church Council through its Executive Committee.]

Executive Committee Action [EC13.07.21b]:

To receive the resolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod regarding To Commission an Adult Catechism;

To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Conference of Bishops; and

To request that a report with possible recommendations be brought to the November 2013 Church Council meeting.

Response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit (November 2013)

In conversations with other churchwide staff, we recommend that this resolution be reassigned to the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The staff in that office is primarily responsible for theological discernment, 500th anniversary work, and has direct contact with our full communion partners. It is in a better position to review the various aspects of the resolution recommended by the Metropolitan New York Synod.

In reassigning this resolution, we further recommend additional time is granted so that the Office of the Presiding Bishop can consult with colleagues in our unit as well as with the Conference of Bishops and Augsburg Fortress.

Church Council Action [CC13.11.69d]:

To receive the response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, Augsburg Fortress, and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To request that a report with possible recommendations be brought by the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2014)

Consideration of the proposed project has focused on the purpose, scope, outcomes, feasibility, and partners. Initial conversations about developing resources for the renewal of faith formation have taken place with Beth Lewis and Martin Seltz of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, and follow-up conversation is needed. The development of new resources for renewal of faith formation is also an initiative under consideration for the ELCA's observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and the possibility of connecting this request with that initiative will be considered in the coming

months. Theological conversations based on Luther's Small and Large Catechisms taking place among churchwide staff this spring will contribute to the consideration of the purpose, scope, and outcomes of this proposed project.

In short, consideration of the request has begun and is continuing. However, at this time there are no recommendations for Church Council action.

VOTED:

**CC14.04.13d To receive the response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and to thank the Metropolitan New York Synod for their resolution on Adult Catechism;
To encourage the Office of the Presiding Bishop to continue in its conversations regarding the development of resources for the renewal of faith formation; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

E. CATEGORY C1: ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

Background:

The Report of the Memorials Committee to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly includes the full text of the synodical memorials.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA13.06.25]:

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Southwestern Texas, Saint Paul Area, Rocky Mountain, Southeast Michigan, Oregon, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Greater Milwaukee, Southwest California, Southeastern Iowa, New England, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Indiana-Kentucky, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods related to Peacemaking with Justice in Israel and Palestine;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to:

1. Continue its awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy on behalf of a peaceful resolution of the conflict between Israel and Palestine;
2. Learn more about the experiences of both Israelis and Palestinians and their mutual fears, aspirations, and hopes;
3. Work to convey the concerns and perspectives of Palestinians and Israelis that dispel stereotypes and caricatures and promote better understanding;
4. Lift up the voices within both communities, especially those of victims of violence, that seek peace with justice through nonviolent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;
5. Continue to help alleviate the humanitarian needs of all of those affected by the conflict;
6. Support U.S. funding that promotes peace and cooperation for all parties to the conflict; and
7. Continue to pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land;

To reaffirm the 2011 Churchwide Assembly action [CA 11.04.27] "to commend the policy, 'ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens,' to the members, congregations, synods, and agencies of this church; and to decline to undertake a review of the investment of funds managed within the ELCA but to commend these recommendations to the Office of the Treasurer, the Office of the Secretary, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Mission Advancement unit, and the ELCA Board of Pensions for consideration;"

To refer to the Global Mission unit, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Mission Advancement unit, the Office of the Secretary, the Office of the Treasurer, and Portico Benefit Services the matter of evaluating possibilities for investing in specific Palestinian economic endeavors and other projects that would promote peace and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians; and to provide a report with recommendations to the April 2014 meeting of the Church Council.

Response from Global Mission unit (April 2014)

At this time, our progress report is that conversations are ongoing with the various churchwide units as well as Portico Benefit Services. We would appreciate the opportunity to make a fuller report, including a comprehensive strategy, to a subsequent meeting of the Church Council.

VOTED:

**CC14.04.13e To receive the response from Global Mission and to grant an extension for a final report and possible recommendations; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

F. CATEGORY A2: UNITING AMERICAN FAMILIES ACT

Background:

The Report of the Memorials Committee to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly includes the full text of the synodical memorials.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA13.03.07b]:

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Eastern Washington-Idaho, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Southwestern Texas, Saint Paul Area, Oregon, Florida-Bahamas, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Southwest California, Minneapolis Area, Central States, Metropolitan New York, Northwestern Minnesota, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Indiana-Kentucky synods related to the Uniting American Families Act;

To affirm the Uniting American Families Act or its equivalent in the Congress of the United States;

To request the presiding bishop of this church to communicate to the president and members of Congress the action of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and

To encourage rostered leaders and members of congregations in this church, if consistent with their individual bound consciences, to support the Uniting American Families Act, or its equivalent, to their elected representatives and encourage them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U. S. immigration law that includes the principles of the Uniting American Families Act.

Church Council Action [CC13.11.69g]:

To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit, to bring a report on its activities related to Uniting American Families Act by the April 2014 meeting of the Church Council.

Response from Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2014)

In June, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) made the historic decision to repeal Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Prior to the court ruling, DOMA had required the federal government to deny legal marriage status to same-sex couples and prevented those couples from accessing federal benefits designed to aid married couples, which, before the SCOTUS decision, defined marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

The repeal of Section 3 is a victory for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) families and for equal treatment under the law. Among many policy implications, the repeal permits legally married LGBT U.S. citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents to sponsor their foreign-born spouses for green cards.

Prior to the SCOTUS ruling, the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) was introduced in the 111th Congress in an attempt to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act so that bi-national LGBT spouses could be united and live in the United States as a family. Because the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services had incorporated Section 3's marriage definition into its administrative policies and practices, prior to this past June, LGBT individuals were not allowed to sponsor their foreign-born spouses. As a result, some LGBT spouses of U.S. Citizens were deported. Bi-national LGBT families were separated.

With the Court's Section 3 decision, however, a UAFAs amendment is no longer necessary. The SCOTUS decision provides for equal treatment to same-sex bi-national couples under immigration law, which is under the federal government's purview. The repeal of Section 3 accomplishes much of what UAFAs set out to do: LGBT spouses who lived in fear of separation or were separated with no legal avenue to gain unification may get relief. The Supreme Court

ruling is that LGBT individuals may now sponsor their spouses for an immigration visa and their families no longer have to fear being torn apart.

In January 2014, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton sent letters to the members of the Senate who co-sponsored the original UAFA legislation in the 111th Congress. Presiding Bishop Eaton thanked them for supporting the legislation and shared the action of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly about the principles of the UAFA. She also shared the Churchwide Assembly action with President Barack Obama and thanked him for his comments on immigration reform in the State of the Union address. A special letter of thanks was communicated to Senator Patrick Leahy, who was the original drafter of the UAFA legislation and introduced it on the Senate floor.

More work is still needed on the issue of immigration reform, and the letters stated that we encourage members of Congress and the President to continue to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of the Uniting American Families Act.

VOTED:

**CC14.04.13f To receive the response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;
To express appreciation for this church's ongoing work on the issue of immigration reform that includes the principles of the Uniting American Families Act; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

G. CATEGORY A3: COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

Background:

The Report of the Memorials Committee to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly includes the full text of the synodical memorials.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA13.06.24]:

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Sierra Pacific and New Jersey synods concerning gun violence and the memorials of the Pacifica, Southwest California, New England, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods concerning confronting the culture of violence;

To reaffirm this church's commitment to addressing issues of violence through worship, education, service, advocacy, ongoing moral deliberation and the work called for in the 1993 Churchwide Assembly resolution, the 1994 social message on Community Violence and the 2013 Conference of Bishops' Pastoral letter on Violence;

To educate members of this church that more people die from suicide than from homicide in the United States and to lift up the ELCA social messages on suicide prevention, community violence, mental health, and to call upon congregations and synods to engage their members on ways to prevent suicide;

To refer the matter of evaluating the feasibility and advisability of developing additional investment screens and related recommendations to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit with the request that it ask the Corporate Social Responsibility Team to provide a report with possible recommendations to the Church Council at its November 2013 meeting; and

To refer requests for education and resource development on issues of violence in society to the ELCA Church Council for appropriate action in keeping with the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force.

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (November 2013)

Due to limited staffing capacity, the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit was unable to adequately evaluate the feasibility and advisability of developing additional investment screens and related recommendations. CSM is requesting an extension to the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

Church Council Action [CC13.11.69q]:

To receive the response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To postpone the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit response of the fourth resolve, including possible recommendations, to the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (April 2014)

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) team is scheduled to review the weapons screen this year. This screen is based on the ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God's World*, and deals with indiscriminate weapons. The specifics around gun control do not, at this point in time, appear to fit the screen, but it will be brought up in the review.

The "Violence in Our World" issue paper was updated in November 2012 and approved at the Church Council. At this point in time, it deals with a variety of issues including policies and reports around gun violence (point 8). This past year CSR, in partnership with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Social Responsibility, addressed Starbucks and Amazon around gun issues and the Newtown situation. The CSR team will continue to follow this work in order to see if there are any places where the ELCA voice could join. This particular resolution and piece of work does not deal with limiting sales but does address issues like corporate policies around having weapons.

Based upon current ELCA social statements, ELCA teaching does not compel a gun screen. At this point in time, and in accordance with current ELCA teachings, there is insufficient basis for such a screen. Again, a handgun screen is not feasible on the basis of the ELCA's existing teaching and policy. There is no textual passage or specific set of signals that could be summarized to support such a screen. *For Peace in God's World* is the basis of the weapons screen, but it never mentions handguns, suicide, or community violence.

The message on community violence puts the ELCA on record favoring gun control as a matter of advocacy, but it also places the questions on a more deliberative note under "ongoing deliberation."

The social policy resolution, Community Violence—Gun Control [CA93.06.10], lists passage of strict enforcement of current legislation but is absolutely silent on investments or many other aspects of the "gun" debate in society. While the ELCA's approach may be summarized as a strong gun legislative/management approach, at no point does it reject ownership as inherently wrong, or even call for the reduction of the production, sale, or distribution of guns.

On the broader topic of community violence and educational resources available to ELCA members on the topics of suicide and violence prevention, the ELCA has the following:

- Lutheran Suicide Prevention Ministry: www.elcaspm.org
- The Congregational Study Leader's Guide for Disability Ministry/Mental Health: <http://www.elca.org/resources/disability%20ministry>
- "The Body Of Christ and Mental Illness": http://www.elca.org/resources/~link.aspx?_id=12187B025F3E4CBD90AD6CD1A1AF477C&_z=z

Other educational resources produced by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, on the topic of Community Violence include:

- Walking Jesus' Path of Peace-Living Faithfully in a Violent World (10/23/2001)
- Intersections, Peace: Christians Living in a Violent World (4/1/1995)
- Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way by Walter Wink (4/1/2003)
- The Way of Peace: Christian Life in the Face of Discord by Jim Childs (2008)

VOTED:

CC14.04.13g

To receive the response of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To commend the development of educational resources on issues of violence in society in order that this church may continue to foster moral deliberation on the issue of reducing gun violence and creating a culture of peace;

To decline to develop additional investment screens on the topic of handgun control; and

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

H. CATEGORY D2: SACRAMENTAL OBEDIENCE IN HOLY COMMUNION [2011 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY]

Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E) [2010]

WHEREAS, our Lord said, “You are my friends if you do what I command you” (John 15:14); and

WHEREAS, St. Paul indicated an enduring tradition when he repeated the Lord’s command: “For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, [gave] thanks...broke it and said ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me’” (1 Corinthians 11:23-24); and

WHEREAS, Christ established a covenantal relationship in this sacrament when he said, “. . . for this is the blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many . . .” (Matthew 26:28), and as children of God we have a duty and delight to obey his will: “Take, eat; this is my body. . . . Drink from it, all of you” (Matthew 26:26-27); and

WHEREAS, our Lord warned us, “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53); and

WHEREAS, the Augsburg Confession claimed, “Our churches are falsely accused of abolishing the Mass. In fact, the Mass is retained among us and is celebrated with the greatest reverence” (CA XXIV, 1); and “. . . one common Mass is held on every holy day, and it is administered on other days if there are those who desire it. . . . Chrysostom says that the priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to Communion and keeping others away” (CA XXIV, 34, 36); and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther in the Large Catechism observed, “. . . we go to the sacrament because there we receive a great treasure . . . as a daily food and sustenance so that our faith may be refreshed and strengthened” (LC V, 22, 24), “. . . those who want to be Christians should prepare themselves to receive this blessed sacrament frequently” (LC V, 39), “. . . no one under any circumstances should be forced or coerced. . . . Nevertheless, it must be understood that such people who abstain and absent themselves from the sacrament over a long period of time are not to be considered Christians” (LC V, 42), “As in other matters . . . there must also be daily exhortation, so that on this subject we must be persistent in preaching” (LC V, 44), “What should move and induce you is that he [Christ] desires it, and it pleases him” (LC V, 52), “For if you wait until you are rid of your burden in order to come to the sacrament purely and worthily, you will have to stay away from it forever” (LC V, 73); and

WHEREAS, our congregational constitutions call the Augsburg Confession “a true witness to the Gospel” (*C2.05.), accept the other confessional writings including the Large Catechism as “further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church” (*C2.06.), and state that the congregation “accepts the canonical Scriptures of Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (*C2.03.); and

WHEREAS, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession professed, “Among us the Mass is celebrated every Lord’s day and on other festivals” (Ap XXIV, 1), and all Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) congregations by ratifying the ELCA model constitution for congregations have already accepted their responsibility to defend and implement the practice of celebrating the Eucharist weekly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that, in obedience to the unquestionable command of Christ and in concord with this church’s Confessions and constitutions, the Upper Susquehanna Synod in annual assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in its next biennial assembly to embrace this Gospel treasure with joy; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in annual assembly memorialize the ELCA in its next biennial assembly to recognize that this is a divine mandate and not a human agenda, and is already firmly established in Scripture, confessional documents, and constitutions of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in annual assembly memorialize the ELCA in its next biennial assembly to devise and implement a plan to encourage all of the congregations of the ELCA to exhort one another to obedience to Christ’s command to the desirable end that all congregations share in the Holy Communion weekly by Reformation Sunday in 2012.

Background and response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop Theological Discernment Team

The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament, adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, affirms the Scriptures and Lutheran confessional writings, which teach that Holy Communion is a great treasure, a gift of grace from God to be received by Christians joyfully, thankfully, and frequently. “At the table of our Lord Jesus Christ, God nourishes faith, forgives sin, and calls us to be witnesses to the Gospel” (Principle 31; p. 36). “According to the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Lutheran congregations celebrate the Holy Communion every Sunday and festival. This confession remains the norm for our practice” (Principle 35; p. 39). The encouragement to celebrate the Lord’s Supper weekly (Principle 35B) is rooted in “Christ’s command, his promise, and our deep need” (Principle 35A, quoting *A Statement on Communion Practices*, adopted by the 1989 ELCA Churchwide Assembly).

Nonetheless, weekly observance of the Lord's Table as the primary worship service of the congregation or local assembly has not been a uniform practice throughout the ELCA. In some remote locations or in places where there is no resident ordained minister, a Sunday service of Holy Communion every week is not yet or no longer feasible. Moreover, while circumstances have changed for other Lutheran worshiping communities, the community's practice of less frequent observance was established already and has become the tradition in that community. Some congregations have a living memory of changing from *quarterly* celebration of Holy Communion to their current practice of monthly celebration.

For these reasons and others, weekly observance of Holy Communion, including both Word and Sacrament, as the central worship service in all congregations remains a goal that calls for renewed attention throughout the ELCA. Gracious invitation and encouragement to individuals and congregations to make full use of means of grace is one part of the needed attention. Policies and procedures that promote the availability of ordained ministers and lay presiders in all locations are another factor that may affect the feasibility of weekly observance in some congregations. Toward this end, an arbitrary deadline is less likely to be helpful than clear authorization and support for the actions needed to make weekly observance both feasible and graciously inviting for all in every place.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA11.03.06f]:

To receive with gratitude the memorial of the Upper Susquehanna Synod concerning Holy Communion and to affirm its commendation of faithful and joyful reception of this sacrament; and

To refer the memorial to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with the Conference of Bishops for consideration of actions that will promote more frequent reception of Holy Communion by ELCA members and weekly observance of Holy Communion as the primary worship service of each ELCA congregation.

Church Council Action [CC.11.11.83h]:

To request that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, present to the spring 2013 Church Council meeting a report and possible recommendations concerning its activities related to Memorial Category D2: Holy Communion.

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (April 2013)

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit is requesting an extension for responding to this Church Council motion until November 2013. This extension would offer time to facilitate discussion about the proposal in the memorial with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Conference of Bishops.

Church Council Action [CC13.04.27i]:

To receive the response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To authorize a delay in the response of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to the memorial on Sacramental Obedience in Holy Communion;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2013 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (November 2013)

Due to unforeseen circumstances and limited staffing capacity, the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit was unable to facilitate a discussion by the requested deadline. In addition, at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly another memorial was received referencing the Sacrament of Holy Communion. This memorial was also directed to CSM for a response and possible recommendations.

Therefore, CSM needs additional time to consult with the Conference of Bishops and the Office of the Presiding Bishop and requests an extension to the April 2014 Church Council meeting to appropriately address the memorial.

Church Council Action [CC13.11.69p]:

- To receive the response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;
- To postpone the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit report with possible recommendations to the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and
- To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission (April 2014)

The blessings and benefits of weekly celebration of Holy Communion are clear in our theology and practice. As noted in the resolution and various responses above, it is the position of this church that weekly Holy Communion be practiced in this church. It is also noted that this is not always possible for a variety of reasons.

The resolution calls for the development of a plan. There are already plans in the works for the encouragement of weekly celebrations of Holy Communion. The Worship Jubilee 2015 will encourage this practice. The planning for the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation will also raise this issue. *The Use of the Means of Grace* statement of this church states, “According to the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Lutheran congregations celebrate the Holy Communion every Sunday and festival. This confession remains the norm of our practice.”

VOTED:

- CC14.04.13h** **To receive with gratitude the memorial of the Upper Susquehanna Synod concerning Holy Communion and to affirm its commendation of faithful and joyful reception of this sacrament;**
To affirm the projects underway that will lift up this normative practice;
To decline to develop additional plans beyond those in process; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

I. CATEGORY D1: COMMUNION PRACTICES

Northern Illinois Synod (5B) [2012 Memorial]

WHEREAS, *The Use of the Means of Grace* (1997), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s (ELCA) guiding document on the “Practice of Word and Sacrament,” clearly states that “The Holy Communion is given to the baptized” (Principle 37, pp. 41–42); and

WHEREAS, since the publication of that document the ELCA has entered into full-communion partnerships with church bodies that do not share that same understanding; and

WHEREAS, the implementing resolutions of our full-communion agreements encourage us to extend sacramental hospitality to one another’s members; and

WHEREAS, some congregations of the ELCA currently have Communion policy statements which would effectively bar members of church bodies with which we are in full communion from participation in the Sacrament; and

WHEREAS, some ELCA congregations welcome everyone present to partake of the Eucharist without stipulating the need for Baptism; and

WHEREAS, clarification concerning Lutheran Sacramental theology and practice would be helpful in the life of this church at this time; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to institute a process necessary to review and possibly revise the ELCA’s guiding documents concerning admission to the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA13.03.10]:

To receive with gratitude the memorial of the Northern Illinois Synod requesting a process to review the ELCA’s guiding documents on communion practices;

To invite members, congregations, synods and the churchwide organization into conversation and study regarding the Use of the Means of Grace;

To request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Conference of Bishops, to establish a process to review current documents concerning administration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion; and

To request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to bring a report and possible recommendations to the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

Response from Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (April 2014)

It is important to note that this entire church has been invited to encourage and invite one another into conversation and study regarding *The Use of the Means of Grace*. The invitation is both important and timely. A review of sacramental practices related to Holy Communion depends on a broad and deep understanding of this church's teaching, in order to address the question of whether changing sacramental practices that are emerging in local settings merit reconsideration of ELCA policy/guidance documents.

A renewed conversation about who is or should be welcome at the Lord's Table has been underway for several years, with scholars and local practitioners from various Christian traditions weighing in. Whether bishop or local pastor, teaching theologian or lay leader, the arguments for more latitude in welcoming the unbaptized to the sacrament of the altar are grounded in a deep desire for broader inclusion that seeks to serve the mission of Christ's church. Some describe it as an exercise in "Eucharistic Hospitality."

Consultations with synod bishops, teaching theologians, and other leaders throughout this church affirm that changing contexts are influencing changes in practice. Further research is required to confirm the anecdotal assessment that more often than not, invitations to the meal of Holy Communion include an indication that this sacrament is for the baptized. Still, it is evident that the link between Holy Baptism and the Eucharist is frequently unstated and that the invitation to the table is increasingly more "open."

To be sure, circumstances are changing and local practices are often removed from the guidance that this church has adopted and provides. But the question is more complex than whether or not all people who are welcome in the assembly are welcome to participate in all of what the assembly does. *The Use of the Means of Grace* itself makes the argument that sacramental practices as described therein are of and for the sake God's mission.

Just as changing contexts influence changes in practice, they also reveal a growing need for catechesis. Most broadly, there is the need to explore the renewing aspects and essence of worship, together with what it means to confess and teach that the church is "the assembly of believers gathered" around the means of grace. There is a particular and pronounced need to rediscover and articulate the relationship between Baptism, Eucharist, and how they are bound up in the ways we teach, learn, and experience our individual and communal relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

It is also important to attend to what is happening within and among our ecumenical counterparts, especially our full communion partners. The insights and practices of others related to the sacrament of the altar, while not determinative, are important to our consideration of open questions about our own practices.

VOTED:

- CC14.04.13i** **To take seriously the invitation to engage one another in conversation and study of *The Use of the Means of Grace*;**
 To request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to provide resources that will help facilitate that conversation;
 To encourage others to develop and share resources more locally, while guiding people to *The Use of the Means of Grace* with the invitation to read and share it;
 To let the conversation regarding *The Use of the Means of Grace* serve as the initial step in a process of review, but to delay any further development or implementation of a process until research is done to assess the nature and extent of changing practices, and until a director for worship formation and liturgical resources at the ELCA churchwide organization is in place and prepared to oversee the design of such a process, both in scope and hoped-for outcomes; and
 To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

J. PORTION OF PROCEEDS FROM TONNER COLLECTION TO SUPPORT REGIONAL ARCHIVES

Background:

It was reported in November 2013 to the Budget and Finance Committee that, in the 1980s, Ms. Florence Foerderer Tonner passed away leaving various bequests to the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). A portion of the LCA bequest included a number of Bibles and religious-oriented books and artwork (collectively, the Tonner Collection). For the past 25 years, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP) has had possession of the Tonner Collection. The collection was loaned to LTSP by the LCA for storage, display, and preservation. In 2013, LTSP contacted the churchwide organization, indicating a desire to no longer house the Tonner Collection and for the possible sale of the Tonner Collection. LTSP explained that the cost to house and preserve these rare books had been considerable. In consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop, Office of the Secretary, and Office of the Treasurer, the Tonner Collection was placed with Sotheby's for auction. As of January 31, 2014, approximately \$1.26 million in proceeds had been received.

In February 2014, the Administrative Team of the churchwide organization approved a recommendation for the distribution of proceeds as follows: 60 percent retained by the churchwide organization and 40 percent deposited into LTSP's endowment held within the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. Of the share retained by the churchwide organization, 50 percent designated for ELCA Fund for Leaders (a portion of which will generate scholarships named in honor of Florence Foerderer Tonner), 25 percent designated for purposes beyond the regular operating budget (e.g., additional seminary support, initiatives proposed by the Theological Education Advisory Council), and 25 percent designated for a fund functioning as endowment in support of regional archives. Establishment of this regional archives fund required Church Council action.

VOTED:

- CC14.04.13j** **To place twenty-five percent of the proceeds retained by the ELCA from the sale of the Tonner Collection into a Church Council designated fund functioning as endowment;**
 To make income from the fund available for support of regional archives;
 To request that guidelines for distribution be developed by the Office of the Secretary in consultation with the treasurer and executive for administration; and
 To authorize that distributions from the fund be made with the approval of the secretary of this church.

K. REVISION OF GLOBAL MISSION UNIT PERSONNEL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Background:

ELCA continuing resolution 16.12.B10.b. states:

The Global Mission unit will develop personnel policies for long-term and other missionaries in consultation with the Human Resources of the Office of the Bishop, and administer such policies after their approval by the Church Council.

This continuing resolution was approved at the November 2013 Church Council meeting. Proposed amendments and the final text of the ELCA Global Mission Personnel Policies and Expectations were presented in Exhibit J, Part 1.

VOTED:

- CC14.04.13k** **To approve the revisions to the ELCA Global Mission Unit Personnel Policies and Expectations as detailed in Exhibit J, Part 1 [Appendix].**

L. OTHER NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Background:

The Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on certain committees and on boards of separately incorporated ministries, social ministry organizations, and seminaries. ELCA constitutional bylaws 8.31.03. and 8.31.04. outline basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries.

VOTED:

CC14.04.131 **To elect to the Publishing House of the ELCA (Augsburg Fortress, Publishers) Board of Trustees to a two-year term expiring in 2016: the Rev. Clint A. Schnekloth;**
 To elect to the Board of Directors of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg to a four-year term expiring in 2018: Mr. David A. Russell;
 To elect to the Board of Directors of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia to three-year terms expiring in 2016: the Rev. Audrey E. Moody and Mr. Robert J. Smith; and
 To elect to the Advisory Board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to six-year terms expiring in 2020: the Rev. Anne T. Carlson and Ms. Gladys Chow; and
 To re-elect to the Advisory Board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a six-year term expiring in 2020: the Rev. Ruben F. Duran; and
 To elect to the Committee of Hearing Officers to a three-year term expiring in 2017: Mr. David D. Swartling.

NEW BUSINESS

AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OF LUTHERAN SERVICES IN AMERICA

(Agenda V.F.; Exhibit H, Part 2)

Background:

Lutheran Services in America (LSA) is a nonprofit corporation of social ministry organizations affiliated with the ELCA or recognized by The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. The social ministry organizations are Class A members of LSA, and the two church bodies are its Class B members. LSA governing documents “may be amended by an affirmative vote of the majority of the Class A members and with the written concurrence of the Class B members.” The Church Council represents the ELCA in such actions.

Church Council Actions:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña noted there was one item of new business to approve amendments to the Lutheran Services in America (LSA) bylaws.

Secretary Wm Chris Boerger made the following motion.

Moved;

Seconded: To approve the amendments to the Lutheran Services in America governing documents.

Responding to questions from Church Council members, the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, summarized the bylaw changes being proposed—largely to reflect structural changes in the ELCA and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and to create associate membership in LSA.

There being no further discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC14.04.14 **To approve the amendments to the Lutheran Services in America governing documents.**

Vice President Peña declared that the motion had been adopted and that there was no other new business.

CHURCH COUNCIL JOYS AND CONCERNS

(Agenda V.E.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Mr. Paul G. Archer, who asked specific people how the Church Council may pray for them.

EVALUATION AND DEBRIEFING

(Agenda V.G.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña recalled that the meeting evaluation form was mentioned in the Board Development Committee report. He said that a link to the online form would be emailed to Church Council members after the meeting.

PROCESS OBSERVATIONS

(Agenda V.H.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Ms. Marjorie B. Ellis to present process observations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Secretary Wm Chris Boerger for announcements.

Secretary Boerger stated that a summary of the meeting would be sent by email to the Church Council members. He asked that expense reports be submitted promptly.

ECUMENICAL GUESTS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña invited remarks from the ecumenical guests present.

The Rev. Lisa Vander Wal of the Reformed Church in America brought a greeting and an expression of appreciation on behalf of the ecumenical guests.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on the Rev. Vicki T. Garber, who closed the meeting with prayer.

The eighty-second meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adjourned Sunday, April 6, 2014, at 2:21 P.M.

Church Council members gathered at 2:30 P.M. in the Lutheran Center Chapel for a service of Holy Communion and the installation of newly elected Church Council members. The Rev. Shelley R. Wickstrom, bishop of the Alaska Synod, presided; the Rev. William E. Flippin Jr., preached; Mr. Clarence M. Smith served as assisting minister; and Ms. Maren Hulden and the Rev. Peder J. Johanson served as lectors. An offering was received for the ELCA Vision for Mission.

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ELCA GLOBAL MISSION UNIT (ELCA/GM)

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

PREFACE

A. ~~“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. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) 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 [201105]).

B. ~~“The Global Mission unit shall provide integrated support of this church’s work in other countries and be the means through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society. The Global Mission unit shall be responsible for this church’s mission in other countries and shall be the channel through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society.”~~ (ELCA Constitution 16.12.B1005 [201105]). In fulfilling ~~the ELCA~~this mandate, the ELCA/GM recruits, appoints, prepares, and supports global personnel to carry out its mission.

C. The ELCA Constitution provides that the ELCA/GM will develop personnel policies for global personnel in consultation with the Human Resources team of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and administer such policies after their approval by the Church Council. Any revisions to the personnel policies as approved by the Church Council revoke and supersede any and all previous versions of the policies.

D. ELCA/GM~~All~~ global personnel ~~serv~~ing under the auspices of the ELCA Global Mission unit are subject to the *ELCA/GM Personnel Policies and Expectations*. A copy of this document and any amendments are provided to global personnel. It is the responsibility of each global personnel to read and comply with the personnel policies and any revisions made to them.

~~E. The ELCA Church Council has the authority to make changes to the *Personnel Policies and Expectations* without prior notice. In addition, the ELCA/GM may deviate from its stated policies at its sole discretion as individual circumstances warrant. These policies and any revisions revoke and supersede any and all previous versions of the policies.~~

~~EE.~~ The ELCA/GM staff has the responsibility of developing and administering supplemental provisions and procedures of support for all global personnel.

~~GF.~~ These personnel policies and any supplemental provisions and procedures of support do not create, imply, or express a promise of continued appointment or employment of any person. ELCA global personnel are at-will employees. ~~Both the ELCA/GM and mission personnel have the right to terminate appointment or employment at any time.~~

1.0 SERVICE CONTEXTS IN THE GLOBAL MISSION OF THE ELCA

The global mission of the ELCA is usually carried out in companionship and mutuality with the community of faith in a given location. The companion church or agency has the primary responsibility for leading and directing its mission, which may include inviting the ELCA to provide global personnel. The ELCA/GM may in special circumstances develop **mission-service** positions in regions where there is no identifiable companion.

The ELCA/GM utilizes various categories of service and patterns of support for global personnel, including employment by the ELCA/GM as well as self-funded volunteers. In addition, the ELCA/GM may develop special contractual arrangements with persons, other churches or agencies.

All persons serving under appointment of the ELCA/GM are considered ELCA global personnel, regardless of duration, category of service, pattern of support or type of ministry, and they carry both the responsibility and privilege of serving this church's mission.

Global personnel live out their vocations within the context of God's call to the global church. They are called by the ELCA to live and work in varied national and cultural contexts as an expression of the mission of the ELCA in companionship with other churches. Global personnel serve the ELCA in international settings and also provide important channels of communication through which the ELCA can be enriched and challenged by the global church.

2.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES

The nature of cross-national and cross-cultural mission requires multiple accountabilities. Global personnel are accountable in three principal relationships.

2.1 ELCA Accountabilities

Global personnel are appointed by the ELCA and are accountable to the ELCA.

This relationship of accountability and support occurs through the ELCA/GM, primarily with the Area Program Desk and also with the Global Service and Finance teams.

As representatives of the ELCA, global personnel serve in a manner congruent with the ELCA/GM's stated practice of mission through the accompaniment model.

2.2 Companion Church or Agency Accountabilities

Global personnel are invited and received by the companion church or agency in the country or by an organization responsible for a particular ministry. They are also accountable to the companion church or agency and are expected to respond appropriately to its expectations.

2.3 Local Supervisor Accountabilities

Global personnel are accountable to and receive on-site supervision from the leadership of the institution or program under which the ministry is carried out. Global personnel need to pay particular attention to developing relationships with the supervisor and local leadership, as this will have a direct impact on the ministry.

3.0 WORK ASSIGNMENTS

Global personnel are invited by and receive their assignments from the companion church or agency in coordination with the ELCA/GM. Global personnel will not make changes in the work assignment nor assume new or additional responsibilities unless approved by the appropriate local leadership, **in consultation with the Area Program Desk.**

Changes in the details and expectations of an assignment may occur. Minor changes should be reported to the Area Program Desk. The Area Program Desk should be involved in the discussions if the proposed changes are substantial or change the nature of the assignment.

All global personnel are expected to carry

out their tasks with a commitment to faithful service.

4.0 ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Global personnel are committed to mission shaped by the cross and characterized by humility, compassion, and servanthood. This implies avoiding inappropriate use of power, position, or resources to gain control and influence or for personal gain or advantage. Global personnel call forth the God-given potential in others. They assist in developing and strengthening local leadership wherever possible.

4.1 Relationships with Coworkers

Global personnel are expected to treat coworkers with respect, including companion church or agency's leaders and members and other global personnel. They should keep confidences and encourage an environment of trust.

4.2 Global personnel in Leadership Positions

Global personnel may not serve in elected positions nor assume leadership roles in the companion church or agency without prior authorization from the ELCA/GM and after it has the opportunity to consult with its companions. Global personnel will not assume any official role in the companion church or agency or serve as one of its official representatives unless granted express permission from the ELCA/GM.

4.3 Relationship to the ELCA

Global personnel share the gifts and witness of companion churches with the ELCA and provide an important channel of communication through which the ELCA is enriched and challenged by the global church. This is done in cooperation with the ELCA/GM's Mission Formation team.

Global personnel employed by the ELCA/GM participate in the missionary sponsorship program and maintain contact with sponsors through regular correspondence and visits. Self-funded volunteers maintain contact with their home

congregation and other supporters.

5.0 COMMUNITY IN WHICH GLOBAL PERSONNEL SERVE

Living in a cross-national and cross-cultural setting can be both rewarding and challenging. Global personnel will be enriched by the depth and richness of relationships built over time with people in the country of service. Global personnel should be sensitive to local customs and mores to learn what is acceptable and appropriate in cross-cultural relationships.

Communal life is developed through participation in church and local community activities, as well as in the context of the mission community (as applicable).

5.1 Christian Faith and Practice

Global personnel live out the Christian faith in a way that is compatible with the gospel of grace through faith. Expressions of faith include regular participation in local corporate worship and church life, as well as personal worship and prayer.

5.2 Language and Culture

Global personnel are encouraged to acquire as much facility as possible in the local language, given the length of service and language learning assistance available. Global personnel should be committed to ongoing learning about the host culture(s) in order to be effective in cross-cultural ministry.

5.3 Living in Community

Relationships contribute greatly to the global personnel's sense of fulfillment and effectiveness. Global personnel are to be respectful, accepting of others and hospitable. This includes a commitment to inclusivity and overcoming racism, sexism and classism. While participating in the life of the church and community, global personnel should refrain from voicing destructive criticism or taking an active role in local disputes.

6.0 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Global personnel conduct themselves personally and professionally in ways that convey dignity and self-respect and reflect well on the church. The mission vocation carries expectations of behavior that differ from those in the “secular world.” Some of these expectations are described in the standards of conduct below.

6.1 Lifestyle

Global personnel are to adopt a modest standard of living appropriate to the gospel and to the context in which they serve. An appropriate lifestyle implies a responsible and ecologically sound use of both natural and financial resources.

6.2 Finances

Ethical handling of finances is required, including maintaining accurate up-to-date records and documentation. Global personnel follow ELCA guidelines, as well as those established by the companion church or agency in the handling and accounting of funds. The Executive Director of the Global Mission unit will be notified of any fiduciary mismanagement.

6.3 Alcohol, Tobacco and Illegal Substances and Tobacco

Personal use of alcohol or tobacco should be in moderation and respectful of local norms and customs. Use of illegal ~~substances~~ ~~drugs~~ is prohibited.

6.4 Dating Relationships

Single global personnel are expected to live a chaste life.

Married global personnel are expected to live in fidelity to their spouse, giving expression to sexual intimacy exclusively within the marriage relationship.

Global personnel in a publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationship are expected to live in fidelity to their partner, giving expression to sexual intimacy exclusively within the publicly

accountable relationship.

Single global personnel should seek guidance from the Area Program Desk and local persons familiar with cultural expectations before entering into a relationship. Courtship should be conducted with full respect for and attention to local customs.

6.5 Disclosure of Sexual Orientation

In many cultures, disclosure of one’s own or another’s sexual orientation can jeopardize both ministry and personal safety. Questions regarding disclosure will be addressed only to the Area Program Desk.

6.6 Sexual Conduct

Global personnel are expected to reject sexual promiscuity, the manipulation of others for purposes of sexual gratification, and sexual harassment, including taking physical or emotional advantage of others. ~~Single mission personnel are expected to live a chaste life. Married mission personnel are expected to live in fidelity to their spouse, giving expression to sexual intimacy exclusively within the marriage relationship.~~

~~In many cultures, disclosure of one’s own or another’s sexual orientation can jeopardize both ministry and personal safety. Questions regarding disclosure will be addressed only to the Continental Area Program Desk.~~

6.7 Harassment

It is the policy of the ELCA/GM to maintain a working and living environment free of any form of harassment. Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual. This includes sexual harassment, which is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or unwelcome visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. No form of harassment or intimidation on the part of global personnel will be tolerated.

Global personnel who feel that they have experienced or witnessed harassment should notify the Area Program Desk, ~~the Global Service section or the Executive Director for~~

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~~the ELCA/GM or another executive in the ELCA/GM or the ELCA Human Resources team.~~ Allegations will be fully and confidentially investigated ~~and appropriately handled.~~ The Executive Director of the Global Mission unit will be notified of any violations/accusations of sexual misconduct.

The privacy of the person issuing the complaint and of the person accused and the steps taken in the investigation will be kept confidential to the extent consistent with the need to conduct a thorough investigate.

6.8 Slander or Defamation of Character

Slander or defamation of character is not tolerated.

6.9 Involvement in Local Political, Social, and Advocacy Activities

It may be detrimental to the mission of the church and even endanger personal well-being for global personnel to participate in local political and social processes or in advocacy activities. Global personnel should first discuss possible involvement with the companion church or agency and the Area Program Desk.

6.10 Government Intelligence Activities

Global personnel shall not cooperate with any form of government intelligence activity or become involved with or report to any intelligence agency of the U.S. or of any other country or political group. Such activity compromises and endangers all other global personnel as well as the companion church or agency with which they work.

7.0 GIFTS AND PROJECTS

7.1 Gifts for Mission

Gifts intended for mission purposes, which result from direct inquiries or relationships that have developed in the course of mission service (e.g. through newsletters, home assignment visits, events or ELCA

publications), are to be directed and made payable to the ELCA Global Church Sponsorship office. This is for the protection of both the ELCA and global personnel, for tax reasons and as part of overall accountability to donors. The ELCA Global Church Sponsorship office will work with the Area Program Desk and global personnel in identifying appropriate projects in the country of service and will be responsible for acknowledging gifts.

Gifts or personal resources are not to be used by global personnel for direct funding of projects in their country of service. Global personnel who have access to independent funds assume a role as 'grantor' that is inconsistent with servant leadership.

7.2 Personal Gifts

Personal gifts should not be solicited. A personal gift is a gift intended for the use of the global personnel or their family, not for mission purposes.

Global personnel employed by the ELCA/GM may not receive a personal gift from non-family members that is valued (in cash or in-kind) in excess of the amount stated in supplemental provisions and procedures of support.

8.0 PERSONAL ISSUES

Global personnel need to balance the demands of work with responsibilities to personal care and family. The ELCA/GM's responsibilities and financial support commitments to global personnel may be affected by changes in personal life situations.

8.1 Marital Status

If global personnel plan a change in marital status, conversation must occur with the Area Program Desk prior to the change. This conversation is important for many reasons, including legal and financial issues. A change in marital status initiates a review of the call to service.

8.2 Adoption

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If global personnel plan to adopt a child or children, consultation must occur with the Area Program Desk prior to beginning the process.

8.3 Health

If global personnel or a family member develops a serious health concern, consultation with the Area Program Desk is required.

8.3 Immigration Status

Any U.S. visa or immigration status processes and/or fees for global personnel, spouses and/or dependents are a personal responsibility.

9.0 PERSONAL SAFETY / RISK MANAGEMENT

Global personnel acknowledge that global mission service involves potential risk to their safety and well-being. Global personnel assume personal responsibility for engaging in appropriate risk management in such matters as health, personal security, and safety, both at their location of service

and when traveling.

The ELCA/GM takes seriously the risk to which global personnel are exposed in the course of their service and seeks to support global personnel in preventing and responding to risk management issues.

Knowing the local community and becoming involved in its activities are a normal expectation and hope of all global personnel. Being received as a member of the community has the added benefit of providing the support and security that a community can offer.

Should changes in conditions suggest the necessity for a higher degree of risk management, the ELCA/GM should be informed as quickly as possible.

The *Security Policies and Crisis Response Plan* provided under separate cover, outline provisions for security planning and crisis management for global personnel and the ELCA/GM.

ELCA GLOBAL MISSION UNIT (ELCA/GM)**PERSONNEL POLICIES
AND
EXPECTATIONS****PREFACE**

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